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**The Third Gender:  
Exploring white western self-initiated  
expatriate women's experiences in  
the United Arab Emirates through an  
intersectional lens**

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PhD

**2014**

**The Third Gender:  
Exploring white western self-initiated  
expatriate women's experiences in  
the United Arab Emirates through an  
intersectional lens**

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of the requirements of the  
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## Abstract

This study directly responds to a call for theoretical and methodological expansion of our understanding of expatriate workers as a relational dynamic, embedded in a multi-layered and multifaceted country specific context (Al Ariss, Koall, Ozbilgin and Suutari, 2012) by exploring the experiences of western women self-initiated expatriates working in the United Arab Emirates.

Extant research in the international management literature in female expatriation identified that western expatriate women working in Japan were primarily perceived as foreign women (a gaijin) by their Japanese colleagues (Adler, 1987). This construction was shown to allow these women to occupy a different, more advantageous social location within Japanese organisations with more degrees of freedom and less gender-based discrimination in comparison to Japanese women; conceptually referred to as constituting a 'Third Gender' (Adler, 1987). This positive social construction contributed to the efficacy of female expatriation strategies.

Drawing upon the intersectionality literature, specifically from feminist and ethnic theorising, the thesis develops a gender with ethnicity (Broadbridge and Simpson, 2011:473) informed intersectional theoretical lens to explore the research question "How do western women self-initiated expatriates understand their experiences in the United Arab Emirates?"

The theoretical potential of an intersectional studies lens to female expatriation is developed through the conceptual construction of 'self-initiated expatriate women' on the interconnecting boundaries between expatriation and migration studies. Purposeful sampling was used to collect accounts from ten expatriate women through semi structured interviews conducted in 2007-09. Drawing upon discourse and thematic coding enabled interpretations of the interplay between how expatriate women's subjectivities are constructed through relational interaction and discourses at the micro, meso and macro level to explore their experiences in the UAE.

This thesis offers an intersectional lens to expatriation studies as a dynamic theoretical lens through which rich multilevel relational contextual studies of women self-initiated expatriates are theorised and connect to new understandings of international mobility in international management and female expatriation studies. Through a fusion of the intersectional lens and expatriation literatures, in-depth interpretations are offered which identify new insights into, and surface some of the discourses contributing to the paradoxical relationship between privilege and marginalisation and problematising the specificities of 'whiteness'. It offers three discourses risk, respect and complex ethnicity to include a country in the Middle East. Finally, this research process offers insights into the temporal, contextual and relationally contingent nature of intersectionality when exploring experiences of women in management studies.

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And my parents Michael and Jean whose love and encouragement gave me the confidence to start and the strength to continue.

## **Declaration**

I declare that the work contained in this thesis has not been submitted for any other award and that it is all my own work. I also confirm that this work fully acknowledges opinions, ideas and contributions from the work of others.

I declare that the word count of this thesis is 83,110 words

Name: Brenda Jane Stalker

Signature:

Date:

# Chapter One: Introduction

## 1. Introduction

This chapter introduces the research focus and developmental process undertaken in the production of this thesis to answer the research question:

How do western women self-initiated expatriates' understand their experiences in the United Arab Emirates?

The chapter provides an outline of the literature which will be drawn upon in the study of western women self-initiated expatriates' (SIEs) experiences, the research parameters and a brief overview of the methodological orientation of the thesis. Finally, a summary of the contents for each chapter is outlined.

My choice of topic is directly related to my personal experiences of expatriation. Therefore, first, I will offer some insights into the experiences which contributed to my motivation in identifying the focus and framing of the research journey which produced this thesis.

### 1.1. Personal experiences of expatriation

I am a woman, white, British national of Irish parents, living in the United Kingdom; I am married with three children and at the time of the study was in my mid-forties. I have been an academic since 1999, after a 10 year professional career in human resource management and development. Through my academic career I had the opportunity to travel and work in Asia on several occasions and thoroughly enjoyed the experience. My husband has always travelled with work, and often worked abroad for significant time periods while I remained resident in the UK with our children. After a particularly difficult international assignment, my husband was offered a significant professional opportunity in South Korea for three years. We decided to accept the full family expatriation package and arrived in Seoul in 2006.

South Korea has emerged over the last 50 years as a significant industrial economy, regionally and globally. Seoul is a densely populated city with a population of 10 million people, of which foreigners constitute only 56,000, the vast majority of which are Korean-Chinese and Chinese (Seoul City Government, 2014). There are less than 5,000 British nationals in South Korea (gov.uk, 2014a), of which 1,500 live in Seoul in comparison to 8,000 Americans who constitute the largest western expatriate group in the population (Seoul City Government, 2014). A university degree is a basic

requirement for employment for any foreigner in Korea (gov.uk, 2014b). The majority of western residents were company assigned expatriates (AEs), often working for large international western or Korean organisations (Harvey and Moeller, 2009). A minority were educators or what I now understand as self-initiated expatriates (SIEs), who had independently secured their own entry and employment in the country.

Although foreigners are dispersed across the city, the professional expatriate populations studied in expatriation studies (Harvey and Moeller, 2009) tend to be concentrated in certain residential areas in the city, which provide access to shops and restaurants tailored to the expatriate community. As the only English language, non-American, secular school in Seoul, the British school attracted a very international cohort of students. Unfortunately, the school could not support a British education beyond Year 9 (age 14), so families left Seoul, sent their children to boarding schools in UK, or transferred to the American school.

There were several professional, and broader community based expatriate societies and networks which facilitated a great multinational spirit in the expatriate community. It had all the practical amenities of a modern capital city, but I still felt distinctly foreign, in a place that welcomed its small expatriate community as symbolic of its increasing presence in a global world. However, our family expatriation experience finished earlier than expected, so after 15 months, my husband moved organisations and we relocated to the United Arab Emirates UAE.

In July 2007, we arrived to the searing heat of summer in Abu Dhabi. UAE has doubled its population from four million in 2005 to more than eight million by 2010, and foreigners account for over 88% of the population (UAE Interact, 2014). A more detailed account of the challenges of this demographic imbalance will be outlined in the country context chapter (see Chapter Two). There are over 150 nationalities resident in the UAE, of which 100,000 are British nationals and over one million British nationals visit each year (gov.uk, 2014c). In 2012, the non-citizen population of Abu Dhabi was 1.857 million people, comprising 79.6% of the total resident population (UAE Interact, 2014). However, 40% of the expatriate population is from the Indian subcontinent (Forstenlechner, 2010), and particularly work in the construction sector.

There are historical links with the British (Al-Fahim, 1995), and they constitute the largest nationality in the western expatriate population. The population demographics are immediately apparent on arrival in the airport in the disproportionate queues for entry. In stark contrast to Seoul, there was a choice of international schools, the British

School was the oldest in UAE, and felt more British and less multicultural, than most urban schools in the UK. It was also used by affluent Emiratis, who wanted an international education for their children, more usually their sons, in the UAE. The nature of the expatriate population was markedly different to Seoul, the western expatriates worked at all levels, across a diverse range of sectors. There was a considerably larger proportion of SIEs' to those sent on company assignments (AEs), and a significant number of families whose children had been born here, or had been resident for over 10 years and owned property here.

Supermarkets were stocked with imported British foods and British high street brands were prominent in the shopping malls, there were expatriate radio stations and full access to British satellite television channels. The accommodation was large and extravagant compared to homes in the UK, and the old shabby concrete apartment blocks were being replaced with skyscrapers with glistening mirror windows.

The access to familiar resources for everyday life from the UK but in a hot climate was intoxicating. Life felt good. Then through the tinted shades I began to pay more attention to my everyday surroundings. I became increasingly aware of how I regulated my own behaviour and demeanour and become more circumspect about my teenage daughters' relations and activities in public spaces. Ethnic dynamics structure everyday relations; there were distinct classes and occupations of expatriates that were often marked by nationality and ethnicity. I began to pay more attention to the patterns of daily interactions between different ethnic expatriate groups and became increasingly uncomfortable at what I saw and heard, and sometimes what I said. I felt like a foreigner here, but I also felt much more aware of my gender, and there were occasions when I feel my white western gendered body was subject to surveillance by a disapproving gaze. My modest dress and demeanour was irrelevant, symbolically as a western expatriate woman I enacted certain performances for which I was held accountable by others in public spaces.

There was always a sense in which I felt that my residence was just a moment in the transformational journey of this young and ambitious country. The global financial crisis had a significant impact on expatriates' living and working conditions in the UAE, and we decided as a family to return to the UK in July 2009. Therefore this study is temporally bound by my two year period of residence in the UAE from July 2007 to July 2009.

### **1.1.1 Implications for this study**

When I reflected on my expatriation experiences in South Korea and UAE, they illuminated the critically contingent nature of context on understanding expatriate subjectivities, which more recently has emerged as a significant issue in international management studies (Ozbilgin, 2011) and expatriation studies (Al Ariss, Koall, Ozbilgin, and Suutari, 2012). The understanding that each context has a unique patterning of multilevel historical, cultural and political influences, that frame and mediate intersubjective relations, in particular spaces at certain points in time was central to this investigation (Syed and Ozbilgin, 2009).

Alternatives to the AE norm were emerging but under-researched in terms of SIEs who reflected a significant number of expatriates in the UAE, in contrast to South Korea, and therefore SIE became a key analytical category for this study (Richardson and McKenna, 2002). The expatriation literature was dominated by an organisational perspective on expatriates and I explored relevant skilled migration literature to appreciate structural conditions and provide a richer understanding of ethnicity in expatriate intersubjective relations (Fechter and Walsh, 2010).

Importantly, I was interested in exploring women expatriates' experiences and I was intrigued by a phenomenon that Adler (1987) originally referred to as the 'gaijin syndrome' and Tung (2004) later as the 'Third Gender', which suggested that expatriate women were advantaged by their foreign gendered subjectivity. The original studies had been conducted in Asia and at the time of this study, had not been extended to the Middle East, and I was interested to explore how the contingent dynamics of the UAE would influence the production of this phenomena.

I had intended to draw from feminist theorising to provide a critical perspective on the production of the women participants' gendered subjectivities. However, the salience of their white ethnicities became more visible during the initial stage of data collection. I returned to feminist studies and drew from theorising on intersectionality to develop and apply a gender with ethnicity lens (Broadbridge and Simpson, 2011) to the expanding expatriation literature and the Third Gender concept in exploring western women SIEs' experiences. The intersectional theorising of gender with ethnicity was not the initial focus of the thesis, but rather emerged as a central concern explored through the participants' experiences. This reflexive turn is explored more fully in Chapters Five (methodology) and Eight (conclusions).

## **1.2. The focus of this study**

The focus of this study is on exploring the experiences of western women self-initiated expatriates' – understood as women who independently or with their spouse /family decide to initiate their employment and residency in another country (Richardson and McKenna, 2002). This thesis explores how the intersectionality of gender with ethnicity (Broadbridge and Simpson, 2011) contributes to the production of western women SIEs' subjectivities in the specific temporal, spatial translocation of the UAE (Leonard, 2008). Furthermore, this thesis argues that attention to contingent multi arena conditions which frame intersubjective relations is fundamental to understanding the situated performance of intersecting subjectivities (Anthias, 2013; Syed and Ozbilgin, 2009; West and Fenstermaker, 1995, a, b, 2002). Therefore, the central argument of this thesis is that theoretical insights into the production of intersecting gender with ethnicity SIE subjectivities may be gained through interpreting experiences of the participants' intersubjective relations framed within a multi arena relational contextual framework (Al Ariss et al., 2012).

## **1.3. Key theoretical concepts underpinning the study**

This section considers the central concepts that have informed theorising both in the foreground and background of this study. The focus in the foreground of the study is on micro relational intersubjectivities which will be informed by concepts of gender with ethnicity (Broadbridge and Simpson, 2011; West and Fenstermaker, 1995, a, b, 2002). The dialectical relationship of processes in the micro arena will be interpreted and developed by referencing the concept of subject positions (Butler, 1990). The background focus is on contingent conditions within macro and meso arenas which frame and infuse the intersubjective experiences of participants within the micro arena (Al Ariss and Ozbilgin, 2010; Al Ariss et al., 2012; Anthias, a, b, 2013; Cunliffe, 2003, 2008). The dialectical perspective within this study examines how micro level relational intersubjectivities are discursively shaped and enacted within structural conditions uniquely framed by the historical, cultural and temporal spaces they inhabit within specific contexts at a particular moment in time (Al Ariss et al, 2012; Anthias, 2013; 2012; Demir and Lychnell, 2014). Furthermore, this thesis will build upon this multi arena relational framework to discursively theorise the third gender concept from an intersectional perspective, the next section introduces key concepts, and outlines their contribution and limitations in terms of this research study.

### 1.3.1 The Third Gender

The relentless pace of globalization has stimulated a burgeoning literature on expatriation issues experienced by individuals, organisations and host societies (Stalker, 2000). Nancy Adler's body of work notably from 1979 to 1994 has become 'classic' in international management and has provided a framework for subsequent studies in the field of female expatriation (Altman and Shortland, 2008) by examining the three most common 'myths' about women in international management:

Myth 1: Women do not want to be international managers.

Myth 2: Companies refuse to send women overseas.

Myth 3: Foreigners' prejudice against women renders them ineffective.

This thesis is concerned with exploring the third myth which suggests that host country nationals' (HCNs') prejudice against women renders them ineffective abroad. This is the starting point for this research study.

Adler (1987) in her study with 70 women expatriates who had worked in Asia found that while 20% of female expatriates commented that their gender was a disadvantage, 42% considered it a distinct advantage. She argued that many women expatriates were accorded a higher status than their male peers and benefitted from a "halo effect" (Adler, 1987:183) interpreting this as suggesting that female expatriates were considered 'foreigners' (referred to as *gaijin* by Japanese) first and 'women' second. This meant that female expatriates were not placed in the same professionally limiting roles as local women, allowing female expatriates to gain advantages that were not available to local professional females. She referred to this as the 'Gaijin syndrome'.

Whereas the women are considered the 'culture bearers' in almost all societies, foreign women in no way assume or are expected to assume that role. As one woman in Japan said, 'The Japanese are very smart, they can tell that I am not Japanese and they do not expect me to act as a Japanese woman'. They will allow and condone behaviour from foreign women which would be absolutely unacceptable from their own women (Adler, 1987:187)

Tung (2004) commented that this had led some Japanese to refer to foreign female expatriates as members of the 'Third Gender', which is the term used in this thesis to refer to this conceptual phenomenon identified by Adler (1987).

Westwood and Leung's (1994) study, based in Hong Kong, found that women were not disadvantaged as long as they were competent. Caligiuri and Cascio (1998) and

Harris, Brewster and Sparrow (2003) have argued that host nationals' negative attitudes could be a contributory factor in explaining the low numbers of female expatriates supported by international companies. Caligiuri and Cascio (1998) suggest that Asian host nations, may have had a sub-stereotype of 'western' working women and 'Asian' working women and their reactions to these two groups may be quite different. Tzeng (2006) reported that the ethnic similarity of her American-Taiwanese respondents was disadvantageous in their host culture of Taiwan. Varma, Toh and Budhwar (2006) suggest that prejudice against women obviously exists but its specific processes and effects vary across countries and require further study.

Therefore, this study sought to extend the translocational contexts in which the 'Third Gender' concept was explored to the Middle East, specifically UAE. A survey on work attitudes of Emiratis conducted by Whiteoak, Crawford and Mapstone (2006) found that negative attitudes toward women at work correlate with females being less accepted as supervisors and co-workers.

The extent to which these (negative) attitudes apply to expatriate females and national females equally is not clear. However, it is likely that many Western females may fit into a different category in terms of religion and culture and thus may not be subject to the same level of discrimination. This is an area that would provide an interesting avenue for future research. Whiteoak, Crawford and Mapstone (2006:87)

A more recent telephone study with women expatriates in UAE by Hutchings, Michailova and Harrison (2013) explored their construction as *cosmopolitan* expatriates and suggested that gender and cultural stereotyping occurred in public rather than work spaces, some of which, they argued, resulted from the women engaging in auto-stereotyping. Negative stereotyping in public spaces was not always attributed to local Emiratis, but rather other expatriates (particularly South Asian Muslims) who made judgements about their dress and demeanour.

The issue of whether female expatriates working in the UAE occupy a position which Tung (2004) refers to as the 'Third Gender' presents an interesting research proposition, yet to be explicitly explored from an intersectional perspective in the UAE or wider Gulf region. In a society embedded in Islamic values which condition a set of gendered cultural values and workplace practices, (Metcalf, 2006) what space do foreign western working women occupy? This thesis argues that context, place, space and time and the dominant understandings and conditions that frame performances of the participants' subjectivities are fundamental in theorizing the concept of the 'Third

Gender' and how it may be produced and enacted within different translocational settings.

### **1.3.2 Self-initiated expatriates**

Expatriation literature increasingly recognises alternatives to the dominant norm of AEs to include other types of work experience (Mayerhofer, Hartmann and Michelitsch-Reidl, 2004). Inkson, Arthur, Pringle and Barry (1997) were among the first to discuss a group of people who independently relocated to another country without employer assistance, referred to as self-initiated expatriates (SIEs). Carr, Inkson and Thorn (2005) argue that they constitute a much larger and more significant group than AEs, yet organisations still seem lacking in how to support, develop and retain this valuable resource (Howe-Walsh and Schyns, 2010). Al Ariss and Syed (2011) have argued that there are significant overlaps in the study of skilled migrants (SMs) in migration studies and SIEs in expatriation literature. Therefore, this study will respond to the call for a theoretical expansion of the study of SIE' by Al Ariss et al. (2012) and include relevant theoretical and empirical studies from migration to articulate a richer understanding of SIE subjectivities in the context of this study.

### **1.3.3 Place, space and time**

Metcalf and Woodhams, (2012) argue that subjectivities are shaped by the "geographies of power" (Metcalf and Woodhams, 2012:134) and, simultaneously, shape modes of resistance, which will be explored within this thesis. They outline three ways in which geographies of power can be understood; as gender operates simultaneously "on multiple spatial scales and across (trans) national terrains", situating subject positions within historicised structural hierarchies and that the "spatial is socially constituted, and that the social is spatially constituted" in which social positions provide differential *access to and power over resources* (Metcalf and Woodhams, 2012:134). Therefore, Metcalf and Woodhams (2012:134) argue the "*gendered geographies of place reveal uneven patterns of development and opportunities, and shape individual subject identity [author's original] positions*" which is a central concern in this thesis.

Walsh (2005) from a cultural geography perspective in migration studies draws upon the concept of *contact zones* when researching British expatriates in UAE which refers to geographical places at the nexus of migration flows. Yeoh and Willis (2005b:269) understand contact zones:

As sites which invoke the spatial and temporal copresence of subjects previously separated by geographic and historical disjunctures, and whose trajectories now intersect, 'contact zones' (as defined by Mary Pratt in the context of colonial encounters) are frontiers where 'difference' is constantly encountered and negotiated.

Leonard (2008, 2010) argues that contact zones at significant temporal spaces provide opportunities to reconfigure discourses and subjectivities (Anthias, a, b, 2013). The UAE is constructed as a contact zone in a postcolonial context in which the research participants discursively enact their postcolonial subjectivities in their intersubjective relations in public and work spaces (Fechter and Walsh, 2010; Coles and Walsh, 2010).

Importantly, this thesis recognises that there are multiple intersecting subject positions embedded within and across spaces and will focus on the particularised subjectivities and practices of western women expatriates in the context of this study which recognises them as historicised, culturally situated subjectivities (Al Ariss and Ozbilgin, 2010; Fechter and Walsh, 2010).

The critique of "unravelling" historical global power relations in terms of "reimagining" alternative understandings is relevant to this study (Metcalf and Woodhams, 2012:130). However, it is beyond the scope of this thesis to explore the wider debates about postcolonialism, transnationalism and globalisation (Metcalf and Woodhams, 2012).

#### **1.3.4 Intersectionality**

An underpinning assumption to this research is that gender and ethnicity impact upon subjective relational understandings and positioning, framing our interactions with others in work and public spaces (Berry and Bell, 2012; Holvino, 2010; Metcalf and Woodhams, 2012). We are all embodied by our gender and ethnicity and enact performances that are inherently underpinned by gendered and racialised social, cultural and political norms and values (West and Fenstermaker, 1995, a, b, 2002).

Intersectionality emerged out of feminist theorising to challenge the unitary construction of woman (Collins, 1990, Crenshaw, 1991) and acknowledge the social construction and substantive effects of intersecting categorical subject positions creating unique subjectivities (Dhamoon, 2011). This is fundamental in constructing an intersectional lens to inform the theoretical framework for this thesis (Davis, 2008; McCall, 2005; Choo and Ferree, 2010). Importantly, the intersectional lens constructed for this

investigation is informed by a gender with ethnicity perspective (Broadbridge and Simpson, 2011).

### **1.3.5 Gender**

There is a significant functionalist managerial perspective in the female expatriate literature generally, which could be illuminated by analyses from feminist theorising (Berry and Bell, 2012; Janssens, Cappellen and Zanoni, 2006). Feminist literature provides a critical perspective on exploring women's subjectivities, through their performances of 'doing gender' (West and Zimmerman, 1987). Gender is drawn upon as a theoretical lens in this study in order to understand 'doing gender' (West and Zimmerman, 1987) as something that is 'said and done' (Martin, 2003). West and Zimmerman (1987) conceptualised gender as a social construction through which individuals are 'accountable' to others and gendered status is 'achieved' through their interactional performance (West and Zimmerman, 1987, 2009). Gender is culturally based and is the process of managing conduct which is held accountable to "normative conceptions of attitudes and activities appropriate for one's sex category" (West and Zimmerman, 1987:127). Butler (1990) argues that discourses provide and restrict the available gender subject positions that people can occupy. Butler (1990, 1993) argues that it is the multiplicity of meanings that aligned to each gender that constitute the category. Butler (1990, 1993) and West and Zimmerman (1987) illuminate the fluidity of gender subjectivities and importantly the role of context specificity and prevailing cultural norms, which is central to this thesis, in exploring the concept of the third gender (Adler, 1987). Seminal concepts of 'Other' (de Beauvoir, 1972) understand categories of social relations including ethnicity as constituted within a hierarchical positioning in which one is recognised as the norm, marginalising attributions of the other. The processes of othering draw attention to organising social relations which produce differential and sometimes "inferiorised" (Jones, 2008:763) subject positions and are an important consideration of this study.

The assumption is that men and women would experience work spaces in different ways and that this would be related to issues of gender (Acker, 1990, 1998, 2006). Women's experiences of work have been critically examined as 'gendered' by a number of authors including Bryans and Mavin, (2003), Gherardi (1994, 1996), Gherardi and Poggio (2001), Mavin and Grandy (2014), Metcalfe (2007). Metcalfe (2007) argues that the reasons for women's limited advancement in the workplace are well documented including the persistence of gender stereotypes, biases in recruitment and selection, few role models and limited development opportunities. Yeoh and Willis

(2005, b) argue that gender can appropriate new meanings in expatriate communities through the gendered inequalities that exist in transnational labour markets which valorise patriarchal norms.

Importantly, feminist theorising (Acker, 1990, 1998, 2006; Gherardi and Poggio, 2001) highlights the tensions that exist at the different levels of analysis i.e. ideological, structural, organisational and individual, in exploring gendering processes. However, the underlying foundation of this research is that we cannot understand the complexity of gender without connecting to the broader social, historical and cultural debates relating to gender in the UAE (Leonard, 2008; 2010). Therefore, this study will adopt a multi arena perspective in exploring gendering processes at the macro, meso and micro levels of analysis (Anthias, 2013, ) within the UAE.

### **1.3.6 Ethnicity**

A contact zone is a dynamic space for connecting transnational communities (Yeoh and Willis, 2005, b). Social constructions of race, ethnicities and nationalities are constantly drawn and reconfigured within global-local discourses (Fechter and Walsh, 2010; Metcalfe and Woodhams, 2012). The focus on expatriates engages with wider debates on the politics of global mobility and western expatriates are conceptualised as occupying a social position embedded in a postcolonial hegemonic discourse of western privileging and asymmetrical power relations (Leggett, 2010; Metcalfe and Woodhams, 2012).

Recent studies of white expatriate subjectivities within migration literature have been particularly informative in exploring central themes of intersectional gendered white subjectivities in postcolonial contexts (Fechter and Walsh, 2010; Lan, 2011).

In the ways that space and place are also active agents in the making of lives and identities, the local histories of social processes and relations of power and difference show that relationships between meanings and ideas of whiteness are by no means essential, stable or immutable, but are ongoing, active accomplishments, distinctively produced in context (Bonnett 2000a; Massey1993). Leonard (2008:47)

However, the primary objective of this thesis is not to expose and challenge racist practices (Leonard, 2008). Rather, this research seeks to illuminate and unravel the privileges and practices of whiteness. This focus shares some interest with an emerging agenda in feminist theorising that seeks to broaden knowledge of the diversities and complexities of the situated particularities of whiteness (Buzzanell, 2000; Gunew, 2007). Although this thesis will draw from a literature on 'whiteness' as it relates specifically to the focus of this research study on 'white western women SIEs' in

the UAE, a detailed critique of the political perspective in this emerging body of work in whiteness is beyond the scope of this thesis.

#### **1.4. The research scope and limitations**

This research study has articulated the scope of the research process in terms of place, space and temporal constraints (Coles and Walsh, 2010). In summary, the study is framed within the geographical place of the UAE, exploring work and public spaces, within the period July 2007 to July 2009.

The theoretical focus of the study will draw from two distinct bodies of literature within feminist theorising in gender and ethnicity in constructing an intersectional lens of gender with ethnicity (Broadbridge and Simpson, 2012; Gunew, 2007; West and Fenstermaker, 1995, a, b, 2002). This lens will then be applied to a fusion of expatriation and migration studies to explicate the conceptual construction of self-initiated expatriation operationalised within this study (Berry and Bell, 2012).

This thesis will articulate a multi-arena relational framework within the scope of the study which situates the participants' intersectional subjectivities within broader processes of social and structural relations (Al Ariss and Ozbilgin, 2010; Al Ariss et al., 2012). Finally, the study will build upon this framework to extend exploration of the third gender concept in the context of this investigation.

Importantly the discussion of theoretical concepts clarifies the limitations in scope and focus of each body of literature, and articulates the theoretical and conceptual insights and empirical evidence that directly relate to the focus of this research study.

#### **1.5. The potential contributions of this study**

This study is responding to a call by Ozbilgin (2011) to contextualise international management theorising. Therefore, the bounded scope of this study within place, time, and space (Metcalfe and Woodhams, 2012) will provide a rich framework in which the specificities of achieving relational subjectivities can be explored in more detail (Coles and Walsh, 2010). The framing of the contextual analysis of the research context as a constitutive feature of this investigation will provide the potential to explore the dialectical discursive and structural forces shaping and configuring embodied subjectivities within specific translocations (Ozbilgin, 2011; Leonard, 2008; 2010).

There is the potential to make an original theoretical contribution to expatriation theorising by extending Berry and Bell's (2012) comparative analysis of expatriation

and migration studies. This study will use an intersectional lens to explicate the analytical construction of self-initiated expatriates on the borderland between the disciplinary fields of study. In drawing from migration theorising this study will contribute to the theoretical expansion of expatriation studies called for by Al Ariss et al. (2012).

This investigation will offer a contextualised multi arena relational framework (Anthias, 2013) for analysing experiences and secondary data sources. This will enable exploration of the specificities of gender with ethnicity within feminist intersectional (West and Fenstermaker, 1995, a, b, 2002) and expatriation studies (Al Ariss and Ozbilgin, 2010). This will contribute to the methodological expansion of expatriation studies called for by Al Ariss et al. (2012) and intersectional studies of doing difference by West and Zimmerman (2009).

This study will seek to make an original contribution to female expatriation studies in exploring the third gender concept (Adler, 1987) in three ways: firstly, by extending existing studies of the concept into the emergent female SIE literature, and secondly, by exploring an under researched translocation in the UAE (Harrison and Michailova, 2012). Thirdly, the construction and application of an intersectional lens will facilitate a discursive analysis of the third gender concept. The discursive theorisation of the third gender will contribute to female expatriation literature to provide an analytical framework to analyse contextualised situated experiences of assigned and self-initiated women expatriates using the concept of the third gender.

The exploration of contested understandings of whiteness will make a theoretical contribution to expatriation studies by critiquing the problematic construction of western subjectivities which is not subject to examination generally within this literature (Al Ariss and Ozbilgin, 2010). Furthermore, it will make an original contribution to intersectional studies by offering a contextualised understanding of the contingent particularities of whiteness which illuminate its potential privileges and liabilities (Fechter and Walsh, 2010) within translocational settings (Lan, 2011)

## **1.6. The research aims and objectives**

Having set out the rational, theoretical perspectives and potential contributions informing this research, the research question, research objectives and approach to conducting this study are outlined below.

The research question driving the design of the research study is:

How do western women self-initiated expatriates' understand their experiences in the United Arab Emirates?

It was supported by three broad aims:

- Explore the experiences of western self-initiated expatriate women working in the UAE.
- Contribute further empirical research from an intersectional perspective of western women self-initiated expatriates to the emerging theoretical and methodological expansion of the expatriation theory base.
- Analyse the experiences of western women self-initiated expatriates in the UAE through the discursive theorisation of the 'Third Gender' to contribute insights into expatriation and intersectional studies.

The following objectives guide the focus of the research:

- Develop an intersectional lens: to apply to connections between expatriation and migration studies in order to construct an analytical category of SIEs from both literatures, through which western women SIEs' experiences can be interpreted and which contributes to new insights into intersectionality and the expansion of expatriation studies.
- Design and implement a research approach and methods to contribute to the methodological expansion of understanding the contextualised subjective experiences of western women SIEs in the UAE in order to explore the concept of the 'Third Gender'
- Develop a framework for analysis of western women SIEs' experiences synthesised within the existing literature.
- Build upon this synthesis to provide insights which contribute to understandings of women SIEs' experiences from an intersectional perspective through the concept of the third ender.
- Make original theoretical and methodological contributions to the fields of female expatriation, self-initiated expatriation, intersectionality and whiteness.

### **1.6.1 Methodology**

This thesis draws upon a relational social constructionist understanding of the social world (Cunliffe, 2003, 2008), which suggests we construct meanings and knowledge through our embodied interactions with others within broader processes of organising social relations (Demir and Lychnell, 2014; Metcalfe, 2007). This allows an appreciation of the construction of categories of difference that inform a normative ordering of privileging and marginalising social relations, but which are acknowledged as subject to critique (Burr, 2003; Cunliffe, 2008). These interpretations are framed within an understanding of discourses and their substantive effect on social relations which facilitates a “recontextualising” of content within this study (Boje, Oswick and Ford, 2004:571)

The design of the research process enabled a multilevel relational methodology (Syed and Ozbilgin, 2009) which drew from participant accounts and additional secondary documents including media articles, government and legal publications to inform the data collection and analysis.

Ten women participants contributed to this study through semi-structured interviews, which is consistent with other similar studies in expatriation in a developing country (Forstenlechner, 2010). They all self-initiated their expatriation to the UAE and at the time of the study were resident for at least two years, with the majority between five and 15 years. They are all working in a paid capacity in substantive work roles, in a range of hierarchical positions and sectors.

### **1.7. Structure of the thesis**

**Chapter One** has provided an introduction to the research focus and process. It began with an overview of the focus of the study and the key theoretical concepts related to it. Details of the research scope and context have been outlined, including brief details about the research participants. The potential empirical, theoretical and methodological contributions of this study have been highlighted and then the research question and the related objectives of the study were outlined. Reasons for researching this particular subject area and focus of interest were explained. The chapter concluded with an overview of the structure of the thesis.

**Chapter Two** outlines the relevant details to provide a coherent account of the significant features of the UAE as a research context for the purposes of this investigation. It provides information on the historical, political, legal and cultural influences that frame the contingent analysis of SIE subjectivities specific to this study.

**Chapter Three** discusses a comprehensive review of the literature on intersectionality, gender and ethnicity. The feminist literature on gender was explored to locate this study within the field and explore the social construction of gender as a situated performance for which women are held accountable to prevailing social norms. Then the chapter considers feminist theorising of race, ethnicity and nationality in which to situate the study. Consideration is given to key concepts of foreign, western and white to explicate the position of this study in exploring the contingent specificities of whiteness in the bounded context of this investigation. This provides the first part of the theoretical framework for this study.

**Chapter Four** applies the intersectional lens to exploring the relationship between expatriation and migration studies. It provides a detailed analysis of the shared and divergent theoretical and empirical interests in global mobility. The expatriation-migration continuum articulates an analytical construction of self-initiated expatriation which positions the focus of the investigation within expatriation studies extending into migration. This provides the second part of the theoretical framework for this study

**Chapter Five** confirms the ontological and epistemological positioning of this research. It outlines the consideration of discourses in the analytical framing of the third gender concept. The chapter gives the rationale and details of the methods used in gathering and interpreting the data. The research participants are introduced and the processes of identifying and selecting them are explained. The chapter details the abductive approach and methods of interpreting the data.

**Chapter Six** provides details of the multi arena relational framework which has been produced from analysis of the participant accounts and contemporary media articles and synthesised with the relevant literature. First, it considers the significant themes in an analysis of the participants' biographical data for this study. The framework outlines the significant themes and their contribution in understanding the participants' subjectivities within each arena of relational activity: macro, meso and micro. The dialectical interweaving of themes between different arenas is explored and synthesised with the literature to offer a discourse of risk to understand the experience of the participants from their self-initiated expatriate subject position. This chapter contributes to understandings of how self-initiated expatriate subjectivities are experienced by western women.

**Chapter Seven** provides the opportunity to explore the concept of the third gender in the specific context of this investigation as detailed in the multi arena relational

framework outlined in the previous chapter. The discursive construction of the third gender concept is explored using its constituent features of gender and ethnicity to surface discourses of respect and complex ethnicity respectively to offer a theorisation of the third gender concept constructed in this study. This chapter contributes to understandings of how the intersection of gender with ethnicity is experienced by western women self-initiated expatriates

Finally, **Chapter Eight** includes an evaluation of the achievement of the research objectives, and highlights the theoretical, methodological and empirical contributions offered by this research. The evaluative framework to establish the trustworthiness of this study is outlined. The limitations of this thesis are explored through discussion of self-reflexivity. The chapter concludes with possibilities for further research.

### **1.8. Summary**

This chapter has provided an overview of the development of this thesis, including details of the personal and theoretical influences which shaped the focus of the thesis upon western women SIEs' experiences in the UAE. The chapter provided an overview of the theoretical and methodological frameworks informing the research process and highlighted potential original theoretical and methodological contributions of this study. This is followed in the next chapter with an account of the contextual details of UAE which are relevant for the scope and focus of this investigation.

# **Chapter Two: UAE Country Context**

## **2. Introduction**

This chapter provides information on the UAE which is the research context for this study. There has been a growing interest in contextualising research in International Management and Expatriation (Al Ariss et al., 2012; Ozbilgin, 2011). The historical, cultural, political and economic specificities of local country contexts is considered integral to understanding the constraints and opportunities which frame expatriate and specifically SIE subjectivities which are the focus of this study (Rodriguez and Scurry, 2014). Therefore this chapter will provide a historical, political, and cultural context for understanding the most significant dynamic challenges in the UAE relevant for this study.

### **2.1. Regional context**

#### **2.1.1 Introduction to Regional context**

Budhwar and Mellahi (2007) suggest that the term Middle East (ME) mainly refers to a cultural area which does not have precise borders. Several researchers argue that the Middle East is highly diverse in terms of languages, ethnicities and religions as well as political and economic systems (Budhwar and Mellahi 2007; Hutchings, Metcalfe and Cooper 2010; Mellahi, Demirbag, and Riddle 2011). Therefore, a more coherent regional collective framework for contextualising UAE for research purposes would be the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). This is a regional co-operation system between six of the southern Gulf countries (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE) and is often cited as a distinctive group for research purposes (Al-Khoury, 2010; Harry, 2007; Forstenlechner and Rutledge, 2011, 2010). Their geographical proximity, common religion, language and culture, and the similarity of their regulations and economic and social conditions were key factors that informed the UAE constitution, agreed in 1981 (Al-Khoury, 2010).

#### **2.1.2 Regional challenges**

Traditional sheikhdoms and absolute monarchies dominate in virtually all of the GCC states (Metcalfe, 2008b). O'Sullivan, Rey and Mendez (2011) argue that there are significant challenges facing many countries in the GCC region which will need to be addressed to unleash the region's economic potential. These factors include: high unemployment, low rates of female participation in the labour force, low levels of private sector development, weak public and corporate governance, bloated public sectors, limited competition and pervasive corruption. Ambitious plans for economic

diversification have serious implications for institutional and regulatory frameworks and the development and management of local and migrant human resources (Budhwar and Mellahi, 2007).

In comparison to other parts of the world, the Middle East has less available literature related to the field of organisations and skilled expatriation (Budhwar and Mellahi, 2007; Afiouni, Ruel and Schuler, 2014; Rodriguez and Scurry, 2014). Scholars highlight the immense impact of Islamic values, work ethics and principles on managing people in Islamic countries (Mellahi and Budwhar, 2010; Metcalfe, 2006, 2007, 2011 a, b.; Robertson, Al Habib, Al Khatib and Lanoue, 2001). Initial literature analysis suggests that in order to survive and flourish, foreign firms need to be responsive to the cultural and religious social values of local stakeholders and customers (Harry, 2007).

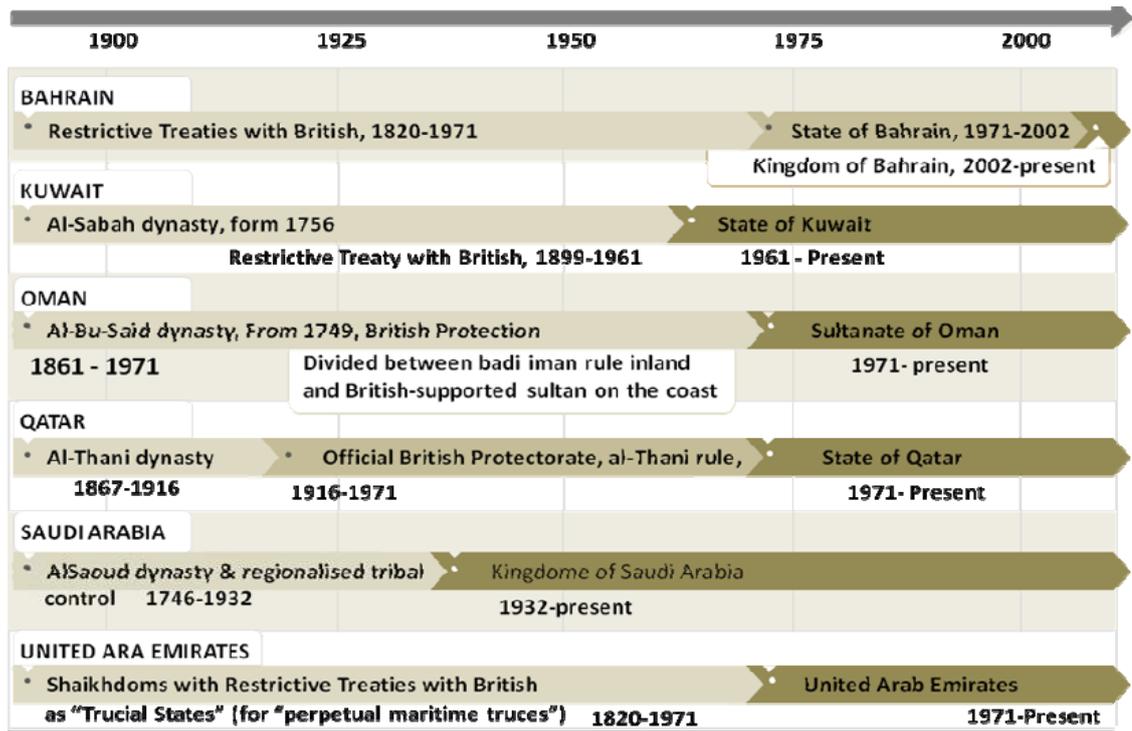
Importantly, macro and structural factors have shaped the role of government in country-specific business and workplace environments in the region (Rodriguez and Scurry, 2014). GCC countries including UAE have invested heavily in developing their human resources (Budhwar & Mellahi and 2007). However, despite considerable investments, the output of the education system is disappointing and there is difficulty in meeting the demands of the labour market in terms of both quantity and quality of skills; so far, the emphasis has been primarily on human resource development rather than utilisation and this is particularly apparent in UAE (Forstenlechner and Rutledge, 2011).

## **2.2. UAE context**

### **2.2.1 Historical context**

The most significant theme from the modern historical development of the GCC states has been their independence from British colonial influence, restoration of historical cultural and social values and national identities and establishment of closer ties within the region (Al-Fahim, 1995). A summary of significant historical events is outlined in Table 2.1.

**Figure 2.1: Historical development of GCC Countries**



Source: Al-Khouri (2010:5)

The UAE was established in 1971 as a federation of six states from a group of tribal sheikhdoms that were previously referred to as the Trucial states. They were British protectorate until independence in 1971. The constitution does not provide for democratic elections and the “rulers hold power on the basis of their dynastic position and their legitimacy in a system of tribal consensus” (Metcalf, 2011b:139)

### 2.2.2 Sociocultural context

The issue of national identity has featured prominently since independence and ‘has been an integral part of the psyche of the citizens’ (Al-Khouri, 2010:4). Upon independence, the Gulf states also sought to reaffirm social connections through their shared histories, cultural values and traditions which were interwoven in the fabrics of their collective societies. Al-Khouri (2010) outlines the mutual factors that help shape contemporary understandings of Gulf Society into a political and economic union (see Table 2.2).

**Table 2.1: Common Identity Elements shaping the ‘Gulf Society’**

Element	Description
Tribalism	People sharing common ancestry and kinship, and using their tribal affiliation as their last names.
Religion	Islam
Language	Arabic: created a linguistic culture that is specific to the Gulf population
Dress Code	Gulf citizens wear traditional attire
Political System	GCC formation led to cooperation and integration in the fields of health, education, labour and social affairs, tourism, sports, etc.
Economy	Oil based, custom union, common exchange rate

Source: Taken from Al-Khouri (2010:4)

Tayeb (1995) drew attention to the role of adapting organisation practices, particularly Human Resource Management (HRM), to the sociocultural context, on the one hand, and to macroeconomic performances of nations on the other. However, Afioni et al. (2014) conclude that HRM practices in one country are likely to be influenced by both cultural and institutional factors, and that it is challenging to deconstruct the various cultural and institutional influences.

Islamic social and religious practices are integral to structuring gender relations in public and private spaces within UAE, Metcalfe (2008b:90) argues that it is an “important source from which the cultural fabric of Arab society gained its patterns (Ali, 1995)”. Islam’s constitutive influence on organising institutional, organisational and individual relations is central to understanding the research context for this study. Islam’s moral framework shapes understandings of the ‘different’ but complementary roles of men and women which informs all aspects of everyday living and working (Marmenout and Lirio, 2010). The different subjectivities are integral to expectations of gendered roles and interactional practices within Emirati society which support a traditional patriarchal structure (Omair, 2008, 2009, 2010). Metcalfe (2008b) argues that this supports cultural practices that attribute a higher value to job roles that reflect dominant masculinities. Men’s primary role is head of the family, responsible for supporting and protecting the family and particularly female family members. In contrast, women’s primary role is as homemaker and mother, and subject to a code of modesty which enshrines their role as culture bearers of Islamic virtue. This places restrictions on inter-gender relations between unrelated men and women, and is

articulated in family practices based on Shar'ia law (Metcalfe, 2006). These cultural practices create gendered relations in the workplace, which sustain sex-segregated education, occupations and work spaces (Gallant, 2006). However, there is growing evidence that economic expectations of women's participation in the workplace are changing (Metcalfe, 2011 a, b ), however others suggest that cultural and social attitudes may be less open to change (Omair, 2009; Whiteoak et al., 2006).

Harry (2007:135) pointed to a regional socio-cultural idiosyncrasy evidenced in the UAE whereby 'connections' (in Arabic: *wasta* – the ability to use family or tribal affiliations to gain unmerited favour) facilitate access to a range of social, political and economic resources including employment, business contracts, investment and access to decision makers. This could include influential family members intervening on behalf of their relatives to secure employment or better conditions. Many employers consider that such interventions interfere with both effective and equitable management of staff (Forstenlechner, Lettice and Ozbilgin, 2011). Forstenlechner, Madi, Selim and Rutledge (2012: 408) comment that "The influence that these connections have, or lack of them, has in the UAE and its GCC neighbours cannot be understated"

Some low paid job categories are deemed unacceptable by Emirati society for nationals to undertake, particularly for Emirati women (Marmenout and Lirio , 2014) and the view that one's 'social status' is related to occupation and sector employment is far more prevalent in the Arab Gulf than elsewhere (Mellahi, 2007).

### **2.2.3 Macro-economic context**

Between 2005 and 2010 the UAE population doubled, from approximately four million in 2005 to more than eight million by 2010, there were 818,000 Emiratis in 2005 and non-nationals accounted for over 88% of the population, the highest in the GCC at this time (see Table 2.3). According to a report issued by the EIU (2010), the population in the Gulf region is predicted to continue rising to 53.5 million by 2020, with 24% under the age of 25. However, Al-Khoury (2010), Director General of Emirates Identity Authority, reports that, in reviewing GCC 2010 census reports, the forecast would be that it reaches or exceeds 60 million by 2020.

Figure 2.2: GCC Population 2005-2010

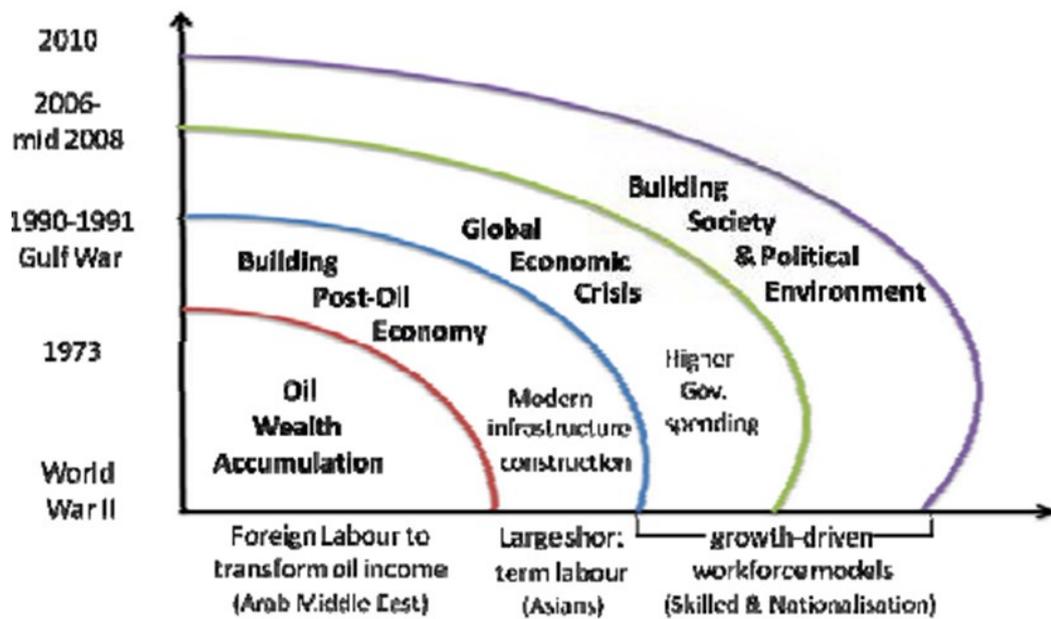
**Foreigners Constitute majority in 4 states**

Country	Population 2005	Population 2010	Citizens	%	Foreigners	%
<b>UAE</b>	4,106,427	8,190,000	950,000	12%	7,240,000	<b>88%</b>
<b>Qatar</b>	796,186	1,678,568	218,214	13%	1,460,354	<b>87%</b>
<b>Kuwait</b>	2,991,189	3,480,000	1,044,000	30%	2,436,000	<b>70%</b>
<b>Bahrain</b>	727,000	1,050,000	507,150	48%	542,850	<b>52%</b>
<b>Oman</b>	2,508,837	3,418,085	2,392,660	70%	1,025,426	30%
<b>Saudi Arabia</b>	22,673,538	28,686,633	20,941,242	73%	7,745,391	27%
<b>GCC (Total)</b>	<b>33,803,177</b>	<b>46,503,286</b>	<b>19,058,559</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>27,413,687</b>	<b>59%</b>

Source: Al-Khouri (2010:3)

Al-Khouri (2010) reports that the first significant wave of foreigners to the GCC predominantly came from Arab ME countries. Due to increased oil revenues in 1970s-90s, a large migrant workforce primarily from Asia participated in transformational economic, public sector and institutional capacity building in GCC states. By 2000, economic diversification, private sector expansion and demographic rebalancing were perceived as fundamental to creating a sustainable post-oil economy (see Table 2.4). The GCC countries adopted strong policies to promote 'nationalisation' of the workforce in various segments of the public and private sectors (Harry, 2007). However, countries including UAE lacked the quality and quantity of indigenous human resources required and met the demand through a growth-driven foreign workforce migration model, particularly in the private sector, attracting a highly skilled workforce to execute ambitious projects.

Figure 2.3: Changing patterns in GCC Workforce



Source: Al-Khouri (2010:3)

Labour market segmentation in GCC countries is disproportionate, as only 1% of the workforce is employed in the oil and gas sector which produces 47% of GCC GDP. Table 2.5 outlines the labour market characteristics in the UAE at the time of the research and clearly illustrates the disproportionate number of Emiratis at 1.3% within the private sector compared to 27.4% of the private sector. Additionally, the proportion of expatriates working in the public sector at 72.6% is substantially more than any other GCC country.

## Figure 2.4: The UAE and GCC labour market characteristics, 2009

Table 1. The UAE and GCC labour market characteristics, 2009.

	<i>Public sector labour force</i>		<i>'Private' sector labour force</i>		<i>National unemployment</i>	<i>Public sector preference</i>
	<i>National</i>	<i>Expat.</i>	<i>National</i>	<i>Expat.</i>	<i>Aged 15–29</i>	<i>Aged 15–29</i>
Bahrain	90.8	9.2	28.6	72.4	27.0	73.0
Kuwait	74.6	25.4	2.7	97.3	8.0	71.0
Oman	80.5	19.5	15.5	84.5	–	–
Qatar	52.8	47.2	17.0	83.0	11.0	63.0
Saudi Arabia	91.3	8.7	45.3	54.7	28.0	60.0
<i>UAE</i>	<i>27.4</i>	<i>72.6</i>	<i>1.3</i>	<i>98.7</i>	<i>12.0</i>	<i>66.0</i>
<i>GCC</i>	<i>72.3</i>	<i>27.7</i>	<i>31.7</i>	<i>68.3</i>	<i>17.2</i>	<i>66.6</i>

Notes: Some 'private' sector entities that are recorded in the labour market data – aggregated for the period 2004–2007 – are partially or, in cases, wholly state-owned. Unemployment figures for the 15–29 age bracket, for those 'neither in education nor in work', and along with the sectoral preferences for this age cohort, were collated in 2009 (Forstenlechner and Rutledge 2010).

Forstenlechner and Rutledge (2010) argue that the provision of highly remunerated and undemanding public sector jobs to citizens is the primary cause of this segmentation. For nationals, a government job often provides a salary several times higher than the equivalent private sector position, secure tenure and a very generous pension (Abdalla, Al Waqfi, Harb, Hijazi & Zoubeidi 2010; Gerson & Shaheen, 2009). Private sector employment may indicate that the given national had insufficient 'wasta' to gain preferential employment in the public sector. Forstenlechner et al. (2012: 408) argue that such a relaxed attitude to labour regulation has been influential in creating a highly segmented labour market with low levels of "inter-changeability between nationals and non-nationals".

By the 1990s, however, the public sector had become overstaffed, overly bureaucratic and a substantial drain on national finances. Furthermore, for the private sector, easy access to an elastic pool of cheap non-national labour had led to low levels of productivity, and little incentive to invest in labour-saving technologies. Furthermore, many public sector employees simultaneously and legitimately also operate a private sector business. In most instances such businesses are managed and staffed by non-nationals. Indeed opportunities for nationals to utilise non-national labour with almost no form of taxation (in Arabic: kafala – the practice whereby a GCC national can sponsor a non-national's work visa virtually free of charge) is considered to be another of the social contract's transmission mechanisms (Forstenlechner and Rutledge, 2010).

According to a recent survey of GCC nationals by Gallup (2009), unemployment figures for those aged below 30 are now in the double digits in all six countries (for the UAE it

is 12%). Forstenlechner, et al (2012) state that examining the underlying reasons for nationals' unemployment is of both economic and political importance because of the region's demographic pyramid characteristics, increasing education levels and associated salary expectations for employment (EIU, 2009; Noland & Pack, 2008). Politically, unemployment is often considered to be one of the region's key domestic policy challenges (Harry, 2007) and seen as a contributory factor in recent demonstrations across the Middle East and other GCC countries, but which have had little impact in UAE to date (Forstenlechner, et al , 2012).

Forstenlechner (2010:190) reports that the average tenure of expatriates in UAE was 2.8 years. The direct salary cost of a national versus a similarly experienced and qualified non-national tends to be one of the most prominent reasons cited in explaining why so few nationals work in the private sector (Mellahi 2007). Indeed, some GCC governments already provide some financial support to some private sector employers to top-up the salaries of the nationals they have on their payrolls and there are suggestions of a similar measure being adopted in the UAE in the near future (Shaheen, 2010). Research by Forstenlechner et al. (2012:416) of 250 UAE based HR personnel confirm that non-nationals tend to be hired in preference to nationals primarily because they are 'easier to control' (i.e. hire, manage and fire).

#### **2.2.4 Institutional and Regulatory Frameworks**

Forstenlechner and Rutledge (2011:26) report that more recently attention has concentrated on the economic, political and social consequences of UAE pyramid demographic profile and segmented labour market. This is particularly relevant to the focus of this study of experiences of western women SIEs in the UAE. The distinctive characteristics and emerging strains within its strategically constructed segmented labour markets (Connell and Burgess, 2013) have resulted from an overdependence on an expatriate workforce and the provision of public sector employment (Forstenlechner and Rutledge, 2010). Forstenlechner and Rutledge (2011:26) argue that the debate around the population profile "has become highly charged"; it is considered to constitute a potential "demographic time bomb" that is now the Gulf's most "dangerous addiction".

The demographic imbalance and segmented marketplace are inextricably linked and present the most significant domestic challenge for both governments and their populations (Tabbara, 2010). It is of particular contemporary relevance in the broader context of the ways in which the region's ruling elites have responded to the "Arab Spring". Forstenlechner and Rutledge (2011) contend that responses by GCC states

are ill-judged and more likely to exacerbate the demographic imbalance. They argue that raising salaries in the public sector in some instances by 100% and generating thousands more public sector jobs (Hamdan, 2011; Izzack, 2011) will only serve to encourage graduate nationals and those currently unemployed to hold out for public-sector employment. This will perpetuate and exacerbate the dysfunctional relationship between a disproportionate national and expatriate demographic profile and a dangerously segmented labour market (Forstenlechner et al., 2012).

Al-Khouri (2010:6) contends that tensions from disproportionate population demographics have pushed GCC countries including the UAE to construct new forms of legislative structures to preserve their national and cultural identity. Forstenlechner and Rutledge (2010) argue that the 'social contract' encompasses the mechanisms by which GCC ruling governments have historically chosen to redistribute oil wealth to their citizenry, primarily through a comprehensive range of health, welfare and education benefits and the provision of very well remunerated and undemanding public sector jobs to citizens, a situation particularly evident in the UAE. Some of the richer GCC countries including the UAE presently have the resources to continue generous provisions for their citizens (Forstenlechner & Rutledge, 2011). Nevertheless, UAE government recognises that continuing this practice will have a detrimental impact on labour market segmentation and labour nationalisation policies. Furthermore, such generous provision reduces the average national's incentive to work hard vocationally or take business risks and increasingly creates a culture of entitlement (Al Gergawi, 2008; Forstenlechner & Rutledge 2010). Al Waqfi and Forstenlechner (2012) report that 98% of the Emirati workforce are in the public sector, and more than half of Emirati students interviewed said they would prefer to wait for a future public sector job opportunity than opt for one of the many currently available in the private sector.

Forstenlechner, et al (2012) state that in the early stages of the UAE's economic development (1971–1990), the federal government realised that its ability to capitalise on its newly acquired resource wealth and upgrade economic and social infrastructures hinged on large numbers of expatriate workers. Consequently, the corresponding labour laws and regulations were designed to allow the exploitation of cheap labour by local and foreign-owned businesses alike (Abdalla et al., 2010). Forstenlechner et al, (2012:407) argue that:

Labour laws, at least those governing the private sector, were not formulated to cater for a permanent workforce, let alone one that would increasingly need to cater for national employees. They were, and to a considerable extent still are, very 'business friendly' (inter alia, no minimum wage, no trade unions, the ability to easily recruit and lay-off staff).

Paradoxically in the UAE, at a time when economic diversification and expansion from resource-based to sustainable innovative based sectors is a strategic economic driver, the Emirati workforce is small and does not yet possess the full range of skills required; therefore, it will continue to be highly dependent on a foreign workforce in the short to medium term. However, UAE ambitions to play on a global stage beyond the region also mean that it is subject to international pressures on its treatment for expatriates, particularly more 'vulnerable' workers within its foreign workforce (Connell and Burgess, 2013; Marmenout, 2010; Metcalfe, 2011b).

The UAE's labour nationalisation programme is referred to as Emiratisation. Since the early 1990s there has been a growing realisation that the public sectors of the GCC states can no longer absorb all graduating nationals (Forstenlechner and Rutledge, 2010, 2011; Harry, 2007). This incapacity is highlighted by the fact that all GCC labour nationalisation policies primarily focus on 'encouraging' this cohort to view the private sector as a viable career option. In addition nationalisation policies have implemented a quota system to increasingly oblige private sector employers to employ locals (Rees, Mamman & Bin Braik, 2007; Forstenlechner et al., 2011). Within the UAE, Al Ali (2008), reports that there is considerable ambiguity over the dismissal procedures with regard to nationals. In 2009, for example, the National Human Resource Development and Employment Authority submitted a proposal to the Ministry of Labour recommending an amendment to the existing labour law that would oblige any private sector business to contact the Ministry prior to the dismissal of an Emirati employee (Hafez, 2009a, b). However, as Table 2.5 shows, the impact of Emiratisation has been limited (i.e. only 1.3% of the private sector is staffed by nationals, yet the number of this cohort, aged between 15 and 29, that are neither in education or employment is 12%). Al Ali (2008:370), reports that only one of the 46 UAE-registered insurance companies had managed to reach the required 5% quota target.

Forstenlechner and Rutledge (2010) report that resistance to Emiratisation from businesses to date may have been reflected in either a lack of commitment or strategy of avoidance e.g. by reclassifying job title/roles or depending on influence of Emirati Sponsor to obviate bureaucratic obligations. They argue that such approaches are increasingly problematic and positive engagement with Emiratisation will increasingly be advantageous, even a prerequisite for navigating regulatory requirements and retaining and securing lucrative government contracts (Rees et al., 2007).

Forstenlechner et al. (2012) explored which factors (social, cultural, economic, regulatory, educational and motivational) influenced recruitment decisions in UAE.

Their survey of 250 UAE based HRM personnel found that the perceived lack of work motivation and the uncertainties over the differing rights afforded to employees was more influential than the lack of necessary qualifications and high reservation wage demands of Emiratis.

### **2.3. Gender Relations in the UAE**

It is important to highlight positive advances in the GCC, where the UAE is an “exemplar” and has more female political representation (22.5%) than US or UK in the lower house of state government, and two women ministers (Metcalf, 2011b:139). However, the General Womens Union (GWU) which promotes women’s interests focuses mainly on social and cultural concerns rather than political and economic factors and is not a part of state governance. Metcalfe (2011b) highlights more recent initiatives to support Emirati women including women’s leadership conferences at Zayed University and the foundation of the Dubai Women’s Establishment (DWE) to develop Emirati womens’ leadership potential. However, Metcalfe and Rees (2010) draw attention to the restrictive class and ethnic constraints in DWE’s operations. Metcalfe (2011b:140) concludes that although state governance frameworks are “still at a rudimentary stage...commitment to female representation in political decision making and leadership efforts provides stronger support for UAE commitment to change gender regimes in polity and the economy” than in some other GCC countries.

In the UAE, men’s and women’s attire has a particular social significance as a potent marker of cultural heritage and national identity in the demographic profile of the country. For Emirati women wearing their traditional black abaya, which is distinctly feminine and contrasts with mens’ traditionally white dishdasha, was a social, religious and cultural norm. Omair (2009:424) states that ‘covering’ enables Emirati women to create new subject positions and reframe gender relations within the workplace. It was a “tool to gain sexual neutrality” (ibid:424) and demarcated a professional relationship where women can interact with men without being considered immoral. As one of her respondents asserted “the abaya is a great item of clothing to enforce ones seriousness and professionalism. I see that when I come in contact with men. They respect me more and behave more modestly” Omair (2009: 424). However, her respondents also report that the only resistance they encountered came from some Muslim men who challenged the wearing of the face veil in a modern work environment, one woman commented “they give such nasty comments, calling them backwards, incapable or just puppets and not people on their own” (ibid:423). Omair (2009:427) asserts that “covering” did not provide any “discomfort” in terms of their Muslim and Emirati subject positions. However, the Emirati women did face

discrimination in the workplace which suggested that the “idea of woman as a manager is still loaded with traditional ideas that women are inferior to men and therefore less capable in leadership positions”. She concludes that “while Arab women are willing to accept more responsibilities in the political, occupational, educational and social spheres, Arab men are not willing to share these responsibilities with them (Abdallah, 1996)” (Omair, 2009:423) .

Afiouni et al. (2014) report that unemployment is disproportionately high among women in the Middle East. According to the World Economic Forum’s (2012) *Global Gender Gap Report*, significant progress has been made in the region to increase women’s educational attainment rates, and over the past decade, almost all MENA countries have closed 90% or more of the gender gap in education. However, these improvements in education have not been matched with comparable increases in female labour force participation rates: approximately 33% of working-age women join the labour force, compared with 56% in low- and middle-income countries and 61% in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) member countries (O’Sullivan et al. 2011). The very low participation of women in the labour force and low employment levels are widely considered a missed opportunity for economic growth and development (International Labor Organization, 2010).

Metcalf’s (2007, 2008, 2011a, b) contribution particularly explores structural constraints and the impact of Islamic values and practices on women’s work experiences, organisational HRM policies and national HRD strategies (Metcalf and Rees, 2010). The main findings acknowledge that overall women in the ME face career and development challenges which are related to the construction of equal but different gender roles. Furthermore, Metcalf (2007) found that gender-related equality issues are generally absent from formal firm level HRM policies. As part of a wider study into work values and attitudes Whiteoak et al. (2006:82) surveyed 241 UAE nationals about their attitudes to women at work and concluded that:

Like many Arab countries, the UAE is still predominantly a traditional, male dominated society, and thus traditional attitudes regarding women at work may still be deeply held within society. The traditional view of women in Arab society is that they should be primarily committed to the house and children (Abdalla, 1996)

Omair (2010:128) reports on Emirati women’s employability in which they constitute 66% of the workforce in the government sector, a third of which are in leadership roles. They also consist of over 40% of all employees in education and 35% in the health sector. The unemployment rate among women nationals has most recently reached a

high of 19.7%, compared to 8.2% for males, despite the fact that women graduates greatly outnumber male graduates (UAE, 2007).

The late ruler Sheik Zayed, founding father of the UAE, was a great supporter of women's advancement, and encouraged women to take up roles suitable to their nature (Gallant, 2006). However, women's primary role is still mostly in the family or traditional roles. Some Emirati women may have limited independent geographic mobility and be reluctant to work in mixed gender work environments, as it is still widely considered haram (a sin) for women to interact with men other than their close relatives, which makes working in some sectors (e.g. tourism and hospitality) problematic and therefore finding a career that is 'respectable' is an important goal for Emirati women (Gallant, 2006). Al Waqfi and Forstenlechner (2010, p. 372) report that many regional employers consider many positions to be culturally 'unsuitable for citizens', particularly local women. Forstenlechner et al. (2012) argue that the issue of the 'appropriateness' of a given occupation and the 'lack of prestige' attached to many positions, are equally attributable to the social contract as much as the region's cultural conventions and are societal understandings that policymakers cannot realistically seek to alter within the immediate future.

#### **2.4. Implications of research context for study**

The UAE presents a socially rich research context; a society embedded in Islamic values which condition a set of gendered cultural values and practices (Metcalf, 2006, 2008, b 2011a, b). As discussed previously, the extant research has begun to explore the complex and contested participation of national women in the culturally framed, highly segmented labour market in the context of the UAE, but little research has been conducted with women expatriates and as Whiteoak et al. (2006:87) comment:

The extent to which these (negative) attitudes apply to expatriate females and national females equally is not clear. However, it is likely that many Western females may fit into a different category in terms of religion and culture and thus may not be subject to the same level of discrimination. This is an area that would provide an interesting avenue for future research.

The focus of this research on exploring the experiences of expatriates at the nexus of this 'demographic time bomb' can illuminate the realities of these fractious connections situated in this specific research site, but which resonate across the region. The demographically disproportionately large expatriate workforce creates a complex ethnic dynamic. Exploring the issue of whether female expatriates working in the UAE occupy a privileged position which Tung (2004) refers to as the 'Third Gender' presents an interesting research proposition, yet to be explored in the UAE or wider Gulf region.

Furthermore, explicit in the study is a critical perspective on the role of our “inherited understandings” and the pervasive nature of shared historical and cultural ways of seeing the world as evidenced in the role of Islamic values in a modern Arab society. The layers of “sedimentation” within the Arab culture itself overlaid with the layers of “interpretation” by Islamic scholars and external western dominant discourses are complex and will be challenging to deconstruct (Crotty, 1998:59). However, a central theme in choosing the UAE as a context for the study is a recognition of how shared meanings can also be temporal in nature and how the weight of tradition of deep rooted societal values can be challenged on several fronts by the winds of modernisation, economic imperatives and changing generational aspirations (Forstenlechner and Rutledge, 2011; Gallant, 2006; Marmenout and Lirio, 2014)

This thesis is consistent with Metcalfe (2011a, b) in acknowledging the legitimate prominence of Muslim and Gulf women’s voices and perspectives in theorising empowerment of gender relations in the region through equality through difference strategy. Nevertheless, the focus in this study is not a comparative study, but rather an exploration of western women SIEs’ intersubjective relations within this Arab, Muslim country context; in which understandings of Emirati womens’ social, legal and economic subjectivities inform the relational contextual framework which infuses the participants social relations. Therefore, this research acknowledges the central contribution of western epistemological perspectives and theorising in framing this research process.

The Middle East region and specifically the UAE have been largely ignored by the expatriate literature although migration has been a significant feature of the local demographics for a period of time (Harrison and Michailova, 2012). This investigation into the country context will contribute to the emergent SIE expatriation literature, by increasing our understanding, of the structural and cultural constraints which frame experiences of SIE in the UAE. Secondly, by understanding constructions of Emirati woman subjectivities, it will inform the structure of gender relations which infuse the broader context of everyday experiences of western women SIEs in public and work spaces. Finally, consideration of Emirati women’s role as culture bearers of Islamic virtue and emerging participation in the labour market illuminates the operationalisation of the Third Gender concept (Adler, 1987) within this study.

## **2.5. Summary**

This chapter has outlined the historical, cultural, political and economic specificities of UAE, particularly the impact of the demographic profile and constructions of Emirati

women's subjectivities which are considered integral to understanding the constraints and opportunities which frame western women SIE's subjectivities which are the focus of this study (Harrison and Michailova, 2012; Hutchings et al., 2013; Rodriguez and Scurry, 2014).

## **Chapter Three: Intersectional Lens: Exploring *difference* through gender with ethnicity**

### **3. Introduction**

To understand and analyse the experiences of western women expatriates, this thesis takes as its starting point the field of intersectionality studies. This is an approach to understanding how the simultaneous intersections of characteristics of difference create new distinct unitary subjectivities that produce unique social positions, which cannot be accounted for by adding together the single categories.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a background to the development of, the intersectional lens that will be applied in this study. To begin to answer the research question:

How do western women self-initiated expatriates understand their experiences in the United Arab Emirates?

In doing so, this chapter addresses the following research objective:

To develop an intersectional lens: to apply to connections between expatriation and migration studies in order to construct an analytical category of SIEs from both literatures; through which western women SIEs' experiences can be interpreted and which contributes new insights into intersectionality and the expansion of expatriation studies

This chapter locates the thesis in relation to intersectionality, gender and ethnicity studies in order to develop a theoretical lens with which western women self-initiated expatriates experiences will be explored. The salient constitutive elements of difference for the research participants, namely their gender with ethnicity (Broadbridge & Simpson, 2011:473), will be explored to illuminate the analytical construction of western women within this study. The relevant issues and tensions in developing an intersectional gender with ethnicity lens will be addressed in order to explicate and justify the construction and application of the theoretical lens in this study. The chapter will discuss relevant literature on intersectionality, gender and ethnicity and conclude with a summary of the theoretical lens that will be applied to expatriation and migration studies in the next chapter.

### **3.1. Intersectionality**

#### **3.1.1 Origins**

The origins of intersectionality are broadly attributed (Davis, 2008; Hancock, 2007) to perspectives which emerged out of feminist scholars of colour challenging the unitary conceptualisations of gender as representative of all women's experiences (Crenshaw, 1991; Collins, 1990, 1993; Hooks, 1981, 1984) and the limitations of models of layered or additive oppressions, which overlooked populations and topics (Hancock, 2007). The work of Collins (1990, 1993) on gender, race and class was particularly influential in challenging feminist theorising before Crenshaw (1991) coined the term intersectionality to "address legal doctrinal issues" (Dhamoon, 2011:231). Crenshaw (1991) used a crossroads metaphor to propose the crashing intersection of inequalities where the unity of two marginalising characteristics constitute a distinct unitary social position that produces unique forms of disadvantage which cannot be accounted for by adding together the single categories. Collins (1990, 1993) refers to particular forms of oppression e.g. gender and race as micro level processes which produce intersectional subject positions located within a system of "interlocking oppressions" organised through a "matrix of domination" which comprise structural, disciplinary, hegemonic and interpersonal power relations (Collins, 1990:276). From this perspective, intersectionality and interlocking are understood as complementary (Dhamoon, 2011:231). Anderson (2005:444) argues that the feminist analysis of the gender/race/class intersectional paradigm differs from other sociological stratification studies in four regards: firstly, it is grounded in the feminist movement; secondly that all three categories are conceptualised as overlapping simultaneously; thirdly, it tends to be interdisciplinary; fourthly, it started from the experience of 'women of colour' and finally that it emphasises social location in framing consciousness.

#### **3.1.2 Benefits**

Phoenix (2006:187) argues that intersectionality provides a richer ontology by making "relational multiple positioning visible within constitutive relations of power". Davis (2008:72) argues that it converges two important strands of contemporary feminist thought, namely the fundamental and pervasive concern of explicating diversity among women and the "deconstructive mission of anti-categorical postmodern feminist theorising", yet importantly provides a platform for feminist theory as a "shared enterprise" where any scholar can use her social location as an "analytical resource" rather than just an "identity marker".

Intersectionality fits neatly into the postmodern project of conceptualising multiple and shifting identities...[it] seemed to embody a commitment to the

situated-ness of all knowledge (Haraway, 1988), promising to enhance the theorist's reflexivity by allowing her to incorporate her own intersectional location in the production of self-critical and accountable feminist theory (Davis, 2008:71)

It provided a common ground for examining multiple co-constituted differences; making the social and substantive consequences of categories visible while using methodologies consistent with challenging universal essentialisms and exploring the dynamic and contradictory structures of power (Brah & Phoenix, 2004; Crenshaw, 1991; Davis, 2008; McCall, 2005). Therefore, several feminist researchers including Holvino (2010), Acker (2006), Leonard (2010) and Verloo (2006) argue that understanding an individual's social location as reflected in intersecting subjectivities should foreground any investigations into gender. In particular, they draw our attention to the way in which the lens through which gender intersects dialectically with other social categories should be understood in the context of how relative historical, structural and cultural power relations are embedded in the relational construction of social collectivities (Brah and Phoenix, 2004:76).

### **3.1.3 Theorising intersectionality**

Shields (2008:301) states that intersectionality as "the mutually constitutive relations among social identities, is a central tenet of feminist thinking and has transformed how gender is conceptualised in research". McCall (2005) suggests that it is the most important contribution of feminist theory to our present understanding of gender and that it has changed how gender is theoretically discussed. Davis (2008) asserts that there is still emerging debate as to whether it is a theoretical paradigm (Hancock, 2007), concept or heuristic device (Anthias 2013a, 2013b) or should be conceptualised as a crossroad (Crenshaw, 1991), axes of difference (Yuval-Davis, 2006) or as a dynamic process (Staunaes, 2003) that illuminates individual experiences or social structures and cultural discourses or both (McCall, 2005). Indeed Davis (2008:69) concludes "paradoxically, precisely the vagueness and open-endedness of 'intersectionality' may be the very secret of its success". The intersectionality perspective explores how the complexities of multiple social locations profoundly influence, shape and mediate constructions of gender and frame everyday social interactions.

The intersection of gender and race challenges the assumption of treating women as a unified category segregated from men when there is significant evidence of internal diversity based on other subjectivities including race and ethnicity (Crenshaw, 1991; Holvino, 2010). Intersectionalist scholars suggest that while capitalist patriarchy deeply influences gender relations, it is complicated by racial dynamics in a society in which

racial thinking informs patriarchy (Brewer, Conrad, & King, 2002). Intersections can create both opportunities and oppressions where members of an advantaged group not only avoid disadvantages but enjoy opportunities not available to others.

An intersectional position is relative to other positional subjectivities so that an individual may enjoy perceived advantages in relation to one category (e.g. being western) but be disadvantaged by her lesbian sexuality from the heterosexual norm (Anthias, 2013a, 2013b). Shields (2008:302) states that such positional subjectivities “instantiate social stratification” – in that they may be experienced as a characteristic of an individual self - but it also reflects the operation of power relations among groups that comprise that intersectional category. Therefore, Shields (2008:302) argues that a fundamental assumption in every influential theoretical formulation of intersectionality is that “intersectional identities are defined in relation to one another – not a set of discrete identities like beads on a string, but rather, they are relationally defined and emergent (e.g. Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1983; Collins 1990)”.

Anderson (2005:446) argues that it is more than seeking a plurality of perspectives and giving a “voice” to previously “silenced” groups, rather it is about the “hierarchies and systems of domination that permeate society”. It does not diminish the role of individuals’ performance and agency but rather “it is a matter of structural and relationship thinking versus comparative and additive thinking” (Anderson, 2005:446).

Thinking comparatively treats all subjectivities similarly so assumes that different forms of oppression are analogous so that, for example, the mechanisms that sustain racism operate like sexism. Anderson (2005) and Risman (2004) agree that each construction has particular, substantive historical, and ideological and specificities but, contrary to Anderson (2005, 2008), Risman (2004) argues that to focus exclusively on studying them simultaneously would detract from explicating how different kinds of oppression are produced. Anderson (2005, 2008) argues that each has its own dynamics, but all exist in a dialectical relationship in which each is relational and reinforcing.

Whilst the understandings of intersectionality may vary across research contexts, Shields (2008:302) argues that a “consistent thread across definitions is that social identities [authors term], which serve as organizing features of social relations, mutually constitute, reinforce and naturalize one another”. By *‘mutually constitute’* she suggests that one category (e.g. gender) is meaningful in relation to another (e.g. race). The notion of *‘reinforce’* emphasises the active participation of individuals in ‘performing’ their subjectivities. Whilst the concepts of enactment and agency are shared with many researchers, West and Zimmerman’s (1987) emphasis on “accomplishment” in a

relational context goes beyond a notion of individual dynamic action as suggested here, and will be explored further in the next section on gender. Finally, in using *'naturalize'* she suggests that subjectivities in one category seem to be seen as obvious through the lens of another e.g. race is constructed as containing two genders. Shields (2008:302) further argues that gender categories are “always and everywhere similarly understood and employed, thus *'natural'* and without other possibilities (e.g. multiple genders; ‘temporary’ gender categories)” which is consistent with West and Zimmerman’s (2009) position that societal changes may reflect changes in gender ascribed behaviours within a category but the integral boundaries of the categories themselves remain stable. However, while acknowledging that recent research into areas such as transexuality has sought to challenge and reconceptualise fundamental definitions about gender and in doing so critiques assumptions about the status and impermeability of socially constructed categories. However, this is outside the focus of this investigation.

As a conceptual lens, intersectionality is ambiguous and open-ended (Phoenix, 2006) yet as Davis (2008: 77) argues:

The infinite regress built into the concept... allows endless constellations of intersecting lines of difference to be explored. With each new intersection, new connections emerge and previously hidden exclusions come to light... [It] offers endless opportunities for interrogating one’s own blind spot and transforming them into analytical resources for further critical analysis... [It] initiates a process of discovery which not only is potentially interminable, but promises to yield new and more comprehensive and reflexively critical insights. What more could one desire from feminist inquiry?

#### **3.1.4 Implications for this research process**

Davis (2008) and Prins (2006) critique the nonspecific nature of intersectionality as a theoretical approach; an open-ended concept filled with multiple meanings and given form as translated into legal and political practices. Other theorists outline how different meanings reflect different concerns (Hancock, 2007; McCall, 2005; Yuval-Davis, 2006) but offer only general suggestions on how these concerns are operationalised (Choo & Ferree, 2010). The theoretical Intersectional lens which is operationalised for this research process is informed by perspectives on the following key aspects: categorical complexity; type of intersectional analysis; levels of analysis; and finally, the contribution of contextual forces.

#### **3.1.5 Perspective on categorical complexity**

McCall (2005:1772) suggests three broad approaches have emerged to intersectional research to respond to the “complexity that arises when the subject of analysis

expands to include multiple dimensions of social life and categories of analysis". They are defined on a continuum primarily by their position toward categories and she refers to them as: anticategorical complexity, intercategorical complexity and intracategorical complexity.

Anticategorical approaches are at one end of the continuum and reject the utility and simplistic fixed notions of categories as "social fictions that produce inequalities in the process of producing differences" (McCall, 2005:1773) and are therefore inadequate and misleading in exploring the complex interplay of multiple and fluid determinations of both subjects and structures. At the opposite end of the continuum intercategorical approaches use existing social categories provisionally and strategically for analytical purposes to understand and explicate changes in equality for different social groups along multiple and conflicting dimensions. McCall (2005) asserts that intracategorical approaches fall conceptually in the middle of the continuum between the other two approaches and 'inaugurated' the study of intersectionality. Intracategorical approaches recognise the analytical utility of categories representing enduring relationships whilst adopting a critical perspective to the processes of category construction.

This investigation draws upon an intracategorical perspective in the construction of a conceptual lens for the study of western women expatriates. McCall (2005) suggests that the strength of this approach provides insights into the complexity and diversity of the experiences of social relations within a single social group as well as between the group and others. This study is interdisciplinary in that it draws from distinct fields of literature to inform the exploration of subjectivities in the research site. There are different literatures which inform our constructions of our research participants as 'western women' (gender and race and ethnicity) and as 'women expatriates' (expatriation and migration). This study fundamentally draws from an intracategorical approach within gender studies by focusing on a "single social group" (women) at a "neglected point of intersection" (western) within a "particular social setting" (expatriation in UAE) to "uncover the differences and complexities of experience embodied in that location" (McCall, 2005:1782). This "unified intersectional core...works its way outward to analytically unravel one by one the influences of gender, race and class, and so on" (McCall, 2005: 1787). Therefore, this is a study about women of a specific racial category, occupying a particular social position as expatriates within a specific structural context in the UAE.

Anthias (2013b:129) argues that particular problems are raised in understanding intersectionality as mutually constitutive subjectivities. In contradistinction to Hancock (2007), and consistent with this thesis, she disagrees that all social subjectivities are equally salient all of the time, but emphasises that they are contextually contingent, which she explores through her concept of “translocational positionality” (ibid, 2013b:129). Furthermore, she challenges the assumption that subjectivities of difference reinforce each other in one direction and in contrast emphasises the existence of dialogical and contradictory positions and positioning. Anthias (2013b) argues that assumptions that categories are mutually constitutive does not attend to their individual specificities including distinctive discourses, practices and ontologies formed in particular historical, cultural and representational moments (Fechter & Walsh, 2010; Leonard, 2010). Therefore, consistent with Anthias (2013, a, b) this study does not assume categories mutually reinforce each in one direction but rather this aims to explore the specificities of the participant’s contested contradictory subjectivities i.e. constructed as subordinate ‘women’ Other within gender subject positions and dominant ‘western’ One within racial categories situated within contextually contingent frameworks of multidirectional and dialogical social relations.

Dhamoon (2011:232) reports that for some researchers the term ‘interlocking’ (Collins, 1990, 1993) emphasises the symbiotic relationality of systems e.g. colonialism and patriarchy which “secure” hierarchical subject positions through “relations of penalty and privilege that cannot be extracted from each other”. More recently, Dhamoon (2011:232) prefers to use the term “interactions” to explicate how power infused “processes of differentiation *dynamically* [author’s italics] function through one another and enable each other; they do not exist apart from one another, although the character of these processes and their effects are varied and indeterminate”. In line with the research aim of exploring the conceptual understanding of the ‘Third Gender’ (Adler, 1987), there are a priori assumptions in the theoretical framing of the research question that “symbiotically secure” (Dhamoon, 2011:232) hierarchical primacy to social processes of gendering intersected with racialising at any level of social relations. In this way it could be argued that in this study the main effect of gendering is prioritised over racialising in exploring intersectionality in a similar way to that in which Acker (2006) centres class in exploring class-gender interaction in the process of capitalism.

McCall (2005:1783) also states that categories can have an “ambivalent” status and are also used to define the subjects of analysis and simultaneously articulate the broader structural dynamics which frame their everyday social relations. Interestingly,

in her notes McCall draws from studies in migration patterns and cites Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994:187): “macrostructural factors alone do not explain how people respond to new opportunities and pressures...political and economic transformations may set the stage for migration, but they do not write the script”. McCall (2005:1782) is consistent with many feminist researchers in arguing that while broad social categories and structures of inequality have an impact they do not determine the “complex texture of day-to-day life” for individual members of the social group, therefore this reinforces the analytical centrality of the experiences of the research participants in this investigation. In line with other intracategorical approaches to intersectionality the adoption of categories of western women and expatriates are used critically in this investigation to illuminate the production and influence of these social relations upon the experiences of the research participants which is consistent with (McCall, 2005:1783):

Scholars also see categories as misleading constructs that do not readily allow for the diversity and heterogeneity of experience to be presented. While the standard groups are homogenized as a point of contrast, the social group that is the subject of analysis is presented in all its detail and complexity, even though in the end some generalizations about the group must be made. These studies then avoid the fully deconstructive rejection of all categorization, yet they remain deeply sceptical of the homogenizing generalizations that go with the territory of classification and categorization. The point is not to deny the importance –both material and discursive- of categories but to focus on the process by which they are produced, experienced, reproduced, and resisted in everyday life (Fernandes, 1997; Glenn, 2002)

Therefore, this research process provisionally adopts categories as durable concepts, in that it critiques essentialism in categories but does not reject the social reality of categories. The intention here is to complicate and adopt categories in a critical way that reveals complexities at the neglected points of intersection (McCall, 2005). Furthermore, this investigation argues that the ‘Third Gender’ concept assumes a “symbiotically secure” (Dhamoon, 2011:232) hierarchical positioning of gender interacting with racial processes and that the contradictory subjectivities of the participants are constituted by multidirectional complex social relations (Anthias, 2013, a, b). Finally, there is a broader understanding of the ambivalence of categories, in that they also “instantiate social stratification” (Shields, 2008:302) but do not determine the “complex texture of day-to-day life” (McCall, 2005:1782). This supports the focus of this investigation at the micro level as the primary empirical subject of analysis located within a system of “interlocking” structural conditions (Collins, 2000:18). The relationship between categories and contexts facilitates an emphasis on the relational dynamic processes of categorisation; essentially a focus on the social processes by which categories are “produced, experienced, reproduced, and resisted

in everyday life” (McCall, 2005:1783). This approach illuminates the theoretical perspective on categories and categorisation operationalised in this thesis.

### **3.1.6 Type of intersectional analysis**

Choo and Ferree (2010) outline three types of intersectional analysis which are useful in different circumstances. They argue that the specific conceptualisations of intersectionality reflect distinct types of interactional analysis as group-centred, process-centred and system-centred. The first focuses on bringing multiply marginalised groups into the centre; the latter two aim to explore or explain intersectional dynamics through the way that the analysis of the data is done. Choo and Ferree (2010:131) argue that more critical theorising would create richer empirical research and argue for using a “more contextual and comparative methodology to study intersectionality itself in a process-centred, institutionally complex way”.

Ken (2008) theorises a transformational model of the social processes themselves through their interaction with other forces in a particular context, which Choo and Ferree (2010) refer to as a “process centred model”. This is similar to McCall’s (2005) intercategory approach because it seeks dimensions of variation in the intersections across categories, and assumes important interactions across contexts as the default position. However, the focus on multi group, comparative, empirical analysis evident in McCall’s intercategory approach is not shared by this investigation. Rather it is the “relational” aspect of Choo and Ferree’s (2010) “Process model” which highlights the substantive and cultural relations of power that structure society which is relevant for this investigation (Choo & Ferree, 2010:134). Choo and Ferree (2010:134) argue that:

The structural type process-centred analysis is not without its limitations. It runs the risk of focusing on abstracted structures in their intersectional configurations, thus turning the persons who are experiencing the impact of macro- and meso-interactions into incidental figures, underplaying their agency in these complex constellations of forces (Prins 2006; Staunaes 2003).

This investigation is consistent with Choo and Ferree (2010:134) in arguing that this limitation can be countered by a focus on cultural meanings and problematising the construction of social categories of western women in this research as integral to theorising intersectionality. McCall (2005) and Davis (2008) argue that this constructionist view is shared with a critical perspective on exploring the stability of subjectivities at the micro level which is consistent with the perspective of this thesis. This approach reflects a broader “discursive turn” in gender and race studies to explore the formation of subjectivities as a “contested process of self-creation in a field of power relations” (Choo & Ferree, 2010:134). The attention focused on exploring the processes of framing choice and coercion in understanding subjectivities in complex

locations is consistent with this thesis (Ken 2008; Yuval-Davis 2006). Therefore, these process models can be sensitive to the issues of subjectivities framing them as co-constructed with macro and meso relations which are central to this research process (Prins, 2006). Choo and Ferree (2010:134) comment that:

They highlight dynamic forces more than categories, racialization rather than races, economic exploitation rather than classes, gendering and gender performances rather than genders, and recognize the distinctiveness of how power operates across particular institutional fields. Because of this interest in mutually transformative processes, this approach emphasizes change over time as well as between sites and institutions (Yuval-Davis, 2006)”

This attention to the intersection of dynamic processes of racialising and gendering performance rather than race and gender as categories is fundamental to this research process. The focus on variation by place, space and time is inherent in the specificities of framing this exploration of the participants’ relational subjectivities. This thesis sets out to explore what Choo and Ferree (2010:135) refer to as “asking the other question” in taking the primary form of oppression i.e. gender and asking how it intersects with “other axes of power and exclusion” i.e. western subject position which are less articulated in the specificities of this context. The critique of this approach is that this leads to a tendency to separating primary (gender) from secondary (western) incongruities and prioritising inequalities so that the process orientated theoretical approach integral to this research process does not just “add groups” but rather “adds intersectional relations”. However, this thesis departs from Choo and Ferree’s (2010) focus on comparative analysis between what are ‘typically conceptualised as “persistent, untransformed main effects” (Choo & Ferree, 2010:135). Rather it is the “process models” theoretical emphasis on a contextually bound field of study, which explores the patterning of multilevel relational analyses of the research participants’ understanding of their intersecting gendered and racialised subjectivities, which is relevant for this investigation.

### **3.1.7 Contextual framing**

Shields (2008), Anthias (2013 a, b) and Dhamoon (2011) acknowledge the importance of the contextual framing of constructing symbiotic relational subjectivities which pattern everyday interactions marked by privilege and oppression. This perspective allows us to theorise how women’s oppression is produced and experienced differently within different racial and ethnic communities in the same and different geographical locations.

While intersectional feminist studies were initially dominated by the experiences of women of colour (Gunew, 2007), more recent research has explored other

intersections. Rooney (2006) examines how gender, sect and class intersect to impact on women's experiences of poverty in Northern Ireland. In doing so, she demonstrates how the prominence of defining the salient social categories that shape individual women's experiences of their social position are highly contingent upon the specificities of their historicised, temporal, social contexts. Choo and Ferree (2010:136) support this perspective:

Societies are theorised as historically constructed, arbitrarily bounded systems in which each system that can be identified is also the environment for all other systems to which they are constantly adapting. Stressing the mix of positive and negative feedback effects in the actual functioning of such historically constructed systems of inequality. Walby, argues for both their fragility and stability: since small changes may have large effects, there are many potential points of intervention for those who seek change, but also many reinforcements for the status quo embedded in multiple, mutually dependant institutions.

This research process delineates a specific historical, temporal space and place in which to explore intersections of gendering and racialising in producing the participants' subject positions (Anthias, 2013b). There is an appreciation that these subjectivities are relational and associated with substantive practices not merely descriptive, and whose construction is embedded in power infused patterns of representational and social structural processes in specific moments and spaces (Glenn, 1999). Choo and Ferree (2010:136) argue that the challenge from this perspective is to identify the historical and local patterns of inequalities since every system is "contingent and path dependant". This perspective resonates with Collins' (1990:276) seminal conceptualising of historically contingent, multilevel interlocking oppressions organised through a "matrix of domination".

Anthias (2013b) reports on recent work concerned with applying intersectionality within a transnational frame (Pukayastha, 2010; Radhakrishnan, 2008). This work is important in drawing attention to the translocational dimensions of context and time including the realities of multicultural and postcolonial cosmopolitan places and spaces. Social categories operate within multiple and complex social fields and relate to substantive and discursive aspects of social relations. Hulko (2009) reports on how individual migrants inhabit positions of subordination and domination respectively in diverse communities in different geographical locations, thereby giving her participants a contradictory social position translocationally. Also contradictory positioning as discussed earlier could mean that a person might be simultaneously in a position of dominance and subordination in different times, spaces and places. Anthias (2013b:127) argues that intersectionality is a heuristic device and a "general tool and not limited to exploring disadvantage". Therefore, Anthias (2013b:130) argues that a

*“translocational”* lens is a tool for analysing positions and outcomes produced through the intersections of different social structures and processes, including transnational ones, giving importance to the broader social context and to temporality”.

From this perspective inequalities are conceptualised as a set of processes, rather than purely possessive characters of individuals, and are theorised as not equally salient at all times, but rather historically sensitive, therefore “emergent” rather than “pre-given” and may construct uneven patterns of social relations (Anthias, 2013b:131). Identifying the distinctive and temporal power infused places and spaces in which intersections are constituted allow the privileging of particular categorical subjectivities at a “specific conjunctural level, rather than in any essential or given way” (Anthias, 2013b:131). This is reflected in the construction of the research participants in this investigation as occupying a ‘Third Gender’ (1987) where race intersects the more salient category of gender. Therefore, the concept of a “translocational lens” which acknowledges the emergence of contradictory subjectivities embedded in a historically and temporarily sensitive uneven patterning of power infused broader social processes is important in operationalising intersectionality within this research process (Anthias, 2013a; Pukayastha, 2010; Hulko, 2009).

### **3.1.8 Perspective on social levels/arenas of analysis**

Yuval-Davis (2006) argues that a social constructionist approach also requires multilevel data that captures the dynamic interactions of agentic subjectivities within the framework of relational and institutional forces which influence their production. Choo and Ferree (2010:134) argue that there is a potential limitation in this approach due to the tendency toward “subcategorization” when processes are conceptually “stacked” from the macro level “down” to micro individual differences. Within this investigation the exploration of differences is explored at different levels of macro (global/societal), meso (organisational) and micro (relational/individual), through the interaction of relational “feedback loops” of cultural and social processes that seek to explore dynamic interactions in social relations at different levels and across different sites of performance.

The translocational perspective argues for a broader and more integrated frame relating to power and agency in understanding social positions and intersubjective social relations at different levels or in different arenas and spaces (Anthias, 2013b). She prefers to use the term societal “arenas” rather than “levels” as a heuristic device to delineate analytically the different societal arenas where intersections are experienced and practiced. She doesn’t conceive of them as actual societal structures,

but rather as organising frames where each arena acts as a context for the others and facilitates an exploration of how they interconnect. Therefore, this thesis does not adopt her specific delineation of arenas but operationalises her heuristic tool in referring to macro, meso and micro, arenas as organising frames, to focus on interconnections and avoid the limitations of “stacking” (Choo & Ferree, 2010:134).

While this investigation is consistent with several authors in proposing the value of multilevel data in exploring intersectionality (Yuval-Davis, 2006; McCall, 2005) it seeks to avoid the limitations of conceptual “stacking” of processes from the macro down to the individual level of analysis. Therefore, it adopts Anthias’ (2013a, b) heuristic framing of arenas rather than levels to analytically describe the different societal/interactional contexts where intersectional subjectivities are produced, experienced, reproduced, and resisted in everyday life (McCall, 2005:1783) so that the processes that constitute the intersectional subjectivities of the research participants are explored within a multi arena rather than multi-level frame of analysis.

### **3.1.9 Intersectionality section summary**

In summary, this section has outlined the theoretical conceptualisation and analytical framework of intersectionality that has informed the development of an intersectional lens for this research investigation.

Therefore, the intersectionality lens in this thesis is understood as operationalising a multiple lens to view mutually constituted, symbiotically secured, different subject positions, in relation to other subject positions, and constituted within a system of group and structural relations (Anderson, 2005; Collins, 1990; Shields, 2008; Davis, 2008). Consistent with Anthias (2013a) and Yuval-Davis (1992) it is not limited to exploring disadvantage, but emphasises their *dialogical* and *contradictory* positions and positioning, produced within particular contexts in relation to structural, discursive and substantive facets of social relations. This research process draws from an “intracategorical” (McCall, 2005) and “process centred” (Choo & Ferree, 2010:134) approach which provisionally but critically adopts categories as durable concepts which “instantiate social stratification” (Shields, 2008:302) and illuminate processes of “interlocking” privilege and oppression (Collins,1990). Importantly, it acknowledges the contribution of “translocational” theoretical perspectives in exploring complexities in individual lives and experiences and frames a historically contingent multi arena analysis to explore patterns of intersecting social relations in the specific context of this research study (Anthias, 2013a, b; Brah and Phoenix, 2004; Leonard, 2010).

## **3.2. Gender**

The previous section explored how the application of an intersectional lens would contribute to the theoretical framing of the research process (Choo & Ferree, 2010; Davis, 2008; McCall, 2005; Shields, 2008). The purpose of this section is to provide a critical review of extant research on gender to explicate and justify the contribution of gender to the intersectional lens. Gender theorising will be explored to outline the analytical construction of 'woman' and 'doing gender' in gendered social relations. This will inform the contribution of gender within the intersectional lens operationalised within this contextual study, which will explore experiences of western women SIE subjectivities in the UAE.

### **3.2.1 Intersectionality and gender**

An underpinning assumption to this research is that gender and ethnicity impact upon relational understandings and presentation of ourselves, framing our interactions with others in the workplace (Anderson, 2005; Berry & Bell, 2012; Holvino, 2010). We are all embodied by our gender and ethnicity and engage in relationships both in and out of the workplace that are inherently infused by gendered and racialised social, cultural and political norms and values (Collins, 1990; Hulko, 2009; Shields, 2008). Conceptual understandings of gender and how they intersect with race provide important insights into exploring and explicating the notion of the 'third gender' (Adler, 1987). Anderson's (2005) seminal paper reflecting on developments in feminist studies in the latter quarter of the twentieth century highlighted the intersection of race, class and gender and the relationship between structure and agency as major themes framing contemporary feminist scholarship. Acker (2012b:214) states that theorising gender and organisations began in the late 1960s and early 1970s but that new questions keep challenging the field because the "empirical terrain is constantly changing" and are more "complicated" because of intersectionality. This section outlines the contribution of feminist theorising on gender in constructing the intersectional theoretical framework for this thesis.

### **3.2.2 Gender in feminist theorising**

Feminist literature provides a critical perspective on exploring women and men subjectivities (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005; Hesse-Bieber, 2007), however, the focus within this investigation is on the construction and social relations of woman (Anderson, 2005). Seminal concepts of 'Otherness' (de Beauvoir, 1953) and the socially constructed negative conditioning of a woman's place as subordinate to males, in which everything that can be attributed to females is devalued, particularly in the work context, are fundamental to the theoretical framing of this research study (Acker,

2012; Anderson, 2005a; Broadbridge & Simpson, 2011). The assumption is that men and women experience their subjectivities particularly in the workplace in different ways and that this would be related to issues of gender (Gherardi, 1996; Mavin and Grandy, 2014). Women's experiences in the workplace have been critically examined as gendered by a number of authors (including Acker, 1990, 1998, 2006; Gherardi, 1994, 1996; Kelan, 2008, 2010; Mavin, 2008; Metcalfe, 2007). An exploration of relevant themes and concepts underpinning 'gender' and how this frames 'doing gender' in everyday interactions can enrich our analysis of the participants' experiences and constructions as a third gender (Adler, 1987) in the specific context of this research study.

### 3.2.3 Conceptualising woman in gender

Anderson (2005) reports on the conceptual development of gender emerging from early understandings of gender as a social construction as distinct from a biologically deterministic view which offered sex differences as explanation of sex role distinctions between men and women (Shields, 2008). The socially constituted dimensions of gender have focused on gender as: an accomplished activity (West and Fenstermaker a, b, 1995, a; West and Zimmerman, 1987); a situated performative social practice (Butler, 1990, 1993, 2004; Martin, 2006); as constituted by symbolical and substantive practices (Acker, 1990, 2006); and more recently as structure (Deutsch, 2007; Risman, 2004). Anderson (2005:441) argues that all of these conceptions share a common theme in that they "include the dynamic and active construction of gender that is captured by a focus on human agency. At the same time, each tries to understand the persistence of gender as a social form (and thus the focus on structure)".

West and Zimmerman (1987) focused on the mundane production of enacting gender embedded in everyday interaction. West and Zimmerman (2009:114) state:

The relationship between sex category and *gender* is the relationship between being a recognizable incumbent of a sex category (which itself takes some doing) and being *accountable* to current cultural conceptions of conduct becoming to - or compatible with the "essential natures" of - a woman or a man. We conceptualized them as an ongoing situated process, a "doing" rather than a "being" (Original authors' italics)

Their perspective assumes a constructionist approach in which the world is socially created through interaction. The focus on analysing micro level interactions to explore how the given nature of the world is accomplished (Kelan, 2010) is consistent with the epistemological and methodological perspective of this thesis.

A complementary but different theoretical perspective was offered by Butler (1990, 1993) whose poststructuralist notion of gendered subjectivity focused on the performativity of gender. Importantly, this marked a conceptualisation of gender as fluid and flexible in contrast to stable and fixed. This focus shifted to exploring gender practices and the processes that frame how gender is 'done' and 'undone' (Deutsch, 2007; Kelan, 2010; Mavin & Grandy, 2011; Nentwich & Kelan, 2013). The conceptualisation of gender operationalised in this thesis acknowledges the centrality of gender as a 'doing' enacted interactionally (West & Zimmerman, 1987), but through a performance marked by fluidity and interactions (Butler, 1990, 1993, 2004).

### **3.2.4 Conceptualisations of 'doing gender'**

Nentwich and Kelan (2013) argue that the conceptualisation of 'doing gender' reflects a shift away from treating men and women as self evident categories towards understanding gender as a social practice. The adoption of the concept of 'doing gender' in this study positions and legitimates this research within feminist theorising. This section will discuss how doing gender has been theorised in the complementary but different work of West and Zimmerman (1987) and Butler (1990, 1993) and how this has influenced subsequent theorising and empirical studies which informed this research process.

Doing gender was originally defined by West and Zimmerman (1987:125) as "a complex of socially guided, perceptual, interactional, and micro political activities that cast particular pursuits as expressions of masculine and feminine 'natures'". They argued that people are already categorised by their sex when they do gender, and are active agents who draw upon a range of learned behaviours to organise their interactional performance. It is not seen as voluntary action but something that is relevant in all social contexts and for which they will be held accountable to the normative conceptions of their audience (Deutsch, 2007; Wickes and Emmerson, 2007). From this perspective social and cultural understandings assume that there are two distinct binary categories of male and female. Importantly they conceptualised gender as a social construction and an 'accomplishment' whereby individuals are 'accountable' to others and a gendered status is 'achieved' through their social interaction. This transformed femininities and masculinities from essentialised properties of individuals to interactional social properties within a system of relations. Their emphasis on gender constituted in situated social interactions and the important part that societal structures, hierarchies and power systems play in framing these interactions is important for this research process (West and Zimmerman, 1987, 2009; Nentwich and Kelan, 2013).

West and Zimmerman (1987) recommended that the focus should shift from gender as an 'achievement' to 'doing gender'. Therefore, as gender activities emerge from, and bolster claims to, membership category then research should focus on "the activities of managing situated conduct in light of normative conceptions of attitudes and activities appropriate for one's sex category" (West and Fenstermaker, 1995 a: 127)

Nentwich and Kelan (2013) report on more recent studies that reflect Butler's critique of the stable categorisation of gender subjectivity and her view of performativity in theorising 'doing gender' as something that is 'said and done' (Martin, 2006). Butler (1990, 1993) argues that discourses provide positions for people to adopt, but that hegemonic discourses restrict the available subject positions and therefore the gender positions that people can occupy. Butler (1990, 1993) argues that it is the meanings aligned to each gender that constitute the category, so that a multiplicity of different understandings is potentially available to each gender.

So the emphasis changed from asking whether one can avoid doing gender to what type of performance is enacted and whether the enactment of alternative performances (gender trouble) is able to change the dominant gender order and the binary understanding of masculine and feminine. Poggio (2006:227) draws upon the work of Kondo (1990) who recommends that rather than just focus on 'accommodation' and 'resistance' in the gendering process that we should consider contradiction, ambiguity and subversion in understanding gendering as emergent, complex and paradoxical.

There are important implications from gender theorising relevant to this research study. Both West and Zimmerman (1987) and Butler (1990, 1993) conceptualise 'doing gender' as a social practice, constituted at the level of interactional performance. Importantly, Butler (1990, 1993) illuminates not only the fluidity of gender subjectivities but the role of context specificity and prevailing cultural norms which is shared by West and Zimmerman (1987) and central to this research process. For Butler (1990, 1993) subjectivities are situationally constructed by the restrictive positions permitted by the prevailing dominant discourses. It is this interactional, performative, situated, but fluid character of conceptualising doing gender that is performed to real or imagined normative audiences that is relevant for this study (Poggio, 2006).

### **3.2.5 Gendered bodies**

Judgements on category membership, for example sex category, are embodied through the production and display of appropriate practices, props, bodily postures and movement. There is increasing interest in the literature in exploring how 'doing gender' is experienced in and through the body e.g. in negating or emphasising maleness and

femaleness; where “the body is not neutral in ‘doing gender’, but rather it is an agent of social practice’ (Messerschmidt, 2009:87). Metcalfe and Rees (2007) draw attention to the body management practices including dress code and demeanour expected of women in organisational contexts. Women are active agents in the construction of their embodied identity, reflexively or non-reflexively supporting or challenging the dominant gender performance codes (Martin, 2006). The body itself becomes a site for mediating and influencing external forces, so that individuals may present a new gendered self through their embodied interactions with others and in doing so create a new organising framework for social interaction (Hall, Hockey & Robinson, 2007).

Importantly, the gendered practices available to individuals are strongly influenced by the contexts in which they live and work (Metcalfe, 2006, 2008 b). Context specific accountability criteria may encourage individuals to act and present themselves in a gendered way sometimes non-reflexively whereas for others there may be a clear reflexive intention to either disrupt or conform to ‘local’ embodied gender practices (Omair, 2009). This is important where particular forms of embodying gender are fundamental to the scaffolding of interactions in everyday social structures and institutional practices (Metcalfe and Rees, 2008). Furthermore, their transgression in deviating from the locally accountable sex-gender congruence (West & Zimmerman, 1987) may threaten local patriarchal inspired social and institutional norms and is potentially punished by punitive social, political even legal sanctions (Messerschmidt, 2009:88). The research participants are occupying positions in a culture which presents distinct cues and images to inform women how they should embody their feminine gender in their dress, demeanour and social relations (see Chapter Two). It is important for us to understand how the research participants interpret and engage with these messages in their daily embodied experience of gendering and its impact upon their social interactions with others.

### **3.2.6 Gender neutral worker**

Acker argues that the gendered logic of organising is predicated on the notion of an “ideal worker” which assumes a “gender neutral, abstract worker who has no body and no obligations outside the workplace: this worker is unencumbered” (Acker, 2012:218). Nentwich and Kelan (2013:9) argue that the espoused rhetoric of gender neutrality in the ideal worker “often means a disguised masculinity”. Men are more likely to be seen as conforming to this disembodied ‘ideal worker’ because women traditionally have done unpaid work that allows men to be ‘unencumbered’. Acker (2012b) argues that this structural separation between production and reproduction creates essentialist cultural normative values that impact on workplace assumptions that influence wide

ranging human resource decisions in the workplace (Parsons, Sanderson, Mills & Mills, 2012). For example, how far are some jobs structured as part time, temporary or as local hires in the context of this study partly to reflect locally gendered cultural sensibilities and partly to avoid obligations on the part of the employer?

### 3.2.7 Geographies of gender

Tatli and Ozbilgin (2012:250) argue that:

the context within which inequalities are constructed has to be the key to the analysis of discrimination and oppression rather than the cumulative formulations of intersecting inequalities. Furthermore, multiplicity of identities and forms of disadvantage in each setting introduce complexity and contextual depth into the analysis of inequality if we are to understand the interplay between different forms of disadvantage

Connell and Messerschmidt (2005:849) in their review of critiques of hegemonic masculinity argued that the concept should be reformulated to reflect an understanding of the geographies of masculinities and femininities. They argue that gender relations can be analysed at three levels including: *local* – constructed in relational spaces for interactions in arenas of families, organisations, communities; *regional* – constructed discursively at the level of nation state; and *global* – created in transnational arenas including world politics, business and media. “Global institutions pressure regional and local gender orders; while regional gender orders provide cultural materials adopted or reworked in global arenas and provide models of masculinity [and femininity] that may be important in local gender dynamics.” Connell and Messerschmidt (2005:849)

The interplay between local and regional gender practices is symbolically constructed particularly through media representations to reflect society-wide gender relations; operating culturally to be “actualized, altered, or challenged through practice in a range of different local circumstances” Connell and Messerschmidt (2005:850).

Similarly to Choo and Ferree (2010) and Anthias (2013a, b), they caution against assuming there is a simple hierarchy of power from global to regional to local and draw attention to the resistance to ideas travelling between the different levels (Connell and Wood, 2005). However, they recognise the increasing potential of global changes including migration to reshape local patterns of gender relations.

Postcolonial feminist theory challenges the application of fixed gender concepts applied uncontested across temporal and historical places and spaces (Holvino, 2010; Leonard, 2008, 2010; Metcalfe and Woodhams, 2012; Mohanty, 2003). As discussed previously feminist theorising understands that ‘othering’ processes vary across time, place and space and that an individual’s or group’s social position is context dependant

(Hulko, 2009) and should be an integral part of analyses (Holvino, 2010). Diverse geographical locations challenge the 'relevance' of gender in all situations (Nentwich and Kelan, 2013). Geographies disturb gender relations; they have the potential to distort the relative dynamics of privilege and oppression experienced by the same individual in the same and different places and spaces (Bannerji, 2001; Hulko, 2009).

Therefore, geographies of gender are understood in the context of this research process in three distinct ways. Firstly, in foregrounding the temporal, spatial and geographical context framing the study. Secondly, in exploring the relationships between these different arenas of analysis which, provide a "cultural framework that may be materialized in daily practices and interactions" in the narratives of the research participants (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005:850). Finally, an acknowledgement that 'othering' processes are context dependant suggests that intersection of gender with ethnicity experienced by the research participants within specific contexts weaves another layer of complexity within the analysis.

### **3.2.8 Dialectical structure and agency**

Anderson (2005:442) argues that one of the greatest contributions of the 'doing gender' perspective and postmodern theory generally is the "return of human agency to gender theory". However, Anderson (2005:443) cautions that such a position can tend to "overstate the degree to which some people are able to resist in some structural contexts". Therefore, she argues in critically examining the source, mechanisms and impact of exercising power at the level of the individual, government and global market. This should acknowledge the dialectical rather than oppositional relationship between structure and agency and particularly its impact on those in the least powerful positions to resist. Anderson (2005:452) argues "Putting feminist analysis in the context of social structures reminds us of the context in which women's (and men's) lives are currently unfolding and that must be the backdrop for understanding gender".

Acker (2012b:219) argues that these gendering processes are maintained at a "less visible level", by gender subtexts of organising and a gendered logic of organization that "link the persistence of gender divisions to the fundamental organization of capitalist societies". Gendered logic refers to the implicit rules and underlying assumptions manifest in symbolic and substantive form about what organizations should be. Furthermore, Parsons et al. (2013:271) report on how these "common sense" broader societal discourses reproduce fundamental structuring of societies and frame women's perceptions of their interactions in the workplace. Acker's (2012) centrality of written and unwritten texts or common practices as evidence of a gender

subtext are elaborated by Benschop and Doorewaard (2012:228) in drawing attention to the “more subtle and complicated” gendering processes that conceal inequality whilst espousing equality. They introduced the notion of a “genderplus subtext” that includes an intersectional perspective that recognises gender as just one category to be explored “and” or “with” other inequalities. Their work reinforces the interplay between the dynamic component processes outlined by Acker (1990, 1993), but importantly draw attention to the role of power in organising and in particular the processes of compliance, accommodation, resistance and counter-resistance. They argue that the attention should focus not only on manifest and latent power (violence, authority or manipulation), but also hegemonic power processes which outline “as a set of subroutines, invisibly steering the less powerful towards compliance and consent.” (Benschop and Doorewaard, 2012:230).

Zanoni and Janssens (2004) argue that minority workers not only experience this collection of controls but also actively comply, accommodate and/or resist these influences. Janssens et al. (2006) identified that expatriate women managers tactically took up different positions to respond to difficulties in the workplace attributed to issues of gender, culture and their organisational status. The intersection of inequalities and agentic processes of compliance, accommodation, resistance and counter-resistance will be explored through the experiences of the research participants in this investigation.

### **3.2.9 Gendered institutions**

Poggio (2006:227) draws attention to the way that gender subject positions are negotiated relationally in a context where dynamic micro-level interactions are enacted within organisations and institutions immersed in macro level historical and political discourses (Acker, 1990, 1998, 2006; Anthias, 2013a, b; Collins, 1990, 1993).

All of these conceptual developments have sought to connect and embed the emergent dynamic of gender within the powerful structural forces of their location. Intersectional theorists (McCall, 2005; Bell & Berry, 2012b) demonstrate the contribution of comparative studies to elucidate the role of state and institutional forces in creating and sustaining inequalities. Acker (1998) outlines the central role of particular male behaviours in maintaining and creating economic, institutional and organisational forms of dominance which inform a powerful critique of ideological, political and economic organising structures claiming gender-neutrality in contemporary societies. Therefore, this research investigation will explore the influence and impact of institutional processes of gendering through an examination of relevant political, legal and

economic explicit and implicit codes, regulations, and laws that provide a framework for the specific context of this study (see Chapter Two). The research process will explore how the research participants' accounts reflexively and non-reflexively embed or resist the influence of these institutional processes in enacting gender in the specificities of this study.

### **3.2.10 Gendered organisations**

Acker's (1990, 1998, 2006) theorising of layered gendering processes in organisations is among the most influential in the field (Benschop and Doorewaard, 2012) and provides a theoretical framework through which we can analyse the usually invisible gendering of organisations. Acker's (2012 b:215) concept of a "gender substructure" outlines "often invisible processes in the ordinary lives of organizations in which gendered assumptions about women and men, femininity and masculinity, are embedded and reproduced and gender inequalities perpetuated...Huge variation exists between organizations and across time and national contexts".

The gendered substructure is created in the organising processes and practices in which inequalities are embedded and reproduced. These processes and practices are sustained by organisational cultures and reproduced in interactions on the job, "shaped in part by the gendered self-images of participants" (Acker, 2012 b: 215). Acker (1990, 1998) introduces four interrelated more visible gendered processes including structure, culture, interaction and identity. For Acker (1990:146) the continuing processes that produce and reproduce the gendered substructure "although analytically distinct are in practice, parts of the same reality" very broad and constantly interacting so that assumptions and practices in one component systemically relate to changes in others.

Acker provides examples of structural arrangements and explicit and implicit rules framing behaviour at work including: job design; wage determination; distribution of decision-making and supervisory power; hierarchical positions, drawing attention to the inequality processes that are "hidden in plain sight" that can "look gender neutral and abstract" (Acker, 2012 b: 216). Benschop and Doorewaard, (2012) argue that structural arrangements also include the way jobs are composed and tasks and work processes allocated.

Organisational cultures includes time and place specific images and symbols, attitudes and beliefs, behaviours and values that explicitly and implicitly direct and justify gender differences in organisations (Acker, 2012 b). These unexamined stereotypical beliefs may shape supposedly gender-neutral practices and definitions of acceptable and unacceptable gendered behaviours (Mavin et al., 2010), so that women continue to feel

silenced and inferiorised by dominant men. Furthermore, this uncritical perspective permeates employee subjectivities so that a culture of denial and invisibility of inequities perpetuates the inequities (Broadbridge and Simpson, 2011). Acker asserts that the cultures of specific organisations are “located in the larger cultural terrain of the surrounding society” (Acker, 2012:216). This is particularly relevant for this research process where culturally defined gender differences are enshrined in country specific legislation, institutional policies and organizing processes that frame workplace practices.

The gendered processes of social interaction produce and reproduce inequities in the workplace (Acker, 2006). They can be formal or informal and operate between individuals or groups in different settings and positions and levels of power, “they may reinforce equality, but they are often the site of affirmation of inequality” (Acker, 2012 b: 216) particularly those that enact domination and submission and create alliances and exclusions. Some of the more visible forms of sexism may not be apparent, but covert assumptions may reappear in ostensibly objective criticisms of women’s capabilities in the workplace. This research process will explore how far sexist interactions have receded in the workspaces that women occupy through the participants’ understandings of their interactions at work.

The final component of the gendered substructure includes “gendered identities” [author’s term] in which people are identified and identify themselves as women and men; these gendered subjectivities are “constructed in the workplace, but also brought with the individual into the organisation” (Acker, 2012 b: 216). Such gendered subjectivities are complex and variable and are formed and changed, embedded within other processes of the gender substructure. Women in management roles may face a “double bind”, criticised for demonstrating both masculinities and femininities (Mavin, 2008). Further intersectional complexity within this research process will explore the participants’ own gendered constructions of their own subjectivities in organising and relational processes.

While Acker’s (1990,1998, 2006) framework clearly positions gender as a social construction (West and Zimmerman,1987) this research process is also informed by Butler’s (1990) nuanced view of gender as an on-going performance that an individual constantly constructs and reconstructs within multiple societal and organisational discourses. Parsons et al. (2012:275) argue that Acker’s framework leaves little place for analysis of the role of external entities in creating the gendered substructure “the gendering of an organisation is not just an internal problem. It is also an interaction of

an external context, other organisations... customers and government, etc”.

Furthermore, they argue that an important dimension of Acker’s work would be to explore the gendered processes as historically and temporally framed. Such a focus could reflect on the performative construction of gendered workplace interactions and has informed the exploration of the contextual factors that shape potentially successful temporal performance of the participants in this research process.

### **3.2.11 Gender contribution to intersectional lens**

Four contemporary seminal reflections on the past and future of feminist research (Acker, 2012 a, b Anderson, 2005; Broadbridge & Simpson, 2011; Harding, Ford & Fotaki, 2013) all identify intersectional analysis of inequalities as a key challenge for prospective feminist theorising. However, different authors take up different positions in their perspective on the balancing of respective categories in feminist theorising. While Anderson (2005) and Acker (2006, 2012 a b) recognise that race and class is anchored in subtexts that are somewhat different from the gender subtext they nevertheless advocate the exploration of demographic analytical subjectivities on a more or less equal footing. Acker proposes analysing processes that embed gender, race and class assumptions in ongoing practical activities through “inequality regimes as a solution to the problems with intersectionality” (2012 b: 219). However, she consistently argues that class processes and hierarchies are always gendered and racialised and class linked individual identities should be examined as a separate factor in inequality regimes (2006, 2012 a, b). In contrast, Broadbridge and Simpson (2011:476) reflecting concerns expressed earlier by Marshall (1995) about diluting feminist core values argue that:

While a focus on diversity opens up new areas for understanding difference and/or disadvantage, there is a danger that the single category of gender disappears into a ‘melting pot’ of intersectional knowledge and meanings. How these meanings cross-cut each other and the implications for women in terms of the way they frame understandings of gender need to be a key focus within gender and management research. This may mean an orientation that gives primacy to gender in acknowledging plurality of differences - i.e. ‘gender with...’ rather than the more equal footing of ‘gender and...’ race, class, age and/or other key categorizations.

This research process reflects a perspective consistent with that of Broadbridge and Simpson (2011) that acknowledges the richness of adopting an intersectional lens that gives primacy to ‘gender with ethnicity’ as a set of practices and experiences of doing gender explored through the experiences of western expatriate women working in the UAE.

This raises the issue of how we can give voice to western women without reinforcing their stereotypical hegemonically privileged position. This dilemma mirrors Broadbridge and Simpson's (2011:476) challenge of researching the normative assumptions of dominant masculinities without reproducing another patriarchally based vision that re-excludes women and femininities. Following their proposal, it is argued here that some of the problems of assumed hegemonic western privilege can be overcome if the exploration of western subjectivity is located within "relations of power" i.e. through integrating personal experiences with the "promise" and "reality" of western privilege. Following Broadbridge and Simpson (2011) a feminist perspective is adopted that focusses on process and struggle around gendered hegemonic western privilege, without continuing to suppress or diminish alternative experiences. What is of particular significance in this study is understanding the intersection of privileged western One subject positions with woman Other positionality in understanding the experiences of the participants in the specific historical, cultural and temporal context of the UEA in this investigation.

### **3.2.12 Gender section summary**

Feminist theorising contributes to the theoretical construction of the intersectional lens in a number of ways. Its first contribution is in its conceptualisation of gender as fluid, flexible and situated, constituted in the interactional social practices of doing gender (Butler, 1990, 1993; West & Zimmerman, 1987). The participants' reflexive and non-reflexive (Martin, 2006) constructions are acknowledged as a dynamic of power relations that are continually reproduced and contested and mediated by broader historical, cultural, political discourses (Anthias, 2013a, b; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Shields, 2008). Component features of organising that create and sustain intersectional gender relations at an institutional, organisational and individual level frame the participants' understanding of their relational subjectivities which are the focus of this research process (Acker, 1990, 1998, 2006, 2012 a b). This investigation reflects a perspective consistent with Broadbridge and Simpson (2011) that adopts an intersectional lens of exploring "gender with race", consistent with Adler's (1987) conceptualisation of the primacy of gender in her work on the 'Third Gender'. The following section will explore the theorising of racial and ethnic concepts particularly relevant to constructing the intersectional subjectivities, positions and practices available to the research participants in this investigation.

### **3.3. Ethnicity**

The previous section explored how the application of an intersectional lens of gender with race would frame the research process (Broadbridge and Simpson, 2011). The

purpose of this section is to provide a critical review of extant research on race to explicate and justify the nature of its contribution to the intersectional lens framing this research investigation. Race and racial theorising within feminist studies will explore key concepts and themes relevant to understanding western women SIEs' experiences within this study.

### **3.3.1 Intersectionality and ethnicity**

This section explicates the theoretical understandings of conceptualising race, ethnicity, nationality, whiteness and difference within feminist theorising, which are woven into the intersectional lens of gender with ethnicity framing this investigation. In exploring racial, ethnic and national subjectivities, feminist theorising include; the work of women of colour and third world feminists drawing from literature in critical race studies (Berry & Bell, 2012; Holvino, 2010; Mane, 2012), migration and ethnicity (Fechter & Walsh, 2010), postcolonial studies (Leonard, 2008, 2010; Woodhams & Metcalfe, 2012)

### **3.3.2 Conceptualising race**

The concept of race has been identified as: internally ascribed (Aspinall & Song, 2013), achieved (West & Fenstermaker, 2002), accomplished (Smith, 2009), constructed or imposed (Collins, 2000; Holvino, 2010). However, they are commonly understood as "key features of people's lives, things that shape their sense of who they are and their projects or life scripts" (Aspinall & Song, 2013:547). Importantly, these constructions reflect the mutually constitutive character of agency and structure, where race implicitly and explicitly informs understandings of lifestyle choices and chances, opportunities and constraints, and racialised scripts of relational behaviour and interactions (Song, 2003) or accountability to their race category (West & Fenstermaker, 2002).

West and Fenstermaker (2002:66) state that attempts to establish race as a scientific concept are redundant as there are no racial criteria to announce race assignment at birth. "Since racial categories and their meanings change over time and place, they are, moreover, arbitrary. In everyday life, nevertheless, people can and do sort out themselves and others on the basis of membership in racial categories." Longhurst et al. (2008:80) argue that 'race' is often placed in inverted commas to signal its "historical dubiousness and its questionable status as an analytical concept".

Irrespective of the scientific utility of the term, race is widely believed to serve as a potent marker of cultural difference, and a racial order whereby observable characteristics are transformed into signifiers of race which legitimises interactional arrangements and accomplishments across arenas of relational activity (West and

Fenstermaker, 1995 a, b, 2002). As a discursive construct the meanings of race differ over time and across public and private spaces (Mane, 2012). These differences, whether they are believed to be grounded in culture or biology, are often manifest in outcomes of racism and racial discrimination (Acker, 2006, 2012 a b; Collins, 2000)

### **3.3.3 Conceptualising ethnicity**

“Ethnicity is understood as socially constructed and includes characteristics such as language, history, or ancestry (real or imagined), religion, and styles of dress” (Giddens, 2001:246). Longhurst et al. (2008:80) argue that sometimes ethnicity is used to put some distance between “historically racist implications of ‘race’ and to emphasise that it is cultural and not biological difference that is the key distinction”.

Ethnicity is understood within this thesis as a relational concept concerned with constructions of self-identification and social ascription, which can usefully be understood as a process of boundary formation that has been constructed, maintained or reconstructed within specific socio-historical conditions (Barker, 2008:249). Al Ariss (2010) argues that there is evidence to suggest that race and ethnicity may be important factors in the workplace and that ethnic minority groups may be subject to discrimination in organisations, a position supported by evidence from feminist theorising (Arifeen & Gatrell, 2013; Berry & Bell, 2012; Holvino, 2010). Syed (2008 a) argues that ethnicity is under-developed in our understandings of people developing international careers. Berry (2009:2) argues that this ‘omission’ reflects the demographic similarity between those who undertake management research and expatriates; Conceptualising nationality

Nationality is a multiple and complex concept; where particular combinations of social histories, political processes and relationships which characterise a nation manifest themselves in contemporary actions of its subjects and citizens (Leonard, 2008, 2010).

While many developed western countries have been characterised as white as in the UK, increasingly their monocultural national identities have been challenged politically, socially and discursively by the ethnic diversity of their populations (Aspinall & Song, 2013). Therefore, people may have complex national, ethnic and citizenship identities. (Leonard 2010:342), asserts “In the debates over nationality that ceaselessly accompany unfolding political events, British people are encouraged to ‘acknowledge that diversity and differentiation are now the hallmark of the national culture’ (Kumar, 2003:260)” so that, not all white people are British, and not all British people are white. Nationality unifies and differentiates simultaneously and reflects the fluidity and contradictions in constructing identities and framing everyday social interactions

(Longhurst et al., 2008). However, there is often a conventionalised set of ways of differentiating ourselves and others according to their nationality and translocational spaces may serve to accentuate an individual's sense of national subjectivity and differentiation with other nationalities (Anthias, 2013a, b ; Leonard, 2008, 2010).

### **3.3.4 Complexity of race, ethnicity and nationality**

Aspinall and Song (2013) conclude that within the UK, race has lost its primary 'very important' attribute position to family and religion in South Asian and Black groups. Aspinall and Song, (2013:547) state that "In Britain race appears to have been undermined by the rise of 'Muslim' identity, the increasing importance of 'mixed race', and the fragmentation of identity now increasingly interwoven with other attributes like religion". Aspinall and Song (2013) suggest that these multiple attributes may be more important amongst the non-white population in this context when its members are confronted by societal norms based on white standards and culture.

This illustrates the complexity of understanding and analysing the temporal shifting constructions of race, ethnicity and nationality (West & Fenstermaker, 1995, a, 2002). Hulko (2009:52) argues that we should be less interested in self-ascriptions but rather focus on socially designated labels that frame processes of subordination and domination.

The understanding of race within this research process is as a highly politicised, polemical term which serves primarily to frame binary constructions of white in relation to an all-encompassing marginalised *other*. Importantly, this perspective illuminates and articulates the historical, political and ideological genesis of colonial oppression and marginalisation predicated on an individual's racial position (Mane, 2012). Paradoxically, this categorical construction of race also presents an illusory, impermeable, fixity to understanding different translocational subjectivities either side of this binaristic territory (Buzanell, 2000; Gunew, 2007). In comparison, ethnicity is primarily constituted as an active relational concept that emphasises the cultural rather than biological distinctiveness of its origins and the contingent and fluid nature of its situated construction (Longhurst et al., 2008; West and Fenstermaker, 1995, a, b 2002). Therefore, the concept of ethnicity rather than race will be operationalised in this investigation where ethnicity is understood as a dynamic, dialogical construction that is primarily constituted by social practice, which creates subject positions and subjectivities within the historical, cultural, temporal and geographical specificities of its location (West and Fenstermaker, 1995, a, b, 2002).

### 3.3.5 Conceptualising ethnicity as doing difference

Building upon the previous section's discussion on doing gender (West and Zimmerman, 1987), the analysis is extended by West and Fenstermaker (1995, a, b, 2002) to explore other intersecting subjectivities as 'doing difference'. Importantly, within a specific context interactants may draw from other categories e.g. ethnicity and religion and their associated attributes in order to construct a new congruent relationship between a sex category e.g. female and another set of attributes and conduct for which they will be held accountable e.g. a western woman. West and Fenstermaker, (1995, a, b, 2002) argue that individuals 'do difference' by creating distinctions among each other in relation to each category. They argue that inferences and consequences of difference are embedded and enacted within structural, institutional and historical circumstances that contribute to the oppressive character of such categories in emphasising differences so that "Ultimately, patriarchy, racism and class oppression are seen as responses to those dispositions – as if the social order were merely a rational accommodation to 'natural differences' among social beings" (Fenstermaker and West, 2002:207)

West and Fenstermaker (2002:210) re-assert in response to Collins' (2002) and Weber's (2002) critique of their lack of emphasis on structural conditions, that focusing on the micro oppressions enacted through everyday interactions "*instantiates and illuminates*" how these systemic forces are "*realised in the unfolding of these relationships*" (authors' original italics). For West and Fenstermaker (2002:98) this evidences how a "few unremarkable actors...are responsible for the force of history, the exercise of institutional power, and enduring social structures". They acknowledge that category appropriate attributes and conduct are embedded in social relations interwoven within broader structural, political, historical influences. Nevertheless for West and Zimmerman (2009:115) "Interactional organization remains the primordial scaffolding of everyday life, whatever other organizational forces impinge on it. The research challenge is to show how these forces mesh, for example, how history intersects with the interaction order".

Their position in foregrounding the micro-interactional arena in the broader context of contingent historical, social and political influences is consistent with the epistemological perspective taken in this research study. Anthias (2013a, b), West and Zimmerman (2009), Smith (2009) and Hulko, (2009) all acknowledge the role of temporal, historical and geographical conditions in changing the subjectivities of social locations. Therefore, West and Fenstermaker (1995, a, b, 2002) emphasis on understanding the processes of oppression i.e. how it is produced through interactional

practices across arenas of social activity, rather than exclusively documenting the effects of these outcomes, is consistent with this investigation. The emphasis on foregrounding the exploration of intersecting subjectivities of gender with ethnicity in doing difference in the interactional practices within the micro arena integrates rather than separates their contingent connectivity with systemic processes of privilege and oppression in other meso and macro arenas in this study.

### **3.3.6 Theoretical framework: Key concepts**

This section explores and illuminates the conceptual understandings of Foreign, Western and White subject positions and how they contribute to the construction of the participants' ethnic subjectivities in this investigation. Furthermore, the conceptual understandings of postcolonial arenas of interactional activity within places, spaces, institutions, organisations and everyday relations will be explored to explicate the influence and impact of the participants' embodied participation constituted in these arenas.

### **3.3.7 Foreign**

What illuminates the salience and distinctiveness of ethnicity is the context. Hulko (2009) illustrates how an individual's ethnic subjectivity is differentially constructed in different translocations. Czarniawska and Sevon (2008) theorised from an historical analysis that foreign women in male dominated professions, in their example academia, didn't suffer from a cumulative double disadvantage, but rather their two types of strangeness may have cancelled out one another or doubled the effect of each for others, permitting these women to be more successful professionally than their native female peers. Their theorising clearly resonates with Adler's (1987) concept of the Third Gender. However, what is striking about their analysis is that they construct the foreign 'transgressor's role as resulting from their 'strangeness' and that focusing on either their gender or their foreignness seems to diminish attention on the other.

Thus the observation, 'She deviates from a proper woman's behaviour', can be countered by, 'Yes, but she is a foreigner'. The observation, 'She does not follow our customs' can be countered by, 'Yes, but she is a woman'

Czarniawska & Sevon, (2008:281).

However, when one type of strangeness did not suffice to explain the other their exemplars resorted to forfeiting one aspect of their strangeness. Czarniawska and Sevon (2008:277) refer to the 'objectivity' of the stranger in framing intersubjective relations with local people which reflect a "particular structure composed of distance and nearness, indifference and involvement' (Simmel, 1950 [1909], p404)". Social

relations with strangers are seen as more abstract than with their own people, a contingent, complex interplay of coolness and curiosity. This investigation will explore how the research participants construct understandings of their foreign intersectional subjectivities and how these experiences resonate with the concept of 'strangeness' (Czarniawska & Sevón, 2008).

### **3.3.8 Western**

Western is subjectivity commonly used in expatriate and migration literatures as reflecting a distinctiveness of the economically developed and more historically politically influential nations in comparison to their Transglobal Other's (Berry & Bell, 2012). Within post-colonial and critical race theorising this is often embedded within contemporary traces of imperial hegemony which sustain systemic institutions and processes of racial marginalisation (Fechter & Walsh, 2010; Woodhams & Metcalfe, 2012).

Hutchings et al. (2013) study on cultural stereotyping of western expatriate women in the UAE is typical of most studies in the expatriation literature which tend to conflate western and Anglo-Saxon, while the unmarked white is conspicuous by its absence (Ahmed, 2004) and ethnicity often expressed as beyond the immediate scope of this study.

In this study we define "Western" women as those who have citizenship in, and identification with, a Western industrialised economy, specifically the Anglo-Saxon countries included within our study... We acknowledge there is significant diversity within these countries... Some of the women interviewed mentioned their ethnic background as part of their responses— however; we did not specifically question them on this aspect of their heritage as it was beyond the immediate scope of our study. Hutchings et al. 2013:300.

The conflation of western and Anglo-Saxon subjectivities in their research participants also serves to obscure the contribution of ethnic diversity explicitly within their analysis, so that any evidence of discrimination related to cultural stereotyping is presented as due to their 'nationality' rather than ethnicity. Hutchings et al. (2013) report that expatriate western women in their study in the UAE highlighted that they face challenges as outsiders which were related more to nationality than gender.

Arifeen and Gatrell (2013) in the UK context, argue that ethnicity and nationality are complex and often contradictory concepts, which can make explicating their contributions in relational arenas opaque and potentially misleading. They also assert that when ethnicity is separated from gender in theorising experiences at work then challenges and issues of ethnic women and their intersectional identities are likely to be ignored and erased.

Similar to other expatriate studies, this investigation was predicated on exploring western subjectivities, and the research participants within this study did share the same western self-ascriptions consistent with Hutchings et al.'s (2013) criteria. However, as the research progressed their white subjectivities emerged in the foreground of the accounts of their interactional performances (see Chapter Five for discussion). This was a homogeneous characteristic of the group and emerged as a social position of distinctiveness in social relations in the context of the study. Within the research process, their national subjectivity was taken into account and prioritised to a lesser extent but used to illuminate distinctiveness in relational subjectivities when relevant. All of the research participants were white women from western developed economies including America, Canada, Australia, France, Republic of Ireland and the UK living and working as expatriates in the UAE.

### **3.3.9 White**

Whiteness crosses boundaries and provides a shared experience of racially structured lives in demonstrating a model of 'elastic whiteness' (Gunew, 2007). In anti-racist feminist theorising colonial and imperial historical and contemporary systems of oppression are strongly associated with whiteness (Mane, 2012; Berry and Bell, 2012). Therefore, for many feminist theorists, the term western is a conflation of 'white colonialism' (Mohanty, 2003). Mane (2012:73) states that whiteness has been characterised as a historically constructed racial identity, a structural racial formation, a location of unmarked privilege, and a property of individuals and subjects. She understands whiteness as a substantive and structural property but frames the "slipperiness of whiteness" (ibid, 2012:74) as a discursive formation, or structuring ideology, and epistemology that produces, secures, and maintains inequalities. Research into 'whiteness', although still 'anxious' in approach (Ahmed, 2004) seeks to acknowledge the role of whiteness as a regime of privilege, power and authority and to expose the ways in which racist discourses and practices work in daily life in constructing subjectivities.

However, Giroux (1997:383) argues that there has been a failure in some of the literature "to capture the complexity that marks 'whiteness' as a form of identity [author's term] and cultural practice". Leonard (2010:342) asserts that whiteness cannot be understood as a "neat package of attributes that is distributed uniformly and evenly across an easily defined white population (Durie, 1999 p.154)". More recent studies have emerged to explore the specificities and limitations of white subjectivities in translocational contexts (Fechter and Walsh, 2010; Lan, 2011; Leonard, 2008, 2010).

In her introduction to a special issue on whiteness in 'Feminist Theory', Gunew (2007:141) stated that recent debates had been dominated by 'black-white' oppositional categories originating in the USA which often appear "to consolidate a type of paralysing stand-off between so-called 'whites' and their 'others' – a model that tends to reinforce those intractable binaries", which Buzanell (2000:83) asserts "eliminates the shifting, socially constructed, and negotiable nature of social membership as well as the kind of language that can bring women together in their fight against the consequences of White privilege".

Gunew (2007) questions how this viewpoint positions indigenous peoples in relation to these debates and asserts the need to move beyond essentialist and over-determined oppositional categories and consider comparative contexts. This perspective reflects a recent trend in whiteness, ethnicity and migration studies to particularise unitary conceptions of whiteness and to distinguish groups that have not traditionally been at the heart of whiteness (the white imperial/capitalist male subject) and to analyse how different groups have differentiated access to both racisms and whiteness. Bonnett (2000) recognises that white identities are historically and geographically located and situation specific; differentiated by nationality, class, gender and age (Leonard, 2010).

This research locates itself within these current debates which aim to explore the 'particularities' of whiteness as they are enacted within specific translocational spaces (Anthias, 2013a, b; Leonard, 2008, 2010). Consistent with Leonard (2010:342) whiteness is understood in this thesis as "a temporally and spatially contingent and fluid category that is ever-shifting and unstable...mutually constituted in relation to other subject positions such as gender, nationality and class". This study does not seek to deflect the historical systemic conditioning of colonial and imperial structural, cultural and political influences on constructing postcolonial white subjectivities (Mane, 2012; Metcalfe and Woodhams, 2012). However, similar to Leonard (2010:342) "more nuanced and subtle understandings of the multiplicities of its historical geographies (Bonnett, 1999), the differences and ambivalences that exist in white identities (Brodkin, 1999), and the diversities within their performances in multiple everyday contexts (Frankenberg, 1993) may help to direct our attention to different forms of white racism and privilege in practice". Therefore, it is not a primary aim of this investigation to interrogate and expose hegemonic whiteness, in order to challenge racist practices, although this may be illuminated in understanding the experiences of the research participants and their relational positioning within these discourses. However, following Leonard (2010) this study does acknowledge that the participants' 'whiteness' is a symbolic and generative feature of the 'particularities' of their lived experiences

(Leonard, 2010; Lan, 2011). Therefore, their reflexive and non-reflexive understandings (Martin, 2006) of their white subjectivities is central in exploring how they themselves make sense of this contested and complex intersecting social positioning in their daily interactions with others. Leonard (2010:342) comments:

There is always an 'unavoidable, complex and contradictory interplay between whiteness as the symbol of authority and dominance, and the material lives of people who are white. That is, there is no straightforward singular relationship between whiteness as a signifier of dominance and authority and the lived experience of white people (Durie, 1999:153).

Therefore, the focus on emerging and uneven white subjectivities in this study is important because, as Leonard argues (2010:356) it suggests that dominant discourses framing subjectivities and performances are more likely to be viewed as "relative rather than absolute (Steyn, 2001)...and underscores the 'heterogeneity, fragmentation, contradictions, cracks, fissures, fractures, incongruities, and inconsistencies' (Prasad, 2003, p. 109) inherent in (neo-)colonialist discourses and subjectivities". Importantly, this reveals discursive spaces for resistance and new discourses to shape and be shaped by the intersubjective performances of intersecting subjectivities within translocational arenas (Anthias, 2013 a, b; Fechter and Walsh, 2010)

### **3.3.10 New post-colonial white subjectivities**

In post-colonial societies there are more nuanced understandings to be explored in the diversity of historical, cultural, economic and political traces and the multiple sites for the enactment of subjectivities in everyday relational arenas (Anthias, 2013; Fechter & Walsh, 2010). Leonard's (2010a: 356) work focuses on the negotiation and construction of what she terms 'new white subjectivities' for expatriates in Hong Kong since 1997. Their co-construction of subjectivities is marked by "ambivalence, contradiction, instability, and fluidity" which serves to "complicate" identities of whiteness and present a "mobile mosaic" (Leonard, 2010b:58) of white subject positions. Leonard (2010a:356) argues that personal biographies are key to understanding the diversity of participants' responses to their whiteness; the complexity of their lives and subjectivities within their home cultures which meant that they arrived with very different identities and ambitions from each other (Hulko, 2009). Leonard's (2008, 2010) work reveals the limits of agency in demonstrating how difficult it is to create coherent and seamless subject positions completely outside the dominant discourses, illuminating the complex and contradictory assumed binaristic divisions between white and other subjectivities to a greater or lesser extent (Fechter and Walsh, 2010). Therefore, relevant literature will be explored within expatriation and

migration studies to illuminate the complexity of the participants' western white women subjectivities in understanding their experiences in the UAE.

### **3.3.11 Gendered white post-colonial subjectivities**

Gender intersects with ethnicity in being critical in co-creating expatriate identities; for white women, their migration often re-positions them in changed relationships of power with men and other members of society, as explored within postcolonial and recent migration studies (Fechter and Walsh, 2010). They may have given up careers, independence and egalitarian relations in support of a male partner's career, and furthermore those who choose to work have to negotiate a discursive landscape framed by patriarchal norms (Yeoh and Willis, 2005b). Their differential responses to this new set of marginalised subject positions are insightful in revealing the complexities of reworking relations and performances of whiteness, nationality and gender and helps to 'shatter the silence' about women at the intersection of organisation and migration theory (Yeoh and Willis, 2005b)

Hutchings et al. (2013:307) report on the complex contingent relationship with dress and appearance with whiteness and nationality in post-colonial settings. They suggest that women may be stereotyped based on their nationality or ethnicity and that some white western women, particularly those who are scantily clad, may be regarded as prostitutes. Sometimes this was inflected with nationality as in Hutchings et al. (2013) study where one interviewee asserted that it was a common prejudice in the UAE that all women of Russian origin would be assumed to be prostitutes.

This was operationalised in this research process by attending to the western, white and to a lesser extent national subjectivities of the participants in this investigation to illuminate where the construction of the distinctiveness of their situated white subjectivities may be enacted in their relational arenas with others including other white western women and men.

### **3.3.12 Geographies of postcolonial subjectivities**

Feminist and ethnicity theorising (Hulko, 2009; Leonard, 2010), has demonstrated how ethnically infused interactions, and the social construction of gendered and ethnicised subjectivities, are situated in translocational spaces (Anthias, 2013a, b). Furthermore, while moving from one translocation to another is always destabilising, it is also complex; full of new constraints and possibilities to reconfigure relations and subjectivities (Leonard, 2008). Additionally, expatriation may be a way of "extending the playing field of entitlement to people who may be 'excluded' at home. In a migratory post-colonial context such as Hong Kong nationality and whiteness can still mobilise

the historical legacy of privileges to override the salience of class” (Leonard, 2008:57). Walsh (2005) supports this finding in the context of her studies in the UAE. Therefore, this thesis understands that the local histories and ethnic dynamic relations are central to understanding how the participants’ western white woman subjectivities are “ongoing, active accomplishments, distinctively produced in context” (Leonard, 2008:47). This was operationalised in this research by exploring the contingent contextual influences particularly in the macro arena which framed the production and positioning of the participants’ subjectivities in this study.

### **3.3.13 Contributions of ethnicity to intersectional lens**

The contribution of ethnicity to an intersectional lens has been illuminated by a review of relevant literature from feminist theorising (Buzanell, 2000; Gunew, 2007) drawing from critical race studies (Ahmed, 2004; Mane, 2012) and postcolonial studies in migration and ethnicity (Fechter & Walsh, 2010; Leonard, 2008, 2010). Theorising conceptual constructions of race, ethnicity and nationality, illuminated a contested theoretical terrain of competing and sometimes contradictory subjectivities (Leonard, 2010). However, consistent with the research aims and epistemological commitments of this thesis, drawing from intersectional and feminist theorising, this thesis argues that ethnicity and nationality are understood as social constructions which are enacted in performances in translocational spaces (Anthias, 2013a, b).

Therefore, this thesis positions itself in current debates in feminist theorising (Buzanell, 2000; Gunew, 2007), in exploring the particularities of white situated subjectivities emerging in translocational spaces (Anthias, 2013a, b). The complex, contingent, multidimensionality of ethnic categories (Aspinall & Song, 2013) contributes to a nuanced understanding of foreign western white subject positioning that shapes individual participant’s social relations in the UAE (Fechter & Walsh, 2010; Leonard, 2008, 2010).

### **3.3.14 Ethnicity section summary**

This section has contributed to the theoretical construction of the intersectional lens in a number of ways. Firstly, it critically examined the contested conceptual constructions of race, ethnicity and nationality and identified that socially constructed conceptualisations of ethnicity were most useful in exploring the racial subjectivities of the participants in this study. Secondly, it explored West and Fenstermaker (1995, a, b, 2002) concept of ‘doing difference’ to extend the focus on ‘doing gender’ in the previous section, to explore gender with race (Broadbridge & Simpson, 2011) subjectivities as reflected in the concept of the Third Gender (Adler, 1987). The

theoretical framework discussed key concepts of foreignness (Czarniawska & Sevón, 2008) and contested theorising on whiteness (Mane, 2012; Gunew, 2007) to explicate a focus on the particularities of white subjectivities which has emerged within gender (Gunew, 2007) and migration with ethnicity literature (Fechter & Walsh, 2010) which will be operationalised in this study. Finally the centrality of place, time and space (Anthias, 2013a, b) was illuminated in exploring postcolonial subjectivities in postcolonial contexts which are central to this investigation of exploring western women subjectivities within the particular scope and focus of this study.

### **3.4. Gender with ethnicity intersectional lens: Implications for this thesis**

An intersectionality perspective requires that subject categories are explored in relation to each other within interpersonal, organisational and structural arenas, while at the same time cognisant of the specific historical and contextual landscape of their social positions (Anthias, 2013a, b; Shields, 2008). However, Risman (2004) cautions us not to assume that processes underlying systems of inequality will be the same between categories when examined within the interactional arenas, particularly within the structural arena.

Forms of intersectionality create unique situations of disadvantage (Crenshaw, 1991), or contradictory positioning (Leonard, 2008, 2010, a, b). This thesis argues that exploring gender with ethnicity frames an interesting dialectical intersecting of complex subject positions. Shields (2008:307) argues that the primary reason gender is used as a starting point in analysis of intersectionality is not to suggest “that gender is always and everywhere the most important social identity, but it is the most pervasive, visible and codified”. This thesis follows Broadbridge and Simpson (2011:476) in constructing an intersectional lens of gender ‘with’ ethnicity to explore the complexities, fluidity and nuances of the participants situated subject positions within the research process.

West and Zimmerman (2009:115) identify three tasks for future researchers to investigate which have informed this research study. First, they encourage further analysis of how categorisation processes “mesh” with the “doing” of gender and difference (Butler, 1990, 1993; West & Fenstermaker, 1995, a, 2002; West & Zimmerman, 1987) which this research explores through examining the lived experiences of western ‘white’ women and how they understand and negotiate the production of their intersecting subject positioning within particular translocational places and spaces (Anthias 2013a, b; Fechter & Walsh, 2010). Their practices, attributes and embodied presentation are evaluated by others (Czarniawska & Sevón, 2008) in relation to the normative conceptions of what constitutes accountability as a

foreign western white woman' in the UAE (Gunew, 2007; Leonard, 2008, 2010). Importantly, Jurik and Siemsen (2009:75) comment "Accountability does not eliminate agency, conscious intent or resistance, but it does contextualise it".

Furthermore, West and Zimmerman (2009) invite further investigation into the impact of different arenas of analyses. This research study adopts an epistemological and methodological perspective (Cunliffe, 2003, 2008), drawing from intersectional and feminist theorising (Anthias 2013a, b; Choo & Ferree, 2010; Collins, 2000) which seeks to understand and articulate the theoretical and empirical consequences of embedding subjectivities within multi arena analyses. This situates understandings of subjectivities 'doing gender with ethnicity' in the micro arena of everyday interactions within organising structures of 'doing work' within broader structural conditions in the macro arena. This resonates with Anthias' (2013 a) concept of arenas rather than levels to avoid 'stacking' and Connell and Messerschmitt's (2005) understanding of the contingent geographies of gender in co-constructing relational and representational subjectivities.

Finally, West and Zimmerman (2009) challenge researchers to examine how changes in structural and historical conditions impact on the social structuring of interactions. Geographies disturb social relations and potentially distort the relative dynamics of privilege and oppression (Hulko, 2009). Furthermore temporal and spatial dimensions have the potential to sustain, mediate or reconfigure social relations within all arenas of social life (Coles & Walsh, 2010). These contribute to produce a dynamic cultural, political and economic framework that has the capacity to scaffold and infuse interactional practices, organising systems and institutional regimes (Acker, 1990, 1998; Collins, 1990, 1993; West & Zimmerman, 1987). Importantly, the specificity of the geographical, temporal, historical and cultural site for this research study provided the opportunity to examine the influence of changes in particular structural conditions which frame the situated complexity of 'doing' gender with ethnicity and the creation and reproduction of the organising framework of interactional intersubjectivities which remain the "primordial scaffolding of everyday life" (West and Zimmerman, 2009:115).

Building on West and Fenstermaker (2002) concept of 'doing difference' the focus in this study is how 'gender with ethnicity' (Broadbridge and Simpson, 2012) is enacted in a specific bounded temporal and spatial translocation (Anthias, 2013a, b). Kelan (2010:180) suggests that what this type of study illustrates is how the "process of accomplishment" of 'gender with ethnicity' order is created out of "social chaos".

This thesis presents an opportunity to explore how the research participants experience this historicised, cultural, structural, chaos in their lives and seek to understand how the accomplishment of their intersecting subjectivities as foreign western 'white' women is held accountable through their daily interactions in both their public and work spaces living in the UAE. The intersectional lens constructed in this chapter will frame the analysis of expatriation and migration studies in the next chapter. This will articulate the second part of the theoretical framework for this thesis in constructing understandings of the participants' SIE subjectivities.

# **Chapter Four: Expatriation-Migration Continuum: deconstructing difference within and between literature domains**

## **4. Introduction**

To understand and analyse the experiences of western women SIEs this thesis starts and locates its understanding of SIEs' from within the field of International Management and specifically Expatriation studies. However, it extends the construction of the second part of the framework to include relevant insights from the study of skilled migrants (SMs') in Migration studies. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a background to the development of, the second part of the theoretical framework that will fuse Expatriation and Migration studies to be applied in this study. To begin to answer the research question:

How do western women self-initiated expatriates understand their experiences in the United Arab Emirates?

The first part of the theoretical framework constructs an intersectional lens of gender with ethnicity (Broadbridge and Simpson, 2011:473) which will be applied to the fusion of the expatriation and migration literature. In doing so, this chapter address the following research objective:

To develop an intersectional lens: to apply to connections between expatriation and migration studies in order to construct an analytical category of SIEs' from both literatures; through which western women SIEs' experiences can be interpreted and which contributes to new insights into intersectionality and the expansion of expatriation studies

This chapter will locate the thesis in relation to expatriation studies and the emergence of SIEs within this body of literature, drawing comparisons with Assigned Expatriates (AEs') which constitute the dominant analytical category in the field. Furthermore, it will extend into migration studies in order to draw comparisons with the construction of skilled migrants (SMs'), emerging within Migration studies. This will enable understandings of the tensions and resonances between the key analytical concepts of AE, SIE and SM in fusing the two fields of literature. This responds directly to a call for the theoretical expansion of expatriation and specifically emerging SIE studies into multidisciplinary fields of shared interests by Ariss et al (2012). The intersectional lens of gender with ethnicity developed for this study (see Chapter Three), constitutes the first part of the theoretical framework and will be applied to the fusion of expatriation

and migration studies to illuminate the second part of the theoretical lens with which western women self-initiated expatriates experiences will be explored. This will reveal and explicate the construction of SIEs within this study as situated social constructions constituted by the intersection of their categorical subject positions as gendered, ethnicised and to a lesser extent classed. In doing so, this responds directly to a call from Berry and Bell (2012: 21) within feminist theorising to explore “women’s lived experiences as expatriates ...as gendered, raced and classed participants of globalizing processes”. The chapter will conclude with a summary of the second part of the theoretical framework which will contribute to our understanding of the experiences of western women SIEs’ in the UAE.

#### **4.1. Literature domains of expatriation and migration**

Berry and Bell (2012:10) state that migration is considered one of the “defining global issues of the early 21st century” and that according to International Organization for Migration (IOM; 2010) there are approximately 214 million or 3% of the world’s population living outside their country of birth; broadly this equates to one in every 35 people in the world being a migrant; of which half are women. Berry and Bell (2012:11) argue that:

Globalisation and migration trends influenced by immigration policies and corporate interests shape the employment landscape for these millions of people who move, many of whom do so expressly for work. Some of them move themselves to other countries to work, finding various positions in various types of organisations on their own. Others are moved by multinational corporations (MNCs) and sent abroad to manage foreign operations.

The movement of people across international borders to work is theorised from two very different bodies of literature, namely international management (IM) and migration (Al-Ariss and Ozbilgin, 2010). Each literature constructs distinct understandings of the people that move across national boundaries for work and refers to them as ‘expatriates’ and ‘migrants’ respectively (Berry and Bell, 2012). The theoretical origins of this study emerge from a foundation in International Management and more specifically in expatriation studies (Harvey and Moeller, 2009). This field is dominated by constructions of expatriates as selected, directed and supported by organisations in undertaking periods of employment in host countries (Scullion and Collings, 2006). However, distinctive lines of enquiry regarding the role of female expatriates (Shortland, 2009) and more recently focusing on expatriates who self initiate their own international employment (Suutari and Brewster, 2000; Biemann and Andresen, 2010) have emerged within conceptual and empirical studies in the field and are particularly relevant to the focus of this research. However, the focus on SIEs is under-researched

and Jokinen, Brewster and Suutari (2008:979) argue constitute “an almost hidden aspect of the international labour market” and that “this dearth of data and analysis is important: not only are SEs a widespread phenomena, but they are, concomitantly, widely used by organizations”.

From a different disciplinary perspective migration theory and more specifically immigration studies focus on the participation of migrants in a global marketplace (Stalker, 2000). Migrants are similarly constructed as people seeking employment outside their home countries, and usually without organisational assignment or support (Al-Ariss and Syed, 2011). However, migration theorising tends to reflect a macro level of inquiry of structural phenomena relevant to labour economists, policy makers, sociologists and geographers (Fang et al 2009, Harvey, 2012, Sanderson, 2010) but, as Parutis (2011) argues rarely cover the individual experience of migrants. Nevertheless, empirical studies exploring the individual lived experience of migrants is emerging (Reitz, 2007) and is also more likely to be covered within the associated field of cultural geography (Walsh, 2005). Parutis (2011) argues that migration theorising in relation to work falls into two categories; low-skilled and skilled migration.

The lack of multidisciplinary research in international management and management and organisation studies inquiry is acknowledged as a weakness in the literature (Metcalf, 2008 a, b; Metcalf and Woodhams, 2012; Ozbilgin, 2009; Williams and Mavin, 2012). Several scholars from IM, including Al-Ariss et al (2012) and Al-Ariss and Syed, (2011) call for an expansion of expatriation studies to include other related disciplines including Migration. Furthermore, there are calls for the international management literature to reflect more critical perspective particularly in examining the role of gender (Metcalf and Woodhams, 2012), ethnicity (Syed, 2008; Al-Ariss, 2010) and class (Berry and Bell, 2012, Acker, 2006). Finally, recent scholars argue for broader intersections in theoretical frameworks, conceptual understandings and empirical studies, including postcolonialism and geographies of power (Holvino, 2010; Berry and Bell, 2012, Metcalf and Woodhams, 2012).

Therefore, this chapter responds to these calls to expand expatriation studies, reflecting a multidisciplinary perspective, which attends to critical perspectives on categorical constructions and connects with studies in postcolonialism and geographies of power.

#### **4.2. Key concepts in expatriation and migration theorising**

This chapter will develop a theoretical framework which will explicate the contribution of both expatriation and migration studies to our understandings of SIEs in this study. This

Expatriation-Migration Continuum framework explains the theoretical understandings that inform the social constructions of difference in expatriates and migrants in relation to gender, ethnicity and to a lesser extent class. It will explore the borderland between these two substantive bodies of literature and identify the subgroups of research participants referred to as SIEs and SMs that are constructed within the dominant frameworks of each theoretical territory yet are evidenced simultaneously in the conceptual and empirical domain of the other (Al-Ariss et al, 2012). It is important to understand how diverse perspectives originating in their respective literature domains are integral to constructing our understandings of expatriates and migrants and more specifically SIEs and SMs (Berry and Bell, 2012). This critical appraisal of key concepts frames and illuminates the contested nature of difference that is explored in our critical understandings of the research participants explored in the focus of this study as western white women SIEs'. The next section will explore the emergence of understandings of SIEs in relation to the expatriation and migration literatures.

#### **4.2.1 Emergence of SIE in expatriation literature**

The expatriation literature is dominated by studies on traditional AEs that are sent and supported overseas for several years on a company assignment (Brewster and Scullion, 2007; Scullion and Collings, 2006). McKenna and Richardson (2007:307) argue:

the consequence of this focus is that research is lagging practice rather than informing it , thus new research agendas need to be developed...to investigate the complexity of issues involved with respect to...the existence of the independent internationally mobile professional (IMP)[authors term]. This is the individual who expatriates without organisational sponsorship, a group who remain largely invisible in research, but of whom there are many thousands circulating throughout the global economy.

Therefore, it would be useful to begin by outlining the emergence of the SIE within the extant expatriation literature and identify how they are differentiated from their AE peers who constitute the vast majority of research in this field (Biemann and Andresen, 2010). More recent research reflects current developments in expatriation to look beyond long term assignments to other types of international work experience (Mayerhofer, et al, 2004) and particularly to those who choose to expatriate independently (Tharenou, 2010; Cerdin and Pargneux, 2010).

Inkson, Arthur, Pringle and Barry (1997) were among the first to describe an alternative to organisationally-initiated international experiences such as AEs, and identified a

separate group of people, namely SIEs independently seeking foreign work experiences. An SIE is understood as an individual who relocates voluntarily to a foreign country on his or her own initiative, i.e. independently of any employer and without organisational assistance, and is usually hired under a local, host-country contract, and not routinely repatriated to their home country or organisation, (Crowley-Henry, 2007; Biemann and Andresen, 2009; Selmer and Luring, 2012; Tharenou and Caulfield, 2010).

Inkson *et al* (1997) originally referred to SIEs' as early phase career individuals with recreational and social motives, and Suutari and Brewster (2000) later expanded the group to include those who chose an international career. Earlier studies tended to focus on formative career years ( Inkson *et al* 1997; Inkson and Myers, 2003), or specific country contexts such as Saudi Arabia (Al-Meer, 1989; Shahid *et al*, 2001) and Singapore, (Lee, 2005), or specific groups e.g. academics (Richardson and Zikic, 2007) nurses (Borzionelos, 2009) and engineers (Suutari and Brewster, 2000). The lack of company support is seen as a defining characteristic in several studies (Biermann and Andresen, 2010; Cerdin and Pargneux, 2010; Suutari and Mayerhofer, 2011). Carr *et al* (2005) argue SIEs constitute a much larger and more significant group than AEs, and therefore their career motivations, including how to recruit, retain and motivate them, are of major interest to employers. However, Howe-Walsh and Schyn (2010) argue that organisations are yet to understand or develop relevant HRM policies and procedures to support SIEs in the workplace. Therefore, SIEs have more recently become established within expatriation and the broader IM literature as a distinct group of expatriates distinguishable from AEs and worthy of further study (Biemann and Andresen, 2010; Cao, Hirschi and Deller, 2012; Jokinen, Brewster and Suutari, 2008; Rodriguez and Scurry, 2014)

#### **4.2.2 Comparing self-initiated expatriate (SIE) and assigned expatriate (AE)**

The analysis of characteristics differentiating SIEs and AEs includes individual background and biographical variables, employer and task variables, motivation, compensation, repatriation, career and organisational support (Inkson *et al*, 1997, 2010; Inkson and Myers, 2003; Suutari and Brewster, 2000; Jokinen *et al*, 2008; Biemann and Andresen, 2010).

The homogeneity of participants in traditional AE studies tends to contrast with the heterogeneity in SIE studies (Suutari and Brewster, 2000). However, while research studies on AE's assume a male norm (Bozionelos, 2009), unless specifically identified as female AEs, SIEs studies seem to suggest significant participation by both genders

(Tharenou and Caulfield, 2010). Andresen, Biemann and Pattie (2012a) argue that there is a higher proportion of women reflected in recent studies on SIE's; however, unless specifically identified by gender there is still the tendency to present studies dominated by male samples as the norm. Harvey's (2012) recent study includes a research sample of 85% males presented as the 'norm' for SIEs within the study without any consideration of how gender of the sample may have been a factor for consideration.

SIEs are differentiated from AEs s by their diverse professional backgrounds and positions (Richardson, 2009); and their career typology in that they are said to present a 'boundaryless' (Inkson and Myers, 2003) or 'protean' career (Hall, 1996) as opposed to an 'organisational' one. Protean career theory argues that "individuals assume responsibility for their careers by demonstrating self-directedness and whereby career success is a personal conceptualisation, not externally formulated (Altman and Baruch, 2012:245). Compared to AEs, SIEs have strong intrinsic career motivations and personal goals to go abroad (Doherty et al, 2011; Harvey 2012). SIEs are theorised as demonstrating high levels of personal agency in driving their international careers (Tharenou, 2008, 2010). Therefore, several studies suggest that self-initiation seems to manifest agentic and proactive career behaviours as reflected in theorising around 'protean careers' (Briscoe et al., 2006; Eisenhardt, 1989; Hall, 2004; Crowley-Henry, 2012).

More recent studies are beginning to draw attention to some of the limitations and constraints for SIEs'. Rodriguez and Scurry, (2014:16) challenge the notion that self-initiation always leads to career capital accumulation and that conversely, contingent forces in the macro arena constrain agency and may result in "career capital stagnation". Altman and Baruch (2012:234) highlight the neglected undercurrent of "chance" in charting contemporary careers (Chen, 2005) and increasing attention to the emergence of 'risk' reflective of a new career 'logic' (Hall, 2004), whereby individuals grant themselves the opportunity to experiment with new possibilities.

This propensity for self-initiated expatriates to be more open to new opportunities is reflected in the literature; however, Richardson and Zikic (2007) draw our attention to the inherent 'dark-side' in self-initiating such opportunities without company support for SIEs'. Richardson (2009) outlines how organisations are keen to recruit expatriates internationally and locally but are often unwilling to adjust their policies for SIEs and that structural forces including immigration policies can constrain their choices and opportunities. SIEs may be required to do jobs that don't suit their qualifications when

they can't get appropriate visas and work permits (Inkson and Myers, 2003). SIEs compared to AEs demonstrate weaker on the job embeddedness to their employers as their motivation is primarily to self, immediate family and their overall wellbeing than the organisationally bound career motives (Crowley-Henry, 2007, Doherty et al, 2011). Importantly, their work subjectivity is built around a portfolio of skills and competences rather than a job or specific organisation context, and they are more prepared to make inter-organisational and international job moves than their AE peers (Mirvis and Hall, 1994, Banai and Harry, 2004, Biemann and Andresen, 2010). SIEs tend to start their international career at a younger age, expect higher benefits from their international experience for future careers and sustain a relatively stable career orientation at different ages, whereas it declines in AEs with increasing age (Biemann and Andresen, 2010). Harvey and Moeller (2009) outline the comprehensive range of organisational support, compensation and benefits provided to AEs in stark contrast to Howe-Walsh and Schyns (2010) recent study which identified the distinct lack of HRM policies and practices provided for SIEs. Therefore, the emergent literature in expatriation has demonstrated the value of exploring the distinctiveness of SIEs compared to traditional AEs and identified gaps in our understanding of the implications for individuals and organisations (Andresen et al, 2012 a, b, c; Cerdin and Pragneux, 2010; Doherty et al, 2011)

#### **4.2.3 Comparing self-initiated expatriate (SIE) and skilled migrant (SM)**

More recently several authors from IM (Al-Ariss and Syed, 2011; Al-Ariss, Koall, Ozbilgin and Suutari, 2012) have chosen to discuss the “apparent disconnection between immigration and self-initiated expatriation” (Al-Ariss and Ozbilgin, 2010:281) and problematised the differences between the constructions and literatures on SIEs and SMs. Al-Ariss (2010:339) comments that the difference between the terms ‘skilled migrant’ (SM) and ‘self-initiated expatriate’ (SIE) are “blurred” in the literature. He compares them on four main features: their geographical origin and destination, the forced/chosen nature of their mobility, the period of stay abroad, and the symbolic status of a ‘migrant’ as compared to a ‘SIE’ in a host country.

The first comparative feature is their geographical origin and destination where migrants are presented as moving from developing to developed countries (Baruch et al, 2007;Doherty and Dickman, 2008) in contrast to SIE’s seemingly boundaryless exploration in any direction (Inkson and Myers, 2003; Richardson and Zikic, 2007). However, some studies on SIEs do not use this distinction (Fitzgerald and Howe-Walsh, 2008). Al-Ariss (2010:341) argues that the term migrant “seems to imply a meaning of necessity, more than a choice” which contrasts with the relative ease with

which SIEs are free to choose and change their destinations (Tharenou, 2010). However, this is not as straightforward as suggested, as most countries have immigration policies and restrictions that may impact negatively on people from other western countries in favour those from local countries e.g. Gulf Cooperative Council (GCC), Marmenout (2010).

SMs may choose to remain abroad for cultural, career and economic reasons (Parutis, 2011; Rodriguez and Scurry, 2014). SMs are primarily presented as motivated to find permanent jobs and perhaps residencies in the developed economies and may choose to stay (Carr et al., 2005, Al-Ariss and Ozbilgin, 2010), whereas, SIEs' experiences are presented as more 'temporary' residencies with 'no definite time frame in mind' (Tharenou, 2010:76). It is suggested that SIEs are somehow more insulated to local and global social and structural restrictions imbued in their 'temporariness'. However, more recent research explores how vulnerable SIE's are to the risks and uncertainties of a temporary residency status and challenge this as defining SIE characteristic (Richardson, 2009, Richardson and Zikic, 2007: Scurry, Rodriguez and Bailouni, 2013). The fluidity of this mobility feature can lead to definitional ambiguities in the terminology as both groups exhibit similar and differentiating features in this regard. Indeed, many SIE's choose to stay in their host country indefinitely and effectively become permanent skilled migrant workers, with access to different degrees of residency and citizenship rights (Al-Ariss and Ozbilgin, 2010).

Both SMs and SIEs are theorised as demonstrating high levels of personal agency in driving their international careers and participating in career self-management behaviours such as initiating training and development opportunities, gaining additional qualifications and work experiences (Al-Ariss & Ozbilgin 2010; Dickmann and Baruch, 2011; Fang et al 2009). Ariss and Syed (2011:295) explore the different forms of capital (social, cultural, economic and symbolic) evidenced in the skilled migrant expatriation process. Importantly 'symbolic capital' reflects power gained or inherited by individuals through the accumulation and deployment of any form of capital legitimated and valued by society, formed through the "shared meanings of value" (Ozbilgin and Tatli, 2005:862) within and between societies. This reflected authority is central for the deployment of all other forms of capital: this is consistent with concepts of privileging and marginalising ethnic social location discussed in chapter three. Al-Ariss (2010) argues there is an implicit distinction between the symbolic status of a migrant and an SIE in a host society; where the term immigrant is imbued with negative connotations (Sayed, 2004). Al-Ariss and Ozbilgin's (2010) research with Lebanese SMs in France identified the lack of institutional support, administrative difficulties and

discriminatory behaviours which resulted in downward career mobility and employment in jobs for which they were overqualified. Although, as Lee's (2005) study of western SIEs in Singapore demonstrates, underemployment is not restricted to only those relocating from developing countries.

From the perspective of IM literature Al-Ariss and Ozbilgin (2010) and Al-Ariss et al (2012) argue that theorising on SIEs and SMs ignore some of the important contributions of each other to the detriment of both. They argue that SIEs, especially those who chose to remain on a more or less permanent basis in host countries, can also be considered as SMs. Furthermore, they are among several IM authors who seek to differentiate between the two groups but also bridge the literature between them, to deepen our understanding of those translocational spaces they cohabit but in which they construct and make sense of their experiences from very different perspectives (Al-Ariss and Sayed, 2011; Al-Ariss and Ozbilgin, 2010).

Overall, the similarities between SM and SIEs are more prevalent than their differences and following the work of other IM scholars (Al-Ariss et al, 2012; Cao et al, 2012, van de Bergh and Du Plessis, 2012) this thesis argues that the integration of the literature and empirical studies that may use the terms SM rather than SIE can make an important contribution to enriching and expanding the field of international mobility and this specific research project on SIEs.

Therefore, the theoretical framework for this thesis is informed by the convergence of theorizing on SIEs that is situated in expatriation studies but extends to include those which draw from conceptual and empirical studies in SMs. However, while this provides a critical review of the extant literature to explicate the construction of SIEs within this thesis, it is important that in line with the second research objective, that we apply an intersectional lens (McCall, 2005) to this body of work, to illuminate the critical understandings of gender, ethnicity and class embedded in their production and performance of SIE subjectivities.

#### **4.3. Deconstructing *difference* in understandings of expatriate and migrant**

There are several authors who have been arguing for the international management literature to reflect a more critical perspective particularly in examining the role of gender (Janssens et al, 2006), race (Syed, 2008; Al-Ariss, 2010) and class (Berry and Bell, 2012, Acker, 2006) and more recently their intersection in theoretical frameworks, conceptual understandings and empirical studies (Holvino, 2010; Berry and Bell, 2012) in global mobility.

The intersectional lens (see Chapter Three) outlined the theoretical understanding of categories of gender and ethnicity as social constructions, marked by fluidity, enacted performatively and accomplished relationally (Butler, 1990; Leonard, 2010; West and Zimmerman, 1987). Class is one of the core categories of social stratification (Mikula, 2008), and is considered here, as it features strongly in migration literature. For Acker (2006:68) class is ultimately about inequality and “stands for practices and relations that provide differential access to and control over the means of provisioning and survival”. Mikula (2008:25) argues that more recently class has been redefined beyond economic terms “to be focused on the social as open and constituted within multiple discourses’.

Holvino (2010) refers to the ways in which gender, ethnicity and class relations are built into organisational structures and processes, which are normalised to produce and reproduce inequality and privilege, through processes of normalising and othering. Berry and Bell (2012) develop and apply this argument to the international management literature on expatriation, proposing that ethnicity, class and gender are built into multinational corporations (MNCs) organisational structures and globalisation processes. Berry and Bell, (2012:11) problematize the concept of ‘expatriate’ to show how the dominant discourse and research in international management (IM) on only one group is “normalized to produce and reproduce inequality and privilege” across intellectual and international domains. They emphasise the virtually identical dictionary definitions of the terms ‘expatriate’ and ‘migrant’, which contrasts with their differential construction in the International Management and Migration literature, and cite the significant absence of the term ‘migrant’ in articles in leading International Management journals in contrast to other disciplines. The term ‘migrant’ is rarely used in the International Management (IM) literature generally or the expatriation literature in particular (Bell and Berry, 2012; Al-Ariss, 2010; Al-Ariss and Ozbilgin, 2010). However, in contrast, the term ‘migrant’ is used extensively and sometimes interchangeably with ‘expatriate’ outside of the IM literature (for example see Leonard, 2008; Yeoh and Khoo 1998). Bell and Berry (2012:12) argue that a consideration of the differences between the definition and usage of these terms across disciplines helps make “visible the invisible”. It helps illuminate how these gendered, ethnicised and classed constructions are legitimised by scholars’ focus on expatriates and their generative status differences with Others employed by the same MNC’s. While the existence of the categories of difference of gender, ethnicity and class are broadly implied to different degrees within both expatriation and migration literature there are sharp contrasts in the manner of their construction and explication within each.

This section will contribute to the first research objective to critically review the expansion of the fused expatriation and migration literature through the lens of intersectionality. By critically evaluating understandings of expatriate and migrant within their original literatures, and reframing them to illuminate the focus on difference constituted by gender with ethnicity (Broadbridge and Simpson, 2011: which directs this investigation on exploring the experiences of western women SIEs' in the UAE.

#### **4.3.1 Understanding constructions of *difference* in 'expatriate'**

Berry and Bell (2012:14) argue that any consideration of gender, ethnicity and class as an analytical lens are conspicuous by their absence in the expatriation literature, where white men dominate the conceptualization of expatriates.

[T]he British engineer working for a multinational oil company in Trinidad is a British expatriate..., [an] outsider, but not an inferiorized other (Jones, 2008, p763).

Three key words in the description of this person point out some of the unspoken reasons why he would not be inferiorized...British, engineer and expatriate. 'British' reads 'Anglo-Saxon' ...attesting to the perceived (and actual) whiteness of most expatriates in the IM literature...'engineer' carries a general expectation that the person holding this job is a man, making it unnecessary for the author to mention this...That 'women expatriates' are referred to as women expatriates speaks to their continued outsider status...Along with male, engineer also indicates well-educated, a class difference. Were class, race and sex more visible among expatriates it would have been necessary to say in the opening statement 'the well-educated, high status, white, male British Engineer' rather than simply 'the British Engineer?'

Berry and Bell (2012) draw from Jones (2008) in understanding that categorical characteristics have the potential to create outsider subjectivities, which is prevalent in migration studies. Importantly, Jones (2008:762) argues that "inequality is itself unequal and, indeed, that inferiorisation is not an essential characteristic of being an outsider but rather is inscribed by gender, class, ethnicity, race, and postcolonial positioning". Therefore, the discursive construction of outsider positioning can delineate a privileged One or marginalised Other subjectivity. This thesis argues that it is the contingent, contextual and relational influences dialectically interwoven within multiple arenas of translocational spaces that frame outsiders as One or "inferiorised" Other (Jones, 208:763). This theme will be developed in the construction of the theoretical framework for this study.

Expatriates comprise a small minority of the people moving across borders to work (Harzing and Christensen, 2004; Jokinen et al, 2008). Their race or ethnicity are not always reported in empirical expatriation studies, and rarely used as an analytical framework (Ariss and Syed, 2011). They are largely assumed to be white (Leonard,

2008). Even in the migration literature when the term 'expatriate' is used it implicitly and explicitly suggests 'white westerner' (Fechter and Walsh, 2010). Indeed, Leonard (2008:58), drawing from global migration literature in her study of 'gender, whiteness and Britishness in post-colonial Hong Kong, justifies her use of the term 'expatriate' as opposed to 'migrant' in her notes by stating:

The term 'expatriate' is broad and somewhat contested. It is usually used by (white) Westerners who have lived abroad for various lengths of time. In Hong Kong many British people refer to themselves, and other white migrants, as expatriates, and for this reason I adopt the term here.

The traditional expatriates work in MNCs in various industries, and are employed as executives, managers and professionals who are well compensated and receive significant benefits and organisational support (Harvey and Moeller, 2009; Hutchings et al 2008). They are primarily male, only 15% females (Altman and Shortland, 2008), and a higher percentage of women included in a study is often noted with interest (Altman and Baruch, 2012). Primarily, they are represented in the expatriation literature as originating from developed western Anglo-Saxon countries and expatriating to developing and developed host countries (Ariss and Syed (2011); Selmer, 2001), although there are increasingly exceptions (e.g. Tung, 2008). They are generally highly educated and skilled as reflected in their executive and professional roles (Altman and Baruch, 2012).

Berry and Bell (2012:19) argue that MNCs focus on profit drives the creation and maintenance of gendered, ethnicised, class processes through their structured labour markets that sustain unequal social and economic processes and are critical determinants of the composition of expatriate and migrant flows. Organising processes including HR policies and practices support some, namely AEs' but not Others in the same organisation. Berry and Bell (2012:19) conclude that "the roles of expatriates thus fit well within class processes- the management and control of MNC global operations and the associated labour of workers". Although acknowledging that expatriates themselves are exploited by the class system controlled by MNCs, Berry and Bell (2012:20) argue that IM scholars also participate in these class processes and help maintain and normalize the constructed inequalities by focusing on the needs of particular groups of workers to the exclusion of others. Therefore, constructions of expatriates are implicitly classed as One and central to debate in expatriation literature (Acker, 2006).

The most significant critical development within the expatriation literature has been the challenge to the prevailing 'male norm' which fuelled the emergence of female

expatriation (FE) as a distinct tract of study in this field (Altman and Shortland, 2008; Shortland, 2009). Company assigned expatriation has dominated the literature where expatriates have traditionally been male and consequently studies to date have typically reported the experiences of male expatriates and their families (Selmer and Leung, 2003 a, b).

Adler (1979, 1984a, 1984b, 1985, 1987, 2002) is recognised as providing foundational research in this field exploring the unique and gendered experiences of female assigned expatriates (AE) which has been developed subsequently by many authors (Napier and Taylor, 1995; Forster, 1999; Tung, 2004; Shortland, 2009; Suutari and Mayerhofer, 2011). Adler's work started in analysing the 'myths' for women's low participation in expatriation; her work was developed by herself and others in the 1980's to focus on why they were not expected to succeed abroad and consequently not selected. The 1990's focused on whether women were as interested as men, and whether corporate policies and procedures were discriminatory (Forster, 1999; Linehan and Walsh, 1999a). More recent work has explored the impact of international experience on careers (Biemann and Andresen, 2010; Crowley- Henry, 2012; Cao et al, 2010). Current research replicating previous studies suggests that little has changed in the experiences of contemporary female expatriates (Volkmar and Westbrook, 2005). Shortland (2009) provides a comprehensive summary of the key theoretical insights which have informed research on female expatriation.

Several authors have identified gender as a significant differentiator in the expatriation literature (Cole and Mc Nulty, 2011; Forster, 1999; Hofbauer and Fischlmayr, 2004; Janssens et al, 2006; Mayerhofer & Scullion, 2011; Napier and Taylor, 2002; Tung, 2004, 2008; Westwood and Leung, 1994). Al-Ariss and Ozbilgin (2010:276) have argued that SIE studies have "remained silent" with respect to gender, with notable exceptions including Myers and Pringle (2005) and Tharenou's (2002, 2003, 2008, 2009, 2010) work on exploring motivations to expatriate. Myers and Pringle (2005) found that SIE women accrued more benefits from their international experience than men. Therefore, studies with a gender focus from the female expatriation and emerging SIE literature have relevance in theorising the experiences of the SIE female research participants in this study. However, as Berry and Bell (2012:21) point out apart from gender and numbers these female AEs are very similar to their male counterparts in socio-economic and cultural terms.

In contrast, participants' ethnicity is not always reported in empirical studies or discussed conceptually in expatriation theories (Ariss and Syed, 2011), and the author

has not identified any studies in expatriation literature that expressly examine the contribution of class. Al-Ariss and Ozbilgin (2010:276) argue that emergent SIE studies have a tendency to ignore ethnicity particularly the experiences of skilled migrants from developing countries. Their studies on Lebanese SIEs in France are insightful in exploring the impact of gender and ethnicity and they conclude:

The intersectional impact of ethnicity and gender in France has been considerably more detrimental to Lebanese female than male workers, forcing them out of the labor market. The position of Lebanese women in the labor market is rather precarious, as they suffer from invisibility as ethnic minority labour and as female workers, which makes their conditions doubly challenging. Gender issues need further investigation in the self-expatriation literature if countries and organizations want to ensure ethical treatment of employees and ensure that they benefit from their international labor force (Vance et al., 2006)

Several SIE researchers (Al-Ariss et al, 2012; Syed, 2008; Syed and Ozbilgin, 2009) acknowledge that SIE research does not generally focus on the experiences of ethnic minorities or prioritise ethnicity as a research factor and this omission is recognised by Indeed Al-Ariss et al (2012:94) comment that the SIE literature “remains a bastion of white skilled migrants from developed countries and fails to consider skilled migrants from non-white backgrounds and from developing countries”.

The issue of ethnicity has been explored within the expatriation literature and more recently SIE literature in the context of understanding the cross-cultural adjustment of primarily western expatriates and SIEs in host cultures (Froese, 2012; Peltokorpi and Froese, 2009). To a lesser degree but more significant for this study, the issue of ethnicity has been addressed particularly in the broader expatriation literature in connection with expatriates' relationships with host country nationals (HCNs'), (Adler, 1987; Tzeng, 2010; Varma *et al*, 2006). Generally, the studies are of western expatriates but there are exceptions that report on non-western expatriates travelling to western countries (Varma *et al* 2011). Perceptions of expatriates by HCNs' are rarely reported. Al Ariss (2014) recently reported on the perceptions of Emirati managers on the diversity of expatriates in the UAE, and concluded that they contributed to ethnic stereotyping in the workplace and sustaining a stratified ethnic dynamic in social relations. This is relevant for this investigation and will be included in the theoretical framework. Therefore, the contribution of relevant studies that identify ethnicity as an analytical variable from the expatriation and SIE literature even from the perspective of 'host' culture or 'third country nationals' (TCNs) have been included as part of the theoretical framework for this study (Varma *et al* 2006). Importantly, however, these studies tend to represent the study of ethnicity as a variable and rarely, as an analytical

lens to critically examine the experiences of ethnicised expatriates in their host countries, cultures and organisations.

Class is not explicitly acknowledged as a construct that differentiates within the expatriation literature as all expatriates whether AE or SIE are implicitly assumed to share privileged high status occupations and socio-cultural positions even within their host societies (Ariss and Syed, 2011). In contrast, gender has been conceptualised as a significant characteristic of difference in expatriation studies (Shortland, 2009). Therefore, this study will extract and build upon the gender lens particularly from the female expatriation literature and apply this to the study of female SIEs within this thesis. Furthermore, empirical evidence demonstrates that ethnicity has been given sparse and circumscribed attention in the expatriation and SIE literature and particularly its intersection with gender (Al-Ariss and Ozbilgin, 2010). Therefore, ethnicity, and paucity of attention to whiteness (Gunew, 2007) is considered an important characteristic of difference worthy of further exploration in understanding the lived experiences of the western white women SIEs participating in a host Middle East culture in this research study (Al-Ariss, Koall, Ozbilgin and Suutari, 2012; Bell and Berry, 2012; Leonard, 2008).

Significantly, the convergence of the expatriation and migration literature on conceptualisations of SIEs and SMs has been outlined in the previous section. Therefore, it is important to explore the understandings of migrants originating within the migration literature through an intersectional lens to illuminate the characteristics of *difference* embedded in their construction.

#### **4.3.2 Understanding constructions of *difference* in 'Migrant'**

Berry and Bell (2012:15) provide us with another illuminating vignette drawing upon the work of Jones (2008:763) which in comparison to the expatriate description cited earlier makes ethnicity, gender and class explicit:

However, the female factory worker from Aruba who migrates to Holland to work is constructed as other and is inferiorized.

...As with the British Engineer the description of this person points out some of the unspoken reasons she would be treated as an inferiorized other; female, factory worker, from Aruba, who moves (herself) for work. That she is female points out her membership in a devalued group, as does her work in a factory, which suggests she is low-skilled and low paid. That she is from Aruba suggests that she is of colour, which is also a devalued status. That she migrates herself suggests that she comes of her own volition, rather than being moved by an MNC, further indicating a less valued status. Thus her race, class and gender are apparent.

Migrants are often presented in the migration literature as people of colour from non western developing countries (Jones, 2008:762) half of whom are women (IOM, 2010). They work in sex-segregated positions where capital intensive occupations are dominated by males and labour-intensive occupations dominated by females (Caraway, 2007). They are often classed as low skilled or semi-skilled, although noting Kofman and Raghuram's (2005:150) challenge to the "problematic definition of skills", where its gendered use means that work in which women dominate is often referred to as semi-skilled. Migrants particularly women, work with low wages and status, few if any benefits and minimal support from their employing organisations. This section will discuss the construction of migrants as classed, gendered and ethnicised within the migration literature.

Parutis (2011) states that migration theory in relation to work falls into two categories: skilled and unskilled (or low skilled) migration. The experiences of these two groups of migrants are often presented as divergent and definitional complexity particularly of SMs features strongly in the literature. Fang et al (2009:472) refer to Immigrant Professionals (IPs) Iredale (2005:8) emphasizes a university level qualification or equivalent professional experience, however, Remennick (2012:2) states this should be augmented with "the ensuing ability to work in a white-collar or "knowledge-based" occupation, for example representing "15.2 per cent of all college-educated persons in the US civilian labour force (Batalova *et al.*, 2008)".

Importantly Remennick (2012:2) reports that only a minority (10–15%) of skilled immigrants resettle in Western countries via arranged employment schemes, while the majority have to navigate host labour markets on their own. Iredale (2005) reports on how SMs can gain good local wages. However, numerous studies illustrate how qualifications or experience from a migrant's country of origin does not guarantee similar work roles in other countries, and often lead to underemployment (Ramboarison-Lalao et al 2012). Remennick (2012:2) argues that there are several factors that contribute to this situation including; the rising skill levels of native populations, resulting in higher competition for the available jobs, a lower market value of human capital acquired abroad, difficulties of evaluating foreign credentials from the employers' standpoint and tacit institutional racism (Chiswick and Miller, 2008; Czedo, 2008). In stark contrast these issues are rarely reported in expatriation or SIE literature (Al-Ariss and Ozbilgin, 2010; Al-Ariss et al, 2012), apart from studies discussed previously including Rodriguez and Scurry, (2014).

Conradson and Latham (2005a:229) propose the term “middling transnationalism” to reflect this migration process for SMs, and Smith (2005:8) refer to such people as “those who occupy more or less middle class or status positions in both their home and host country”. Writing in the IM literature Al-Ariss (2010:339) prefers to use the term migrant or skilled migrant when referring to similar participants in his study as this term reflects the long-term stay of the Lebanese participants and importantly emphasizes their ethnic and minority status within a host country.

The economic perspective on structural forces in migration has dominated theorising and empirical studies in migration. Therefore class is a dominant characteristic of difference within migration literature to identify groups of low-skilled and skilled migrants (Remennick, 2012). Recent migration literature evidences increasing interest in understanding the experiences and challenges of SMs’ (Peisker and Tilbury, 2007). Within the migration literature ethnicity is clearly theorised as a characteristic of difference that is embedded and shared among different understandings of what constitutes a migrant (Al-Ariss and Syed, 2011; Peisker and Tilbury, 2007). Furthermore, there is an emerging rich stream of studies which explore postcolonial white subjectivities which is directly relevant in this study (Fechter and Walsh, 2010; Lan, 2011). In contrast, Berry and Bell (2012) argue that attention on exploring the influence of gendered understandings of migrants has only emerged relatively recently in the migration literature and is worthy of further investigation (Pessar and Mahler, 2003; Remennick, 2005; Resurrection and Smajor, 2010).

Berry and Bell (2012) argue that until relatively recently gender was ignored in the migration literature, although the last ten years has seen evidence of increasing attention in the field (Pessar and Mahler, 2003, Remennick, 2005). Berry and Bell (2012:16) report that migrant women workers are often subject to gender-specific labour discrimination, including pre-employment testing, sexual harassment and contract termination on pregnancy. The women migrant workers working and living conditions serve to preserve and sustain gender inequality in macro, meso and micro arenas and are invisible in expatriation and wider International Management research (Berry and Bell 2012; Metcalfe and Woodhams, 2012). Resurrection and Sajor (2010) acknowledge that traditionally gender research in migration focuses on structural forces that shape the migration processes which are gender selective, e.g. for specific labour markets, and produce gender differentiated outcomes. However, more recent work, including their own explores how the subjective perspectives of female migrants guide their actions and choices. Following Butler (1990), they understand “gender and migrant identities as not just emerging from a particular place or context but as being

constituted in place. Practices of work thus call forth both gendered identities and places” (Resurrection and Sajor, 2010:104). Furthermore, they argue that labour markets are constituted through discursive and cultural meanings in addition to economic and structural processes which shape migrant identities (Resurrection and Sajor, 2010).

Ethnicity is evidenced in migration theory and research and serves to challenge the dominant economically driven labour market theories of migration. Peisker and Tilbury (2007:60) are typical of such studies which examined the effects of ethnicity or as they prefer “visible difference” on employment outcomes for migrants. Peisker and Tilbury (2007) reject neo-classical rational economic explanations that argue labour markets are ethnically blind and adopt a critical perspective which identifies that structural and interpersonal racism explains the differential employment outcomes for different groups of migrants. Migrants from Africa and the Middle East in Australia, had very high average human capital in comparison to other migrants and the general population, yet compared unfavourably in employment outcomes to their less visibly different peers from Yugoslavia with lower human capital.

This supports the argument that ethnicity and country of origin are salient characteristics in the construction of SMs in migration studies. In the SM literature, the specific ethnicity of the participants is more commonly used as a defining characteristic and analytical lens through which their experiences are explicated and theorised (Al-Ariss and Syed 2011). The characteristic of ethnicity is embedded in understandings of migrants particularly as ‘ethnic minorities’ coming from ‘developing countries’ and is theorised as a characteristic of difference shared by all groups of migrants within the migration literature.

Migration scholars have demonstrated how migrants’ experiences, and the social construction of gendered and ethnicised subjectivities, are situated in translocational spaces (Anthias, 2013, a, b) although the term migrants and expatriates are used interchangeably (Leonard 2008). Different expatriates position themselves differently in terms of their nationality and ethnicity particularly as it draws from discourses of whiteness imbued with notions of privilege and entitlement (Lan, 2011; Leonard, 2010; Walsh, 2005). However, there are significant challenges and constraints in seeking to reconstruct consistent alternative subjectivities and renegotiate interpersonal relations outside the dominant global colonial and local understandings of whiteness and gender which weave through everyday social and working lives (Hulko, 2009; Leonard, 2010a).

A special issue of whiteness in postcolonial contexts in the journal of Migration and Ethnicity edited by Fechter and Coles (2010) demonstrates how whiteness intersects with other subject positions including, age, citizenship and class to produce marginalised subject positions and social relations. Furthermore, changes in the temporal and socio-political context can be implicated in complex changes in individual subjectivities, social relations and interactions in the workplace and in society. Leonard (2008, 2009, 2010 a, b ) explores established and emerging discourses that frame postcolonial British and white subjectivities in Hong Kong after 1997, where old understandings of privilege and entitlement on which white British work identities and work-power relations have been based are being unsettled. She focuses on local, micro-relations, and the particular and context-bound features of white female expatriate performances in work-life settings exploring the diverse ways in which people may negotiate gendered and ethnicised discourses in order to organise their whiteness and their relations with 'Others' which is a focus consistent with this thesis. However, the history of imperialist influence still offer substantial symbolic power, and the legacy of the ethnicised discourses on which these privileges are based still actively mediate the experience of those living in many regions including the Middle East (Coles and Walsh,2010). Leggett (2011) illustrates how colonial discourses resonate with contemporary structuring of social relations and practices in postcolonial workspaces in Indonesia. Therefore, several scholars argue that this classed, gendered and ethnicised 'colonial' subjectivity still pervades white western attitudes and social relations when working with indigenous 'Others' abroad (Fechter and Walsh, 2010). However, more recently, Lan (2011) and Maher and Lafferty (2014) are among studies which explore the limitations and constraints in drawing from colonial discourses in contemporary enactments of white privilege and entitlement and the complexities of nationality in performing western subject positions in translocational spaces.

Importantly, indigenous locals also construct their own local relational subject positions for foreign 'Others' (Hulko, 2009) e.g. Hong Kong Chinese mockingly refer to white people as 'fan gweilo' which literally means foreign devil (Leonard, 2010a: 348). Therefore, host nations themselves may seize the opportunity to reframe and reassert their own national identity and notions of citizenship; which may reveal limits in the agency of expatriates to create coherent and seamless subjectivities completely outside the dominant local discourses of whiteness and gender which weave through their everyday social and working lives (Leonard, 2010; Maher and Lafferty, 2014). Importantly, as Leonard (2009:356) 'the subject positions established in the empire's

heyday form a prism through which contemporary life in postcolonial Hong Kong is constructed and lived". These studies in migration with ethnicity are integral in constructing the theoretical framework for this study.

This section has explored how the characteristics of difference as reflected in constructions of ethnicity, class and gender are constituted differently within understandings of expatriate and migrant embedded and emerging from their respective fields of literature (Berry and Bell, 2012). As previously outlined the nexus of these two literature domains interconnects on those people who independently choose to relocate themselves to a host culture for work namely SIEs and SMs. This section has applied an intersectional lens to deconstruct what constitutes difference in the understandings of expatriate and migrant in their originating literature domains and explore the implications for this investigation and construction of a theoretical framework for this study. The next section will explore how adopting an intersectional lens (McCall, 2005) will inform an overarching theoretical frame across the two diverse literature domains. This illustrates the divergent conceptualisations of migrant and expatriate and illuminates their shared territory within understandings of SIEs and SMs which has informed and directed this investigation in answering the research question of How do western women SIEs understand their experiences in the UAE?

#### **4.4. Expatriation-Migration Continuum**

The preceding review has demonstrated the divergent constructions of difference implicit in our understandings of the terms expatriate and migrant in their respective literature fields. What is evident is that ethnicity, class and gender are embedded in each of these constructions to a greater or lesser degree and that this balance is reflected in their respective conceptual and empirical studies. Therefore, in response to Al-Ariss et al (2012) calls for a theoretical expansion of expatriation and specifically SIE literature. It is proposed that a way forward would be to explicate the constructions of expatriate and migrant within their respective literatures but framed within a broader integration of both fields. Berry and Bell (2012) sought to identify the differences between expatriates and migrants, and this study extends their framework. It is argued that even these distinctions are too broad and exist at either end of an expatriation-migration continuum evidenced in the extant literatures, where two other significant and more closely associated sub-groups have been identified, as acknowledge by Al-Ariss et al (2012). The broader International management literature increasingly recognises SIEs' and more recently from the migration literature SMs' as distinct groups represented in research (Ariss and Sayed, 2011; Ariss and Ozbilgin, 2010). A theoretical map has been constructed to illustrate the scope and borders of the

literature domains of expatriation and migration which situate SIE and SM analytical constructions relevant to this study referred to as the ‘Expatriation- Migration’ continuum (see Table 4.1).

**Table 4.1: Expatriation-Migration Continuum**

Expatriate -----		-----Migrant		
<i>Dominant characteristic of difference</i>	Gender (male norm) Ethnicity rarely Class not included	Gender emerging Ethnicity emerging Class not included	Class dominates Ethnicity emerging Gender emerging	Class dominates Ethnicity emerging Gender emerging
	Assigned expatriate (AE)	Self- Initiated Expatriate (SIE)	Skilled Migrant (SM)	Migrant (M)
<b>Gender</b>	Primarily male: 15% female (Altman and Shortland, 2008)	Both male and female (Tharenou,2010)	Primarily male (Tzeng, 2010)	Approximately 50% male and female (IOM, 2005)
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	Primarily from white Anglo-Saxon countries	Primarily from white from Anglo-Saxon Countries (Harvey, 2012)	White Postcolonial subjectivities- Fechter and Walsh, (2010) Si. Lan (2011) Maher and Lafferty (2014) Leonard (2008, 2009, 2010 a, b)	Often racial and ethnic minorities of colour from developing countries (Jones, 2008)
<b>Class (including education/skill/ occupation) Education/Skill levels</b>	Educated and skilled	Educated and skilled (Richardson, 2009)	Educated and skilled (Remennick, 2012)	Skilled (but may need to take unskilled work) and unskilled (Remennick, 2012)
<b>Sample of occupations and gender make-up</b>	Executives, managers, professionals, primarily male	Executives, managers, professionals, More balanced between male and female occupations: nursing (Bozionelos, 2009), academics (Richardson and Mallon, 2005)	Executives, managers, professionals, Predominantly male (Tzeng, 2006) however also female (Leonard, 2008, 2009, 2010)	Nursing, eldercare, childcare, primarily female Labourers in capital intensive and labour intensive industries (Jones, 2008)
<b>Geographical origin and destination</b>	Primarily from developed countries to developing and developed countries	Primarily from developed countries to developing and developed countries (Richardson and Zikic, 2007; Fitzgerald and Howel-Walsh, 2008)	Primarily from developing countries to developed countries (Al-Ariss and Syed, 2011; Al-Ariss, 2010; Syed, 2008) Contrary direction: western to other countries (Tzeng, 2010, Leonard, 2008)	Primarily from developing countries to developed countries (Stalker, 2000)
<b>Employers/ Industries</b>	MNC's in various industries	MNC's in various industries, SME, Institutions e.g. Universities (Richardson and Zikic, 2007)	MNC's in various industries, SME, Institutions e.g. Universities	MNC's in various industries Also, healthcare, agriculture, construction (Caraway, 2007)

Table 4.1 continued

Sample of occupations and gender make-up	<b>Executives, managers, professionals, primarily male</b>	<b>Executives, managers, professionals, More balanced between male and female occupations: nursing (Bozionelos, 2009), academics (Richardson and Mallon, 2005)</b>	<b>Executives, managers, professionals, Predominantly male (Tzeng, 20) however also female (Leonard, 2008, 2009, 2010a, b)</b>	Nursing, eldercare, childcare, primarily female Labourers in capital intensive and labour intensive industries (Jones, 2008; Human Rights Watch, 2002)
Compensation and Benefits	<b>High Wages and significant benefits (Harvey and Moeller, 2009)</b>	<b>Good wages (local hire contracts)</b>	<b>Good/Local Wages (Iredale, 2001, 2005)</b>	Often low wages and few to no benefits (Resurrection and Sajor, 2010)
Organisational Support	<b>Significant financial, living, travelling, family support (Hutchings et al, 2008, Harvey and Moeller, 2009)</b>	<b>None or limited financial or organisational support (Jokinen et al, 2008, Howe-Walsh 2010)</b>	<b>None or limited financial or organisational support</b>	Very limited to none
Institutional Factors	Rarely considered as focus of studies	<b>Rarely considered, exceptions – Al-Ariss and Ozbilgin, 2010)</b>	<b>Considered as key factors (Remennick, 2012)</b>	<b>Key factor in global migration flows (Paruitus, 2011, Malecki and Ewers, 2007)</b>

Developed and extended from Berry and Bell (2012:13). The original framework has been reconfigured to define class as a composite of education/ skill/ occupation consistent with Remennick, (2012). Additions to the original framework from this investigation are emphasised in italics, notably the evidence on SIEs and SMs. Specific areas of research included in the theoretical framework of this study are identified in bold. There are examples of studies that are indicative but not exclusive of all of the work in this area which will be included in the theoretical framework for this investigation.

This framework builds and extends the work of Holvino (2010) and Berry and Bell (2012) and considers the contribution of ethnicity, gender and class in theorising the four positions on the expatriation-migration continuum. The continuum builds upon and extends the original comparative table between expatriates and migrants developed by Berry and Bell (2012) and collates empirical studies presented in this review, and adds consideration of ‘geographical origin and destination’. However, importantly the framework proposed in this study extends the scope and focus of their work to examine the borders of the respective theoretical territories in more detail beyond expatriate and migrant by including SIEs and SMs. The characteristics of the SIE have been explicated by comparison with those on both sides of their position on the continuum i.e. (AE) and (SM). In particular, the similar and different characteristics of SIEs and SMs have been examined in order to clarify the analytical construction of SIE operationalised in this study and the rationale for drawing from relevant research and empirical studies from both theoretical domains in this research project.

Furthermore, the expatriation-migration framework clearly explicates the changing dominant understandings of ‘difference’ embedded in each socially constructed group along the continuum. The preceding analysis has demonstrated that the nature of difference constructed in each of the four analytical subject positions varies. This reflects implicit analytical constructions and explicit exclusions in theoretical and

empirical studies in the originating expatriation and migration fields. Expatriation literature evidences gender as a dominant differentiating characteristic, where man is normalised and woman is constructed as the Other, however, not necessarily a unitary “inferiorised” Other (Jones, 2008:763) and neither ethnicity or class are given any significant attention (Al-Ariss and Ozbilgin, 2010). In contrast, the work-related migration literature differentiates on the basis of class, in terms of skill, education and economic status (Remennick, 2012). More recent work evidences the emergence of gender (Resurrection and Sajor, 2010) and ethnicity (Tzeng, 2006). The most significant work recently has explored postcolonial white subjectivities (Fechter and Walsh, 2010) and its intersection with gender (Leonard, 2008, 2009, 2010, a, b) and the limits and constraints in postcolonial white performances, which are central to the focus of this study (Lan, 2011; Maher and Lafferty, 2014).

What is clear is that although expatriates and migrants in many ways reflect significantly contrasting characteristics, when they meet in the contested landscape between these two distinct fields the nature of difference that marks their territory changes. The constructions of SIEs and SMs share more characteristics than differences particularly their similar understandings of class and gender. However, what is evident in the current literature is that what differentiates conceptual understandings of SIEs and SM’s is their ethnicity and country of origin (Al Ariss and Ozbilgin, 2010). So that, the ethnicity and country of origin of an educated, skilled, professional worker initiating and securing their own employment in another host country will have a significant influence upon how they are constructed in the extant literature as an SIE or SM. The emerging SM literature seeks to illuminate the symbolic and generative role of race in constructing multi-level understandings of the individual in the context of their host country. However, this is rarely evidenced in SIE literature which remains “silent” in this regard. (Al-Ariss, 2010:354). This suggests that researching homogenous ethnic groups could help us explore the influence of ethnicity on the experiences of SIEs. Furthermore, as Al-Ariss (2010:354) reports SM literature also highlights the influence of restrictive immigration policies and institutional discourses that “allow certain truths to be told whilst simultaneously constraining others (Jack and Lorbiecki, 2007:92)”

Class, as reflected in their shared education, occupation and high skill status is a characteristic shared by AE, SIE and SM subgroups in the expatriation-migration continuum, but presents as the dominant difference characteristic which differentiates the SM From her low-skilled migrant peers (Berry and Bell, 2012). Therefore, the assumption of a privileged class status is implicitly if not explicitly recognised as a

shared rather than a differentiating characteristic of difference in the literature on SIEs, SMs and AEs.

Both SIEs and SMs have emerged from the broad expatriation and migration literature respectively but differentiated themselves by their points of intellectual origin from two different literature bases and now co-exist and occasionally overlap in the disputed territories between them (Al-Ariss and Ozbilgin, 2010). Variations in the definition and usage of expatriate and migrant across disciplines inform different understandings of the concept of moving from one's home country to another. Paradoxically however, they share enough similar characteristics for researchers to use the terms interchangeably (Leonard, 2008, Harvey, 2012) whilst sometimes simultaneously clarifying their differences in the same work (Ariss and Ozbilgin, 2010). Al-Ariss (2010:339) suggests that 'such ambiguities could be explained by the fact that the literature on SIEs is relatively recent'. However, consistent with Al-Ariss et al (2012) this thesis argues and has articulated the process by which construction and appropriation of each term reflects divergent intellectual, historical and political origins and the perspectives of scholars and vested interests in each field of practice. Therefore this thesis responds to the call by Al-Ariss et al (2012) for a multidisciplinary theoretical expansion of future SIE studies to include studies from migration theoretical and empirical studies.

#### **4.5. Implications for this study**

The field of management research is marked by politics regarding the terms used for framing and studying the careers of skilled migrants. Depending on the particular standpoint and vested interest, i.e. management, organizations, or workers themselves, from which authors write, the literature uses three different terms to discuss international mobility; corporate expatriation, self-initiated expatriation (SIE), and migration. (Al-Ariss et al., 2012:93)

Overall, it is clear that although both expatriates and migrants cross national borders to work, their construction in the literature differs by gender, ethnicity and class. It is argued here that the different constructions of 'expatriate' and 'migrant' reflect their complex and diverse historical and theoretical origins and research perspectives, which are implicit in the different levels of interest in issues of gender, race and class in each body of literature. This thesis argues that it is important to understand the distinctive origins and characteristics of these terms because it explicates the bodies of literature and specific areas of research which have informed the theoretical framework of this study and which are presented as bold in the Expatriation-Migration Continuum (see table 4.1).

The migration and expatriation literatures emerge from very different intellectual origins and tend to focus on different levels of analysis and reflect very different perspectives and agendas. Migration studies reflect a strong interest in macro level inquiries of structural phenomena (Fang et al 2009, Harvey, 2012). Ariss and Ozbilgin (2010:277) argue:

Immigration studies investigate the macro-level advantages and disadvantages for the sending and receiving countries, such as in terms of economic benefits and knowledge transfer matters (i.e. brain drain and brain gain). However, they overlook the management of skilled immigrants in organizational settings (Docquier, Lohest and Marfouk, 2005).

In contrast to expatriation literature the migration literature has a rich conceptual and empirical base in examining the impact of institutional and government forces framing the experiences of skilled people who have chosen to initiate work in host countries which can inform the country specific context of this research for SIEs working in the UAE. Indeed Al-Ariss and Ozbilgin (2010:283) have argued, "We contend that it is only possible to understand the experience of self-initiated expatriates in their situated institutional context (Ozbilgin, 2006; Syed, 2008)". Therefore, studies on SM's that explore the macro level influences of government and institutions that frame the context in which SIEs live and work will inform this investigation (Al-Ariss and Ozbilgin, 2010).

In contrast, the International Management literature focuses at a meso level of analysis dominated by the interests of organisations and even when it explores experiences of expatriates and their families at the individual level it does so from the perspective of managing the expatriation process as a strategic human resource (Harvey and Moeller, 2009; Howe-Walsh and Schyns, 2010). Several feminist theorists including Acker (2004) and Caraway (2007) argue that global capitalist interests systematically engineer organising systems and structure employment strategies and institutional and legal frameworks in order to leverage workers' gender, ethnicity and class to maximise profit. However, there is research from female expatriation which can be particularly relevant at the meso level in illuminating the challenges women SIEs experience working in organisations, Janssens et al (2006) work is particularly useful in this regard, and will inform the theoretical framework of this thesis.

There is limited evidence of critical approaches which focus on ethnicity and country of origin of individuals explicitly shaping conceptual and empirical work in expatriation studies (Al-Ariss and Syed, 2011; Al-Ariss et al, 2012). However, research in expatriation and migration which critically explores the influence of constructions of ethnicity from the perspective of the research participant particularly those sharing the

same ethnic profile or country context will be included in this investigation (Al-Ariss, 2014; Al-Ariss et al, 2012; Tzeng, 2006). Importantly, the studies which explore postcolonial white subjectivities, particularly as it intersects with gender, and frames privileges and constraints will be central to the theoretical framework for this study (Fechter and Walsh, 2010; Lan, 2011; Leggett, 2011; Leonard, 2008, 2009, 2010, a, b)

Importantly, the expatriation-migration continuum illuminates understandings of the construction of the research participants as western women self-initiated expatriates and their social location in the borderlands of two extant bodies of literature. Borderland is used here to denote a zone where the conceptual boundaries of gender, ethnicity and class are continually crossed and where new constructions challenge existing hegemonic discourses (Anzaldúa, 1987). This critical review of the literature has contributed to the emerging literature on SIEs in expatriation research by adopting an intersectional lens to challenge established conceptual constructions embedded in the existing literature on expatriates and migrants.

In doing so, it has contributed to the emerging debate in IM of the lack of multidisciplinary research in International Management and Management and Organisation Studies which is acknowledged as a weakness in the literature (Metcalf, 2008a,b; Metcalf and Woodhams, 2012; Ozbilgin, 2009; Williams and Mavin, 2012).

Furthermore, this framework has contributed to the theoretical expansion of bridging research between SIE and SMs called for by Al-Ariss et al (2012:95) and extends the literature on SIEs by applying an intersectional lens through a multilevel analysis of the macro-contextual, meso-organisational and micro-individual influences which infuse the context in which the research participants construct understandings of their experiences. Therefore, while research on SIEs is at the core of the theoretical framework directing this study it also includes understandings particularly from SMs and female expatriation that are significant in exploring the experiences of western white women SIEs in the UAE.

In this contested theoretical landscape the borders between the conceptualised groups are increasingly researched and discursively renegotiated to identify their shared and differentiating characteristics. This chapter has sought to explain the construction of SIEs adopted in the IM literature and the significant similarities it shares with the constructions of SMs from migration literature. Yet it also identifies ethnicity as an important differentiation in their construction which is worthy of focus within this study. It justifies the integration of an interdisciplinary approach including conceptual and empirical studies from both expatriation and migration that have informed the research

framework. Importantly, this research project seeks to respond to the gap identified in the literature by Berry and Bell (2012:21) who “call for more research on women’s lived experiences as expatriates. What is expatriation really like for them as gendered raced [author’s term] and classed participants of globalizing processes?”

#### **4.6. Chapter summary**

This chapter has provided a detailed critique of the literature from expatriation and migration which has informed the conceptual construction of SIEs used in this thesis. The comparative understandings of AEs, SIEs, SMs and Ms were analysed in terms of their implicit constructions of difference and presented in an expatriation-migration continuum which explicated the rationale, focus and scope of conceptual and empirical studies that have informed understandings of SIEs in the literature and specifically within this research project. Furthermore, this theoretical framework highlighted an original contribution to expatriation and migration studies by extending Berry and Bells (2012) framework illuminating how diverse theoretical interests have a distinctive impact upon the construction of conceptual and empirical studies in each field and sought to bridge the gap between them. Specifically it outlined the specific shared and divergent characteristics in constructing SIE and SM subjectivities with particular reference to gendered whiteness. Finally, this review explained and justified the intersectional focus of this study on gender with ethnicity in critically reviewing the extant literature of SIEs which inform the second part of the theoretical framework for this study to answer the research question, how do western women self-initiated expatriates understand their experiences in the United Arab Emirates? The next chapter will outline the methodological commitments and methods that informed the research process.

# Chapter Five: Methodology

## 5. Introduction

This chapter outlines the philosophical commitments and methodological choices drawn upon to inform and frame the research process for this thesis with the aim of demonstrating a coherent and logical path from the research question to the methods implemented in this investigation. This research strategy aims to enable this study to answer the main research question:

“How do western women self-initiated expatriates understand their experiences in the United Arab Emirates?”

The chapter begins with an overview of the theoretical perspectives underpinning methodological choices and commitments in this study. This is followed by a discussion of the research design and methods, including the development of the data collection and analysis process and a brief overview of the participants and the rationale for their selection. Furthermore, the process of developing the data collection methods and the abductive approach to interpreting the data and refining the research question are discussed. In doing so the chapter addresses the second research objective which is:

To design and implement a research approach and methods to contribute to the methodological expansion of understanding the contextualised intersubjective experiences of western expatriate women SIEs' in the United Arab Emirates in order to explore the concept of the 'Third Gender'?

Alternative research designs and methods will be discussed in detail here particularly in comparison to other comparative studies. However, the broader implications of the epistemological, ontological and methodological commitments of this research will be discussed further in the concluding chapter of this thesis.

### 5.1. Epistemological and ontological choices

This inquiry is informed by a social constructionist epistemology and process ontology informed and shaped by feminist theorising (Hesse-Biber, 2007). Fundamentally, this perspective explores intersubjective individual and collective co-constructions of gendered social realities through which we come to understand ourselves and to construct knowledge of the social world (Burr, 2003; Crotty, 1998; Cunliffe, 2003, 2008; Demir & Lychnell, 2014; West & Zimmerman, 1987, 2009). The central tenets and

concepts of this perspective are outlined in more detail in the following sections together with my interpretation of their application in this investigation.

### 5.1.1 Social constructionist position

Cunliffe's (2008) work in framing different research positions within social constructionism along a continuum has been informative in helping me explore and clarify my own epistemological and ontological commitments and examine how they affect my ways of theorising and researching in order to investigate the research question. Therefore, I have adapted and outlined my own relational social construction position from Cunliffe's framework (2008) in undertaking this research inquiry (see Table 5.1).

**Table 5.1: Ontological and epistemological positioning of this research inquiry (Adapted from Cunliffe (2008:126))**

<i>Nature of Social Reality</i>
Intersubjective realities where people create meaning and reality with others Emerging social realities, focus on processes of meaning making with no one person in control
<i>Process of socially constructing reality</i>
Reality construction and sense-making as a relational process focusing on interaction and dialogue between people Social construction as power infused
<i>Epistemological interests</i>
Social construction at the micro level between people in everyday interactions and dialogue Reflect meso and macro level socially constructed categories which are discursively produced and enacted e.g. gender, race. Often within a broader cultural and historical political context Context- related interpretative insights and meanings created in on-going moments. Research and learning as a critical reflexive process.

### 5.1.2 Relational social constructionism: Themes and application in this thesis

There are three key themes that are relevant for the exposition of a relational social constructionist (RSC) epistemology relevant to this research investigation. The following themes are adapted from Potter (2006:80) and used to frame the understanding and application of RSC in this study:

- Understanding of how knowledge is constructed
- Principle of multiplicity
- Relationship between knowledge and power

The social and relational construction of knowledge is reflected in the central focus of the research in collecting rich accounts of embodied and embedded intersubjective experiences of the participants (Cunliffe, 2008). Emphasis on intersubjectivity differentiates relational social constructionism, where sense making emerges continually through dialogue and interaction with others (Cunliffe, 2008). Language is central to sense making, “giving form to reality” (Cunliffe, 2001:352), but it is interaction that gives language its capability to mean (Cunliffe, 2002). Therefore, the analysis will highlight similarities and differences between and within their experiences and a focus on their interactions, conversations and relationships with others in different social arenas. Furthermore, attention to the rhetorical strategies at play in particular kinds of discourses (Carabine, 2001; Potter, 2006) will be collected through participant interviews and an analysis made of relevant contemporaneous media stories. Importantly, RSC emphasises that we are embedded and embodied in temporal, spatial and discursive contexts (Cunliffe, 2008:131). Therefore, participant accounts elicited understandings of sense making and responses and the implications of this embodiment in their accounts (Cunliffe and Coupland 2011:65; Metcalfe, 2007).

The orientation of this thesis acknowledges that there is no single truth (Guba and Lincoln, 2005:212) and the ‘truths’ research participants share can be understood as situated, partial accounts (Riessman, 2008), co-constructed for the purpose of the interview (Hosking, 1999). Therefore, different interpretations are sourced and collected in the research process through interviews and media to illuminate rather than triangulate the data interpretation process (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). The dialectical nature of experience and understanding is not presented in a dualistic sense but rather as a “continuous interplay of two opposing terms, such that both maintain their difference yet pass into each other: they are inseparable in practical circumstances” Cunliffe (2008:131). Cunliffe (2008, 2008:129) argues that the dialectic of intersubjectivity (sameness and difference) reflects that:

we are always selves-in-relation-to-others-inseparable because whole parts of our life are part of the life history of others. We are who we are, because everything we say, think and do is interwoven with particular and generalized others: generalized groups, categories, language systems, culturally and historically situated discursive and non-discursive practices

Therefore, our understandings emerge in situated responsive relations with others embedded in the “moment by moment” interactions with “no one person” in control (Cunliffe, 2008:130). Bakhtin (1981) is associated with the notion of dialogic forms of talk, which reflect the contested polyphony of power infused competing voices and multiple meanings. This is understood in this study as focusing our attention on the pluralistic and fragile nature of social realities in narrated accounts and emphasising the emergent and contested nature of the participants experience by exploring the tensions and movement between intersecting constructions of women and whiteness within and across their accounts and from other sources e.g. media, UAE laws and regulations (Cunliffe, 2008:131). Furthermore, a commitment to collect, analyse and synthesise multi-level data reflects an understanding of multiple voices contesting multiple meanings constructed over time and space in diverse social arenas (Anthias, 2013).

The main focus in the foreground of this study is exploring the intersubjective micro processes of social interaction of the research participants. However, a RSC perspective draws our attention to the relationship between micro level relational dynamics, meso level organising and macro level structures (Cunliffe, 2008). These constructions at the macro and meso level form part of a range of “seemingly real” (Cunliffe, 2008:129) constraints and enablers which influence people’s understandings and behaviour at the micro level through a degree of consensus, approximate structures in the form of social and cultural norms and rules (Crotty, 1998). Importantly, while appreciating that we are discursively constructed, we are also capable of critically assessing the discourses that constitute us and of adopting new ones (Saukko, 2000:302). Therefore, the contribution of the participants’ accounts are understood as contingent upon their framing within specific historical, socio-cultural, and institutional frameworks converging within this research context (Al Ariss et al., 2012; Burr, 2003; Syed and Ozbilgin, 2009). In this study this is reflected in the recognition that relational processes at all levels are interwoven and power infused which creates differential access to privileged and marginalised social positions (Cunliffe, 2008:128). This multi-arena relational interplay is reflected in connecting participant accounts to the wider macro social worlds they inhabit with analysis of secondary data including media and regulations that allow us to claim insights into the traces of historical and contemporary conditions (Al Ariss and Ozbilgin 2010; Al Ariss et al., 2012 ; Rodriguez and Scurry, 2014).

Cunliffe (2008:126) suggests that researchers may pick and choose and think through a perspective rather than being limited by or to it (Crotty, 1998: 215). Therefore this

research is understood as informed by a relational social constructionist perspective located within a constructionist continuum, drawing upon the emergent nature of social realities and a critically informed understanding which acknowledges knowledge production is power infused, and privileges some people's understandings over others with substantive consequences. This reflects the thesis' methodological choice of discourse inquiry which is explored in detail in Section 5.2.2.

### **5.1.3 Process ontology: Themes and application in thesis**

Ontologically, a processual understanding of knowledge construction privileges fluidity, emergence and becoming, so that in the context of this thesis what is generally accepted to be real and permanent is framed as temporal, emerging from dynamic relational interacting, always in the process of becoming, and never achieving a final fixed state (Chia, 1995; Demir and Lychnell, 2014; Sergi and Hallin, 2011).

Furthermore, the research focus on exploring the participants' experience assumes a level of closeness, complexity and specificity of locality of this particular present experience co-constructed and interpreted within the context of both the past and future (Crotty, 1998). The country context and theoretical framework chapters identified the specific influences e.g. demographic imbalance, and post-colonial constructions of westerners that had a direct potential rather than actual "proximate relevance" and were therefore assumed to be infused in binding relations with participants' subjectivities (Demir & Lychnell, 2014:4). Therefore, the participants present constructions of social reality are understood as mutually constituted by both their intersubjective and collective understandings of living in the UAE as a western woman SIE infused with historical, present and future understandings (Sergi & Hallin, 2011).

The framing of this investigation of the intersectional nexus of gendering and ethnicising in the lives of the research participants was understood as an 'occasion' in a research site at a certain time (2007-09) in a certain place (UAE) where the knowledge collected from the research process i.e. accounts of the participant's intersectional construction of themselves and others as western women SIEs' constitutes the inherent properties of the "on-going moment" (Cunliffe, 2008:126) on this occasion.

This investigation assumes that the temporal and spatial constituents of the occasion mutually constitute the relational event of intersecting gendering and ethnicising processes in this study (Berry and Bell, 2012). Space is interpreted in this study as

more of an abstract concept, and constructed discursively to identify the locations manifesting the cultural, social and normative processes constituting the relational construction of the research participants e.g. as postcolonial white subjectivities (Czarniawska, 2004). It is understood in this study as a contested social location of action and choices, a dynamic nexus of relations between structure and agency (Fotaki, 2013). This is explored through the participants' complex and contradictory experiences of privilege and vulnerability e.g. in their temporary legal status as expatriates in a host country (Lan, 2011). Place is understood as both a substantive physical place with institutions e.g. government and laws, and also discursively as an organised domain of meaning e.g. site for expressions of Emirati cultural and normative values such as gender segregated seating in government service centres (Demir & Lychnell, 2014).

The activity sites are interpreted in this investigation to include the workplace, team and client meetings, networking, and conferences, personal and professional social groups and organisations. The site of a process, just like the site of a practice, enjoys "powers of determination", which makes possible the separation and assimilation of components that belong to the process' "identifying" characteristics and "generative properties" (Demir & Lychnell, 2014: 5). It provides an ontological lens, which helps to distinguish and see connections between space, place, site, as well as how these mutually constitute one another (Demir & Lychnell, 2014: 8).

This study understands that time, space and place are integral in illuminating the mutually constitutive elements of the research site which discursively produce enactments of western women SIEs' subjectivities in the context of this investigation (see Section 5.2.2 for discussion on discourse).

#### **5.1.4 Feminist theorising: Themes and application in thesis**

The following section outlines the contribution of feminist theorising in shaping and operationalising my understanding of the RSC epistemological and process ontological orientation of this thesis and their implications for the research process in this specific investigation.

This research acknowledges the fundamental contribution of problematising the social construction of gender from feminist theorising in the epistemological and ontological perspective of this study (West & Zimmerman, 1987). The assumption in this study in relation to gender is that men and women would experience their personal and professional lives, roles and opportunities in different ways and that this would be

related to issues of gender (Broadbridge & Simpson, 2011; Gherardi, 1994, 1996; Mavin & Grandy 2012, 2014; Metcalfe, 2008a,) intersecting with ethnicity (Berry and Bell, 2012; Holvino, 2010). The position of this study is consistent with West and Zimmerman (1987), in conceptualising the notion of 'doing gender' and how "sex category is the intersecting point of doing gender" (Mavin & Grandy, 2012:219). Doing gender involves enacting performances that are recognisable as consistent with the sex category claimed and accountable to culturally contingent "normative conceptions of attitudes and activities appropriate for one's sex category" (West & Zimmerman, 1987:127). This is understood in this study as exploring the processes through which the participants' gender is constructed in terms of the "essential natures" of being a woman within the cultural, social, ideological influences in this research context. Furthermore, it will seek to illuminate enactments of diverse performances and processes of accountability by others of the participants doing gender in work and public spaces in this context (Gherardi, 1994, 1996; Mavin & Grandy, 2012; Metcalfe, 2006, 2008a; Metcalfe & Woodhams, 2012). This position is consistent with the understandings of a gender "binary divide" which "constrains and restricts how men and women do gender" but one which can be challenged or unsettled but not dissolved (Mavin & Grandy, 2012:219).

West and Zimmerman (2009) contend that understandings of doing gender can be changed by dynamic changes in cultural normative conceptions of woman, which is explored in the UAE as constituting a different place to explore contingent norms of gender accountability. West and Fenstermaker (1995a, 2002) argue that people may draw from other categorical distinctions such as ethnicity in 'doing difference' to construct a new congruent relationship between their sex category and accountability. So this study will explore the intersection of gender with ethnicity (Leonard, 2008) to illuminate whether the participants' western ethnicity changes the attributes and behaviours to which they will be held accountable in doing gender in this research context.

Constructions of doing gender are understood as constituted in an interactional social order where "patriarchy, racism and sexism are seen as response to those dispositions – as if the social order were merely a rational accommodation to 'natural differences' among social beings" (Fenstermaker and West, 2002:207). Therefore, this study will explore whether the contingent construction of the participants as 'western women SIES' unsettles the interactional social order enacted in doing gender within the research context.

This study understands that women's 'ways of knowing' are understood as emerging from a social location that makes their process of knowledge construction as qualitatively distinctive and explicitly and or tacitly gendered knowing (Gilligan, 1982). While valuing the centrality of women's experience, including the researcher and the researched, this is not interpreted as adopting a 'Feminist Standpoint' (FS) perspective (Harding, 2007).

Feminist theorising asserts that "knowledge and truth are partial, situated, subjective, power imbued, and relational" (Hesse-Biber, 2007:9). Women and men experience reality differently and this is understood as related to issues of gender. Feminist theorists have illuminated how experience is interactionally gendered through embodied enactments (Mavin & Grandy, 2014; Metcalfe, 2008a; Trethewey, 1999) which this study will explore in collecting and interpreting the women participants' accounts of their experiences.

An epistemological aim of this study is to collect understandings of women's situated experiences as western women SIEs which are understood as shaped by their particular social position, including the specificity of circumstances, conditions, values, and relations of power (Czarniawska, 2004; Fotaki, 2013). It is argued in this thesis that the specificities of the research context are a constitutive feature of participants' contested categorical constructions as intersecting gender and ethnicity which influences how they articulate their 'lived experience' which is collected and co-constructed through their accounts. Roof (2007) asserts that testimony based on individual lived experience can serve as a powerful source of evidencing oppression and mode of authorising its authenticity.

Tracing the discourses embedding accounts of experience helps illuminate underlying processes of oppression i.e. gendering and ethnicising (Hesse-Biber, 2007). Therefore, this was interpreted in this investigation by exploring references to macro structures and meso organising in the co-construction of participants' accounts and by collecting and analysing secondary sources of data including media accounts, government documents and regulations. The dialectical relationship between structure and agency can also create opportunities for resistance and repositioning which will be explored in the women's accounts (Janssens et al., 2006).

Feminist theorising provides a critical perspective on exploring women's enactments of gender through seminal concepts of 'Otherness' (de Beauvoir, 1953) and the socially constructed negative conditioning of a woman's place as a subordinate to males and in a state of subjection and dependency in which everything that can be attributed to

females is devalued is fundamental to the theoretical framing of this research study (Harding, 2007). Simons (2000) outlines how de Beauvoir's (1972) analysis includes race, caste, class and sex as social categories through which 'othering' occurs. An aim of this study is to explore and reveal the processes of 'othering' which are embedded in the participant accounts.

Examining the social construction of gender in the workplace is fundamental to feminist theorizing and research (Gherardi, 1994, 1996; Mavin & Grandy, 2012). This investigation interprets this to argue that gender is used to refer to the multiple ways in which practices, structures, interactions, symbolisms, cultures, values and so on are theorised to contribute to gendering processes (Hesse-Biber, 2007). Furthermore, this investigation understands the broader concept of 'social' as "something that is lived through and with gendered and gendering bodies, but it is also a set of ideas, relations and processes which produce gendered bodies" (Swan, Stead and Elliot., 2009:433). This investigation will explore the participants' experiences of gendering processes in organising and organisations including the persistence of gender stereotypes and biases in policies and practices, as outlined by Metcalfe (2007) and extended into the Middle East context (Metcalfe, 2008) Hutchings, Metcalfe and Cooper, 2010).

Equitable co-construction of knowledge through research data is central to feminist reflexive praxis (Oakley, 1981, 1993; De Vault and Gross, 2007). Hesse-Biber and Piatelli (2007) argue that dissolving these boundaries creates a potential common space for creating knowledge. I explore how my positionality as a western woman researcher is implicated as a "hindrance and a resource...toward achieving knowledge" (Brooks and Hesse-Biber, 2007:15) in the research process (see Chapter Eight).

Very few researchers have taken a feminist theoretical perspective in the female expatriate literature (Berry and Bell, 2012), notable exceptions include Hofbauer and Fischlmayr (2004) and Janssens et al. (2006). Within the female expatriate literature the evidence would suggest paradoxically that 'western' ethnicity for some women precedes gender as a privileged category and creates a 'Third Gender' (Adler, 1987) in their intersubjective relations. Therefore, this thesis draws from feminist theorising on developing an intersectional lens to explore the participants' intersubjective understandings of their contested privileged One and marginalised Other subject positions produced in the discursive and structural conditions of the research context (Berry & Bell, 2012; Holvino, 2010; Woodhams & Metcalfe, 2010).

However, feminism is also understood as a political project, closely aligned to social activism (Anderson, 2005; Collins, 1990), which is not an explicit objective of this

research process. Therefore, I am not claiming to operationalise a distinctively 'political' feminist epistemology or ontology in this investigation (Harding, 2007). Although the methodological choices are informed by feminist scholars and practice (Hesse-Biber, 2007; Oakley, 1981), I would not position this research as a distinctively feminist methodological project (De Vault and Gross, 2007)

## **5.2. Methodological choices and decisions**

### **5.2.1 Methodological framing of study**

The approach to methodological choices and decisions in this study has been directly informed by the call for a methodological expansion of future research in the empirical study of SIEs and skilled migrants by Al Ariss et al. (2012). Therefore, this section will outline how I have responded to this request and operationalised an expanded methodology in the context of this investigation and my RSC epistemological and processual ontological and feminist commitments.

Al Ariss et al. (2012) argue for a theoretical and methodological expansion of studies in SIEs and SMs. This investigation has responded directly to this call, firstly, in Chapter Four, by positioning this study and its conceptualisation of SIES in the expanded theoretical borderland between Expatriation and Migration studies through the theoretical framework of the Expatriation-Migration Continuum. Al Ariss et al. (2012:92) argue that the second expansion requires "the adoption of relational methodologies, as well as more reflexive methods which encourages researchers to recognize a wider range of vested interests when framing their research questions and designing their studies". This study responded directly to this call by designing a multilevel relational methodology which centralises discourses as a methodology, informing the reflexive methods of data collection and interpretation (Clarke et al., 2012). A detailed outline and explanation of the overall relational methodological framework adapted from this Al Ariss et al. (2012) study is provided in Table 5.2.

**Table 5.2: Expansion of methodological approaches to international mobility: Application to WW SIEs in this study (Al Ariss et al., 2012)**

Hierarchical themes	Specific themes	Application in this study
Cross-disciplinary	Migration, sociology, psychology, management and organization studies, geography, medicine, among others	Chapter Four located this study and its conceptualisation of SIEs as occupying a position in the theoretical borderland between Expatriation and Migration studies through the theoretical framework of the Expatriation-Migration Continuum. Importantly it identified this investigation as emerging from and positioned within international management studies, more specifically female expatriation and drawing from appropriate theoretical and empirical studies from Migration studies, specifically of skilled migrants (Al Ariss and Sayed, 2011).
Reflexivity	Position of the researcher regarding his/her research topic, researcher's history and background and how this influences research, researcher's rationale in choice of research questions/methods/theories/concepts	The Introduction to this investigation in Chapter One outlined the reflexive position of the researcher in this study, a summary of my role as a researcher and how this contributed to the research process including rationale for selecting the study's aim, scope and focus, theoretical and methodological choices. This reflexive approach will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Eight.
Substantive Measures	Duration of stay, purpose of international mobility, country of origin/destination, type of contract	Substantive measures applied in this investigation include the requirement for all participants to have been resident in the UAE for two years; they were included on the basis of being a woman and originating from a western country and having a white ethnicity. Their conceptualisation of an SIE was on the basis of initiating their own expatriation. While, they were not included on the basis of specific types of contracts, nevertheless all of the participants were employed or worked within 'local' national/regional contractual conditions in contrast to being sent on assignment by an MNC. This will be outlined in more detail in Section 5.2.5 on identifying and inviting research participants into the study.
Subjective Measures	Work-life experiences of the international mobile workers as perceived by them, self-identification in terms of status (e.g. migrant vs expatriate), intentions to remain in/leave a country	The research participants' construction of their relational subjectivities was the key focus of this study, importantly this was theorised as a dynamic, dialectical process infused and shaped by their interactions with others and implicating broader historical, cultural and political influences that framed and informed their understandings and experiences as western women expatriates in the temporal and spatial research context of this study.

Table 5.2 continued

Data Sources	Interviews conducted with participants/focus groups, case studies, surveys, datasets, policy documents, grey literature, organizational guidelines, photographs and images, videos, national/regional/international press, observation	Interviews were conducted with research participants to explore and explicate their constructions of their WW SIE subjectivities and explore this construction process in relation to their reflections on their interactions with others and understandings of their social position within broader historical and cultural influences in the research context. In addition, contemporary media sources were identified to illuminate and illustrate the construction of expatriates and specifically WW SIE within the research context, which the participants may draw from to inform and shape their own understandings and relationships with others.
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### 5.2.2 Discourse

Discourses are complex interconnected webs of modes of being, thinking and acting. They are in constant flux and often contradictory. They are always located on temporal and spatial axes; thus they are historically and culturally specific. (Gannon & Davies 2007: 82)

This research focuses on how discourse is relationally constructed as an inherent part of subjectivities and socio-cultural practices and what is manifested by this construction within specific social contexts (Alvesson & Karreman, 2000; Keenoy & Oswick, 2004).

The concern of this thesis is exploring how multilevel discourses frame and infuse the participants' understandings of their subjectivities and inform the patterns of their gendered relational interactions. Subjectivities in this thesis are theorised as dialogical, dialectical and relational (Cunliffe and Coupland, 2011): where individuals draw on discursive practices and resources at different levels to construct their understandings (Keenoy & Oswick, 2004; Simpson & Lewis, 2005). Therefore, a discursive mode of research is appropriate to express and interpret meaning about these relational processes (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2011; Gannon & Davies, 2007). Table 5.3 outlines my methodological commitments adapted from Boje et al.'s (2004:571) framework of "doing of discourse" through different 'forms' of engagement to explain how they have been applied to this study and its focus on constructing participants' subjectivities.

**Table 5.3: Forms of discourse engagement and application in this thesis**

Form of engagement	Overview of strand	Application in this thesis
Foci of engagement	language as a means to an end or language as an end in itself	Language is a means to an end – to explore participants’ processual construction of their dialogical, relational subjectivities through interactional discursive practices and drawing from discursive resources
Levels of engagement	<p>“micro” (e.g. discrete episodes or conversations)</p> <p>“meso” (e.g. broader patterns and networks of interaction)</p> <p>“macro” (e.g. grand narratives and meta discourses with wider social implications)</p>	<p>Micro – the primary aim of this study is to explore and illuminate participants’ construction of their relational subjectivities through ‘fine grained’ interpretation of selected texts from each participant’s accounts (Zanoni &amp; Janssens &amp;, 2004). This perspective acknowledges that this is a relational process that is intertwined with different meso and macro level discourses (Keenoy &amp; Oswick, 2004)</p> <p>Meso – to illuminate their processual construction of subjectivities through exploring participants’ broad relational interactional patterns with others e.g. colleagues, clients, professional networks within and across participants’ interview texts (Clarke et al., 2012)</p> <p>Macro – to explore the broader, historical, cultural and political influences instantiated in media texts which both frame and inform discursive resources available to the research participants in constructing their subjectivities (Alvesson and Karreman, 2000)</p>
Modes of engagement	monological, dialogical, and/or polyphonic perspectives	Dialogical in the context of a relational engagement with the researcher in co-constructing the interview text, polyphonic in illuminating the diverse and competing discourses evident at meso levels of interaction and macro levels of contemporaneous media sources (Cunliffe, 2008)
Methods of engagement	methodological alternatives include conversation analysis, ethnomethodology, content analysis, deconstruction, narrative analysis, intertextuality, and critical discourse analysis	I am drawing on reflexive, discursive analytic methods and applying these for different purposes, at three levels outlined above (Potter, 2006).

Discourses are understood in this thesis as embedded in historical and culturally specific social arenas (Anthias, 2013, Gannon & Davies 2007). Therefore, such an understanding requires the research process to ‘recontextualize’ content (Boje et al., 2004:571) and examine “the social context and social relations within which power and knowledge occur and are distributed” (Carabine, 2001:275). Within this point of view, organisations and communities manifest diverse and dialectically emerging multivocal discourses embedded within local and macro situated contexts (Fletcher, 1999). This approach is particularly suited to this study where I am interested in how individuals draw from multidimensional discursive resources to make sense of their intersecting relational subjectivities in the context of this research site.

Discourse is understood as an interrelated framework of understanding shared meanings, power and knowledge (Carabine, 2001), constituting a pattern across contexts, which frames our ways of being, thinking and acting (Simpson & Lewis, 2005). The generative properties of discourse in producing 'both meaning and effects in the real world' (Carabine, 2001:268) is consistent with the orientation of this thesis as it explores the implications of 'language and practice' in the construction of participant subjectivities and their substantive effects on their relational practice with others; connecting what people say with what they do (Hall, 2001:72). Discourses including language, symbols and ideology, create legitimating frameworks, shaping and establishing certain 'truths' as 'normative' (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2000), which determine who can say what and when creating truth effects (Kelan, 2008). Furthermore, discourses can be understood as "generative" (Demir & Lychnell, 2014:4), in that the process of establishing normative expectations also constructs spaces for the 'other'; which implicates the contested dialectic between agency and structures and the creation of discursive spaces (Fletcher, 1999).

Therefore, discourse in this thesis explores what function discursive acts serve; how discourses shape participants' thinking, attitudes and behaviour (Simpson and Lewis, 2005; which are drawn on explicitly or unreflexively by participants in their sense making (Martin, 2006); illuminating understandings of what modes of thinking and behaviour are deemed to be acceptable (Simpson and Lewis, 2005) for which participants will be held accountable (West and Zimmerman, 1987). This thesis acknowledges the fluid interconnectivity of multi arena discourses as illuminating the intertwined nature of individual agency and discourse, so that an individual may potentially draw upon a number of discourses simultaneously, at different times or in different situations (Janssens et al., 2006; Sunderland, 2007). The creation of discursive spaces enables opportunities for participants to challenge, adapt or reject dominant discourses and the influence of meso and macro level social structures in framing constructions of their relational subjectivities (Fletcher, 1999). The intention is not to substitute truth claims of one discourse with another, but rather, to reveal complexities and contradictions, explore underlying assumptions, facilitating the emergence of new insights (Cunliffe, 2008) into ways of thinking, being and behaving (Fletcher 1999).

In line with my epistemological and ontological commitments outlined earlier, and my relational methodology, I adopt a middle ground (Tsoukas, 2000) between critical discourse studies (Fairclough, 2004) where power dynamics form the focus of the

investigation and constructionist/interpretivist studies which tend to focus on micro-processes of social reality, thereby prioritising agency over structure (Heracleous & Hendry, 2000). This study aims to gain deeper understandings of how the research participants construct subjectivities through relational dynamics at the micro level. Following Al Ariss et al. (2012) this study seeks to explicate the discursive processes and substantive effects that are implicated in the meso and macro arenas of activity.

Discourse is understood in this study as fluid and often contradictory, located on temporal and spatial axes and therefore historically and culturally specific (Gannon & Davies, 2007). Therefore, an understanding of discourses serves to surface complexities and tensions, to discuss and question underlying multi arena normative assumptions and enable our understandings of the emergence of new subjectivities in discursive spaces (Fletcher 1999). Finally, it will illuminate the gendered and ethnicised relational interactional practices the participants' engage with intentionally (Janssens et al., 2006) and non-reflexively (Martin, 2006) within the contextual site and scope of this investigation.

### **5.2.3 Research Design**

Defining qualitative research is a difficult task (cf. Ellis et al., 2008), but the term is often used as an umbrella term covering a vast number of interpreting techniques aimed at describing, decoding, translating and understanding the meaning of different phenomena (Van Maanen, 1979). Qualitative research here, however, does not refer to method or data, but to knowledge claims. Understood this way, "qualitative" research is about the methods used to generate what could be better described as interpretations and meanings, a form of knowledge that cannot and does not aim to be reproduced with exactness and to be generalized, since it is the result of a processual performance; it thus refers to epistemological positioning. (Sergi & Hallin, 2011:192)

The design of the qualitative research process of this thesis was informed by the epistemological, ontological and methodological commitments already discussed in detail in order to answer the research question. Four comparative empirical studies reflecting similar and contrasting commitments, focus, methodology and methods, conducted contemporaneously in or near the research site were identified and are outlined in Table 5.4 to illustrate alternative or similar methodological choices and justify the decisions made in the research design for the study. These comparative studies will be referred to in the subsequent sections on data collection and analysis to situate and position my methodological choices in the theoretical field of study in expatriation in the Middle East and specifically UAE. As explained earlier there are no

extant studies that share the same specific research focus, methodological choices and methods in the research site, therefore, the four studies have been selected on the basis of sharing consistent or contradictory methodological choices in studying expatriates, to help illustrate the position of this study in current empirical studies and explain the research design of this investigation. Their individual rationale for selection is outlined in Table 5.4.

All of the studies share a constructionist approach to their research. Potter (2006:84) argues that the goal of constructionist research is explication rather than explanation from empirical research. Explication provides an alternative approach to deal with complexity and is appropriate when researching under theorised concepts including the 'Third Gender' (Adler, 1987) and SIEs' (Al Ariss et al, 2012), in under theorised research contexts including the UAE ( Harrison and Michailova, 2012). Therefore, similar to this study, three of the studies are understood as "exploratory" (Potter 2006:84). In contrast, the study by Forstenlechner et al. (2011) is "explanatory" as it seeks to apply and evaluate the application of a particular multilevel relational model of diversity in the context of the UAE (Potter 2006:84).

**Table 5.4: Comparative studies of issues in expatriation studies in UAE/Middle East**

Study Characteristics	Forstenlechner et al.(2011)	Harrison and Michailova (2012)	Rodriguez and Scurry (2014)	This study (2014)
Rationale for comparison in this study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Country same</li> <li>▪ Multi-level, Relational Framework</li> <li>▪ Methods (same and different)</li> <li>▪ Macro data from different source</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Country same</li> <li>▪ Participants</li> <li>▪ Methods (different)</li> <li>▪ Focus (broad topic areas similar)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Similar Country</li> <li>▪ Participants – SIE but not gender specific</li> <li>▪ Multi-level, Relational approach</li> <li>▪ Focus (broad topic areas similar)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ UAE</li> <li>▪ Participants – western, white women SIEs'</li> <li>▪ Multi-level relational framework</li> <li>▪ Method- S/S interview and media analysis</li> <li>▪ Third Gender subjectivities</li> </ul>
Country	UAE	UAE	Qatar	UAE
Participants	Expatriates and Government Officials	Western Women Expatriates (AE/ SIE/ trailing spouses)	Professional/Skilled SIE	White western women SIEs
Method	Face to face interview and observe management meeting	Online survey and phone interview	Face to face interview	Face to face interview
Type of Study	Explanatory	Exploratory	Exploratory	Exploratory
Type of Data	Qualitative	Quantitative and qualitative	Qualitative	Qualitative
Study Focus	A longitudinal case study to analyse the multi-level dynamics of the implementation of the quota system to show how the interdependence of these levels influenced the outcome of the quota programme.	Focus on expatriates' own interpretations of their adjustment, cross-cultural training (CCT) and social ties and support experiences in UAE	Explored career capital development of self-initiated expatriates (SIEs) in the context of the Middle East	Focus on exploring experiences of 'Third Gender construction for white western women SIEs in UAE
Access	Not explained	Embassies, chambers of commerce, expatriate associations and own personal and professional networks in each of these countries and the UAE. Sent out 220 email invitations to participate in an online survey; 86 respondents	MD Gatekeeper to a Case Organisation	Personal contacts networks/ media

Table 5.4. (continued)

Participant selection criteria	Key actors involved in quota process in case study organisation and government	"broad definition for 'female expatriate' as provided by Taylor and Napier (1996a, b) to allow for as many respondents as possible". Asked for 'nationality' from 4 western countries (UK/US/Australia and NZ)	Qatari Non-nationals SIE identified by organisation purposely sampled skilled SIEs in professional roles.	SIE- Women- Originate in Western country and ethnically white with a minimum of 2yrs residency in UAE
Participant demographic characteristics	7 Interviews- 3 Expatriate and 1 local employees and 3 Government Officials	Target – nationals from UK/US/Australia and New Zealand. Survey- 86 respondents- most managerial -55% Australian - 60% under 40 yrs., 55% married and 51% had no children. Overseas Phone interview – 25 - 38% Australian- 53% SIE rest evenly split assigned Expat and trailing spouse – Strong caveat	8 women and 12 men. Age range was 31–63 years, average age of 42 years. Period of tenure ranged from 1 month to 7 years. Countries of origin were UK (8) Philippines (3), India (2) and 1 each from Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Peru, South Africa, Syria and the USA.	10 Interviews, All ethnically white women, from western countries - UK (2), Australia (3), Canada (2), Ireland (1), France (1) USA (1)- with at least 2yrs residency in UAE.
Method	Semi-structured, Face to face Interview and 1 meeting observation	Online survey- then from answers identify participants invited for a phone interview	Semi-structured, face to face Interview	Semi-structured, face to face Interview and media analysis
Interviewees number/ place/duration	4 Senior managers across 3 dates at work - Total of 90-150 minutes with each interviewee	25 - Phone overseas	20- Private room in organisation / 45-60 minutes	10- Café/ participant homes/ social club/ hotel café
Analysis method	Thematic coding using a grounded approach (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Syed and Ozbilgin's (2009) relational framework was used to identify themes at each level	Analysed and grouped according to themes that emerged related to the theoretical propositions	Interpretative, narrative approach. Identified themes within 3 analytical clusters: macro-country, meso-organisational and micro individual. Organised coding using NVIVO tool	Discourse approach thematic coding. Adapting Syed and Özbilgin's (2009) relational framework to identify themes within 3 analytical clusters: macro-country, meso-group and micro individual. NVIVO tool

Only Harrison and Michailova (2012), share a similar focus on 'western women SIEs', designated within their study as Anglo centric and by nationality, however the two other studies are of a broadly similar focus on expatriates in UAE, or neighbouring Qatar, which shares a similar enough expatriate population profile to be relevant for comparison (Rodriguez & Scurry, 2014). All of the comparative studies included the collection of qualitative data, through semi-structured interviews, although Harrison and Michailova (2012) conducted theirs by telephone from New Zealand, with participants identified in an online survey, which provides some interesting differences with this study. Comparisons in access to the research site and challenges in identifying and inviting research participants will be discussed in more detail in the subsequent sections (5.2.6 and 5.2.7 respectively). Two of the studies reflect a relational, multilevel approach to methodology; however, they provide useful different comparisons in their choice of research methods and conduct with this study and neither use media sources. All of the studies adopt a thematic coding approach to data analysis (King, 2004), although there are few specific details on frameworks or particular approaches to the data analysis process for further comparison.

Overall, the three studies provide a useful comparative framework for discussing the details of the chosen research design and methods for this study which will be discussed in detail in the next section. The overall research design process for this study is outlined in Table 5.5.

**Table 5.5: Thesis research process**

Research process stages	Actions taken
Development of interview questions	Initial research focused on western women expatriates, in UAE, leading to developing an interview guide – semi-structured questions organised to explore participants’ understandings of their experiences of living in UAE as ‘western women expatriates’
Identification of research participants	Potential participants were identified through personal and professional networks and contacts in the research site and particular participants were purposively invited to participate in the study
Initial interviews	Initial three interviews carried out using the interview guide. Interviews were tape recorded and transcribed
Transcription and initial review of interviews	Reflection on three interviews identified that the participants’ ‘white’ rather than ‘western’ subjectivity was a critical emerging theme in the data. Reflexive review led to focus upon implications of ‘whiteness’ within participants’ constructions and relations with others in data analysis and interpretation.
Interviews	Contact with potential participants, and remaining five interviews carried out using interview guide, providing ten interviews in total
Analysis of interviews	Apply thematic coding to identify emergent themes in the participants’ interview data
Integration with secondary data from research site	Compare emergent themes with an analysis of themes drawn from contemporary secondary data sources of daily national newspapers in UAE
Synthesis of primary and secondary data with literature	Synthesise primary and secondary data with literature review on intersectional lens and women SIEs to identify and outline relevant consistent and contradictory discursive themes for multi arena framework
Re-theorise the Third Gender concept	Selectively recode the data to explore intersection of gender and ethnic subjectivities. Deconstruct the Third Gender concept to reframe its discursive theorisation drawing from the analysis of selective data and multi arena relational framework, synthesised with literature
Reflect and evaluate implementation of research design process	Identify and discuss challenges and contribution of researcher reflexivity to research design, implementation and limitations (see Chapter Eight for detailed discussion)

### 5.2.4 Data collection

This section gives details about the methods chosen to collect qualitative primary and secondary data and how I identified and invited selected woman expatriates to contribute to the study. Furthermore, it will discuss issues, alternatives and rationale for the methods used in the study to collect qualitative data on the participants' experiences of living and working in the UAE. It also provides details of the participants, schedule and procedures for conducting the interviews. The following section will outline the process for collecting secondary data on macro level discourses on expatriation through contemporary media newspaper sources, to contribute to the multilevel

### 5.2.5 Methods for collecting qualitative data

The following table outlines the range of methods available for collecting qualitative data and the alternatives methods used in the comparative studies. My access to the field was advantageous and I decided that in-depth semi structured, face to face interviews were the ideal method to collect candid accounts of individual participants' lived experiences. Analysis of contemporaneous news stories from three national newspapers was used to explore macro level discourses and connect participant accounts to these broader constructions within the research field (Williams & Mavin, 2012).

**Table 5.6 Summary of comparative methods for collecting qualitative data**

Options	Alternatives from Comparative Studies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Interviews ( face to face/ Skype/phone/e-mail)</li> <li>❖ Surveys (online vs paper)</li> <li>❖ Focus groups</li> <li>❖ Observation - meetings</li> <li>❖ Secondary data – visual/text/multimedia/document analysis</li> <li>❖ Diaries, journals, life histories, stories</li> <li>❖ Researcher ethnography/participant observation (Cassell &amp; Symon, 2004)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Observe meetings (Forstenlechner et al., 2011)</li> <li>➤ Online surveys (Harrison &amp; Michailova, 2012)</li> <li>➤ Phone interviews (Harrison &amp; Michailova, 2012)</li> <li>➤ Face to face interviews (Rodriguez &amp; Scurry, 2014;</li> <li>➤ Forstenlechner (2010:183) “The rationale for conducting this research using the interview method is partly based on Ahlstrom et al. (2004), who found that in developing countries (such as the UAE), research subjects often prefer face-to-face interviews to questionnaires”</li> </ul>

## 5.2.6 Negotiating access and identifying participants

Jokinen, Brewster, and Suutari (2008:979) highlight the increased significance of research into SIEs, arguing that whilst they are “a widespread phenomenon”, they constitute “an almost hidden aspect of the international labour market”. This illustrates several key points about SIEs hidden in plain sight, including the following: challenges of negotiating access to research sites and potential participants.

Hutchings et al. (2013) suggests that the challenges of conducting research internationally can be overcome by drawing on personal contacts (Forstenlechner, 2010). A distinct advantage for me during the period of the investigation was the fact that I was resident in the UAE and similar to Forstenlechner (2010) able to leverage personal contacts e.g. school yard with other parents, friendship groups, personal and professional women’s networking organisations and communities in Abu Dhabi and Dubai (Leonard, 2008, 2010; Silverman, 2010). These issues are outlined in more detail in Table 5.7 with specific examples and how other comparative researchers have responded.

**Table 5.7: Issues accessing the research site and participants**

Issues accessing the Research Context and Participants	Alternative Approaches
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Restricted access through organisational/gatekeepers (Tzeng, 2006)</li> <li>❖ Lack of researcher proximity to field (Hutchings et al 2013)</li> <li>❖ Mobility of participants – leaving the field (Harrison &amp; Michailova, 2012)</li> <li>❖ Sensitivity, risk and vulnerability of participants in research contexts (Richardson &amp; Zikic, 2007; Rodriguez &amp; Scurry, 2014)</li> <li>❖ Lack of quantifiable demographic data on potential participant group in research context (Harrison &amp; Michailova, 2012)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Direct contact with case study organisation (Forstenlechner et al., 2011; Rodriguez &amp; Scurry, 2014)</li> <li>➤ Contacting institutions/networking organisation e.g. embassies, chambers of commerce, expatriate community and networking organisations (Harrison &amp; Michailova, 2012)</li> </ul>

### **5.2.7 Identifying and inviting participants**

There are significant challenges in identifying and inviting research participants into this kind of study. As discussed in Chapter Three, significant empirical expatriate research is built upon male samples (Bozionelos, 2009); female expatriation research focuses primarily on company-assigned executives (Altman & Shortland, 2008) and research on SIEs is still in its early stage (Al Ariss et al., 2012). The limited number of working women expatriates (Tzeng, 2006), and even less women SIEs, complicated further by issues in access and identification, before estimating levels of willingness to participate in a research study, led me to adopt a focused approach to identifying and inviting participants into the study (Silverman, 2010). Similar to Forstenlechner et al. (2011), I adopted a purposive strategy to search for and identify potential participants whom I believed would help me answer my research question (Bryman, 2004; Silverman, 2010). This was supplemented by a snowball sampling technique, based on chain referral (similar to Janssens et al., 2006) to seek the help of current participants to identify others who would be appropriate for the research; two participants were referred in this way. Table 5.8 outlines the issues, alternatives and explains my choices in undertaking this stage of the research process.

**Table 5.8: Summary of challenges and alternative practices in inviting research participants**

Research Activity	Challenges	Alternatives
Identifying and inviting participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Definitional ambiguity – e.g. could include – trailing spouses, dual career couples (Richardson and McKenna 2003, 2006 Tharenou 2008)</li> <li>❖ Research acknowledges the role of family relationships and the complexities of dual-career couples in expatriation decisions for both assigned and SIEs (Richardson and McKenna 2002; Tharenou 2008; Jokinen et al., 2008)</li> <li>❖ Economic conditions in recession and paradoxically buoyant labour markets as evidenced in UAE during the study period 2007-2009, evidence many AEs’ unilaterally or through mutual consent changing expatriate status to a regional or local contract , fixed terms, reduced/improved benefits and more/less security and protection from membership of MNC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Ask participants to self-ascribe themselves to SIE definition (Forstenlechner, 2010)</li> <li>➤ Use a “broad definition for ‘female expatriate’ as provided by Taylor and Napier (1996a,b) to allow for as many respondents as possible” (Harrison and Michailova, 2012:634)</li> <li>➤ Acknowledge ‘fuzzy’ boundaries for classifying participant types. Harrison and Michailova comment that (2012:634 ) “Given the lack of official numbers regarding Western female expatriates in the UAE, we must concede that there is a possibility that the actual distribution of independent, trailing and traditional female expatriates may vary from the distribution in our study.”</li> <li>➤ Use an online survey to identify, select and invite participants for interview (Harrison and Michailova, 2012:634)</li> <li>➤ ‘Expert’ – government officials (Forstenlechner et al., 2011)</li> </ul>
Participant search approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Range available for qualitative studies usually include purposive, snowball, (Bryman, 2004)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Purposive ( Rodriguez &amp; Scurry, 2014)</li> <li>➤ Expert ( Forstenlechner et al., 2011)</li> <li>➤ Snowball (Leonard, 2008, 2010)</li> </ul>
Any specific participant selection criteria for focus of study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Research question requires specific demographic characteristics, gender, nationality, tenure, age, marital status, children</li> <li>❖ Western often used but usually defined in terms of countries included in the ‘Anglo-cluster’ (Ashkanasy et al , 2002)</li> <li>❖ Class – often attributed to occupation, education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ ‘Western’ description used by several researchers and identified through nationality (Forstenlechner, 2010 used ‘British’; Harrison and Michailova, 2012 selected participants with ‘UK, US, Australia and New Zealand’)</li> <li>➤ Select participants on basis of professional occupation/ education (Rodriguez and Scurry, 2014)</li> <li>➤ Select participants on country of ethnic/national origin (Al-Ariss &amp; Ozbilgin, 2010)</li> <li>➤ ‘Western’ description but actually exclusively ‘white’ ethnicity (Leonard, 2008, 2010)</li> </ul>

The characteristics I adopted for a self-initiated expatriate included someone who independently or with their spouse/family had decided to initiate their employment and residency in another host country (Richardson & McKenna, 2002). However, I also acknowledge that people's motivations for initiating expatriation are not always exclusively employment choices but influenced by other aspirations including: money, career, lifestyle, adventure and exploration (Banai & Harry 2004; Tharenou, 2008). I decided it was more relevant to include participants who had established themselves living in the UAE for at least two years, to collect insights beyond first impressions and to encourage more participant reflexivity on broader and deeper experiences.

Berry and Bell's (2012) deconstruction of the 'western' nomenclature used in empirical studies as reflecting a 'white male norm' was illustrated in the comparative studies, (Forstenlechner, 2010). The contribution of race and ethnicity in obfuscating category attributions (Al Ariss & Ozbilgin, 2010), was usually manifested in using nationality as a proxy for 'western'. Harris and Michailova (2012) selected 'western' expatriates by country of origin from UK, US, Australia and New Zealand. I decided that 'western' would include participants from countries of origin normally recognised in empirical studies to include those from North America, Europe, Australia and New Zealand and ethnicity as indicated by a 'white' physiology. I did not expressly say that I was interested in their 'white' subjectivities, but rather their experiences as western and foreign women as I did not want to unknowingly provide cues to frame their reflective accounts around their 'white' construction of their lived experiences. (King, 2004; Silverman, 2010:197).

A total of 12 SIE women living and working in the UAE were identified and invited to participate in the research process, but two withdrew, therefore 10 research interviews are included in this investigation. Whilst a small qualitative sample, Akerlind (2008) argues 10–15 are appropriate given that these are selected for variation, reflecting the range, rather than the frequency of ways of understanding phenomena within the population. In the comparative studies using face to face interviews, Forstenlechner et al. (2011) had seven participants, Rodriguez and Scurry (2014) had 20 and Forstenlechner (2010) completed 18 in UAE. Therefore, my data set of 10 face to face, in depth interviews is comparable with other similar studies. This is consistent with conducting cross-cultural management research, particularly in developing countries (Forstenlechner, 2010). In addition repatriation to the UK with my children was required within a shorter timeframe than anticipated and therefore on a practical level, primary data collection was completed before leaving the UAE in July 2009.

Individual semi-structured interviews were conducted in English, lasting between 40 – 130 minutes, and took place in the UAE during 2008–2009 at a location convenient for the participant. Interviews were recorded, transcribed and pseudonyms used, which meant there was a reliable ‘chain of evidence’ (Rodriguez & Scurry, 2014). All participants had chosen to relocate individually or with a partner and/or family to the UAE, and therefore were a group of SIEs. The participant biographical details are discussed briefly here in Table 5.9 and discussed in more detail in Chapter Six.

**Table 5.9 Research participant interview information**

Pseudonym	Current Occupation	Country of origin	Time Place	Duration minutes	Words
AmE	Academic	USA	Social club Sep 08	110	18,953
Ann	Training Consultant	Australia	Hotel café Dec 08	130	23, 423
Beth	HR Director	UK	Office Mar 09	45	6,142
Cara	Executive Assistant to Chief Executive in Finance	UK	Home May 09	75	12,785
Jess	Publisher/ Entrepreneur	UK	Café May 09	50	7,347
Emma	Independent Training Consultant	UK	Café April 09	80	14,892
Katy	Training Manager in a local finance company	Canada	Café Dec 08	120	22, 319
Sue	HR Director	Canada	Hotel café Nov 08	120	21,306
Fay	Physiotherapist	France	Home May 09	40	5,454
Lynn	Quality professional	Republic of Ireland	Home Feb 09	60	8,562
All women were aged 30-55 years. None of the women were sent by an international company on an assignment to the UAE. However, CH had originally been sent to the UAE on a company assignment and then returned to Canada, left the company and returned independently to the UAE.					

### 5.2.8 Semi-structured interviews

As outlined earlier (see Table 5.6) research has suggested that research subjects in expatriate studies often prefer face-to-face interviews to questionnaires (Forstenlechner, 2010:183). Therefore, this study was similar to other SIE studies

(Rodriguez & Scurry, 2014), and consistent with feminist aims of surfacing understanding of other subjectivities in everyday interactions (Hesse-Biber, 2007). The primary data was collected through qualitative semi-structured interviews to understand how the women relationally and reflexively make sense of their experiences intersecting gendered subject positions (Cunliffe, 2008; Lutgen-Sandvik 2008; Janssens et al., 2006).

#### 5.2.8.1 Setting the context

Given the sensitivities of the topic and the research context I was consciously aware of ensuring that all participants felt comfortable and safe. I spoke with participants first to outline the purpose of my research, my role as a researcher, broad areas covered, note taking and recording before we arranged to meet. I met with participants in a setting of their own choice. The participants and myself both signed the Individual Informed Consent forms so that we each had a copy before we commenced the interview (Appendix 1, pg. 235).

#### 5.2.8.2 Structure of the interview

The use of an interview guide combined structure and flexibility and the conversational style gave space for participants and researcher to pursue participants' ideas. It facilitated a dialogical exchange with participants which helped me to unravel individual discourses emerging from their lived experiences (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The latter was particularly relevant to explore the way individuals intersubjectively and relationally discursively constructed themselves, their relationships, places and spaces they inhabited, connected to their broader social world (Cunliffe, 2008).

I adopted a form of semi-structured interviewing to encourage participants to provide detailed partial understandings rather than broader generalised accounts (Sergi & Hallin, 2011). The intention was always that the process would be more of a conversation which would cast my research participant as the narrator and myself as the listener (Czarniawska, 2004). However, I was open to respond to any specific questions they may have of me, but conscious of providing information rather than leading opinions. Acknowledging the voice of participants as curators of their own life stories enabled me to loosely frame a journey that meandered and flowed so that the participants' streams of interest and insight traversed the route along the way (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009).

### 5.2.8.3 Creating the interview guide

I formulated a conversational guide which was drawn from the literature review and my own experiences and knowledge of the research topics and country context (King, 2004; Kvale and Brinkman, 2009), and discussions with two western women academic colleagues in the UAE. The key factors in creating the conversational guide are outlined in Table 5.10

**Table 5.10: Conducting the interview**

- ✓ Reintroduced myself and the focus of my investigation and discussed the details of the Individual Ethical Informed Consent forms, which we both signed so that we each had a copy.
- ✓ Use an interview template sheet with topics and boxes to write key comments as talking and as a check throughout and at the end that I had covered all of the topics
- ✓ With the participants' permission I used a small digital recorder to record the interviews
- ✓ Start with broader, more open, and biographical conversational questions
- ✓ Follow the participants' lead, and give them a lot of space to direct and develop their own thoughts, ideas and insights
- ✓ Establish rapport and match and mirror, tone and pace of interaction
- ✓ Use silence and don't be tempted to fill a vacuum, encourage them to reflect and articulate their flow of sense making out loud rather than internally
- ✓ Ask for specific illustrative examples where possible to help participants focus on concrete examples rather than abstract generalities (King, 2004a :16)
- ✓ Be overly familiar with my guide, take brief notes, asterisk key points/quotes
- ✓ Refer participants to previous examples or previous topics to deepen or extend participant engagement and or reflection e.g. "How was this experience of discrimination at work here different from the one you mentioned with your previous employer?"
- ✓ Target and seek clarification, particularly with reference to the intersectional lens e.g. Why do you think they behaved in this way, was it because you were a woman or a foreigner?

\*Sources: Bryman (2004); King (2004); Kvale and Brinkmann (2009); Silverman (2010)

There were six broad areas I covered during the interview but not necessarily in this order:

- Work/life timeline and expatriation history
- Motivations to expatriate generally and specifically to the UAE
- Broader cultural impressions and adjustments to living in UAE

- Work environment and professional relationships/interaction
- Perceptions of representations of western women expatriates' and Emirati women in the media, and more broadly in social context
- Explore intersectional concept of 'Third Gender' – understanding and impact

I did start all of the interviews with a request for a brief biography of their career and expatriate details to date to establish a work/life timeline and broad indication of expatriate history. Depending on their responses we then covered the other topics but not necessarily in this order. In order to explore intersectionality and the concept of the 'Third Gender' in more detail I asked for their own opinions on how they constructed their own subjectivities as western women expatriates and how they think others perceived them at work and socially. Finally, I was interested in exploring their perceptions of macro level discourses and practices, so I enquired how they perceived that western women expatriates and Emirati women were presented in the media, and whether they felt that they were treated differently to Emirati women and did they feel advantaged or disadvantaged by the comparison, socially or in the workplace, or by institutional practices or regulations (See Appendix 2, pg. 236, for conversational guide).

#### 5.2.8.4 Conducting the interview

The assembly of narratives in interviews (or conversations) is always a two-way process. Therefore, we should treat the interviewer's questions not as (possibly distorted) gateways to the authentic account but as part of the process through which a narrative is collectively assembled (see Gubrium and Holstein, 2009; Rapley, 2004). Silverman (2010:47).

I aimed to demonstrate the competences of a quality interviewer (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009) in the structure and conduct of interviewing. I encouraged participants to set the tone and pace of their account, and supported their narration with a more conversational probing following the flow of their experiences (Wengraf, 2001) to explore, clarify and elaborate on the emergent issues raised. Table 5.10 outlines the key issues considered in the conduct of the interview.

I recorded and transcribed interviews, however there were some noise distortions in the public spaces, so on these occasions I reverted to my notes, to create a full account, which were then tidied up i.e. adding appropriate punctuation, removing pauses and false starts. Elliott, (2005:52) argues that this is appropriate where it is the content rather than the structure of the account that is being interpreted. Although I

acknowledge the value of providing the opportunity for participants to read their interview transcripts and my interpretations, I decided that, similar to other researchers in the field, the nature of expatriation research increases the risks of participants leaving the country at very short notice, so I did not build this into the research design. Indeed, three of the participants told me of their plans to leave the country during the interview.

I made minor adaptations to wording to the prompt sheets between interviews. Interviews lasted between 50 minutes and two hours and generated 141.183 words transcribed texts. Details of the interview schedule are noted in Table 5.9. During the interviews I made notes on the topic template forms, and used them to help me to refer the participant back to previous comments/incidents and help me make sure that I had covered all of the topics.

### **5.3. Data analysis and interpretation**

#### **5.3.1 Abductive analysis**

The approach to data analysis can be best described as abduction. The traditional models of reasoning and inference are induction and deduction (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2012); Pierce (1903) asserted that “Deduction proves that something must be; induction shows that something actually is operative; Abduction ... suggests that something may be” (cited in Gold, Walton, Cureton & Anderson., and 2011:234). The logic of abduction, which Pierce referred to as retroductive reasoning, comprises deductive (theory-inspired) and inductive (data-inspired) analyses. He originally framed abduction inference as a “preparatory” and a “first step” in scientific reasoning, prior to both induction and deduction; a response to an observation of facts which are initially surprising but which require explanation (Gold et al., 2011:234). Abduction embraces an iterative process reflecting the to and fro between data and theory in which theory is used to understand data and in enhancing understanding of the data also helps to develop, modify and refine emergent theory building (Alvesson & Sköldbberg, 2009; Fotaki, 2013).

Fotaki argues that abduction rejects the dualism of whether the themes were induced from data or deduced by theory “or the chicken-and-egg question” (Fotaki, 2013:1258). The first chapter outlined how this investigation was initiated by my observation and lived experience of the contingent relationship between contextual historical, cultural and temporal factors within specific but distinct geographical regions namely South

East Asia and the Middle East on understandings of western female expatriation. The puzzle of explaining my own and fellow women expatriates' experiences, subjectivities and social location as a 'third gender' (Adler, 1987) through available theorising on female expatriation in International Management literature was frustrating and lacked the criticality and contextual framing I felt was fundamental to the investigation.

From my observations outlined in the introduction, the expatriation landscape in UAE and South Korea was very different (see discussion in Chapter Two) and did not seem to be represented in the current expatriation literature. My observations and networking with fellow expatriates in the UAE led me to search for theorising on independent expatriates which I found in the emerging convergence of Migration and Expatriation literature through a focus on SIEs and SMs (see discussion of Expatriation-Migration Continuum in Chapter Four). In order to understand what was going in women expatriates' experience, from a critical rather than functional perspective, I looked to feminist theorising, to frame and inform the critical construction of 'woman' as gendered subjectivities.

After living and working in the research site, and after an initial analysis of three interviews in preparation for a staged doctoral progression panel I was struck by how my existing theoretical frameworks did not seem to explain what my data and observations were revealing. I decided that both of my current theoretical streams of conceptualising the subjectivity of the 'western woman expatriate' were inadequate. Stepping back from the data, I went back into the theory; a critical reconstruction of the original concept was implicated in both theoretical streams. The converging SIE/SM literature served to challenge the dominant western epistemological and empirical framing of expatriation literature (Al Ariss & Ozbilgin, 2010; Al Ariss et al 2012) and uncritical constructions of 'expatriates' representing a 'western white male subject', which was reflected in feminist theorising (Berry & Bell, 2012). Feminist theorising led me to disassemble and reconstruct my understanding of the participants' subjectivities as gendered and ethnicised (Holvino, 2010). The development of an intersectional lens (McCall, 2005) from feminist literature was fundamental in helping me to refine the social position of the participants at the intersection of their gendered and ethnicised subjectivities (Berry & Bell, 2012). My understanding of 'western' was problematised by the converging SIE/SM literature (Al Ariss et al., 2012) and redefined by feminist ethnicity literature which led me to adopt a more ethnically nuanced understanding of western as 'white' (Gunew, 2007), theoretically and empirically framed within the postcolonial traces of the contemporary research context (Fechter and Walsh,

2010). This intersectional lens helped me to reframe the converging expatriation and migration literature and clarify my conceptualisation of SIEs operationalised in this study (Berry & Bell, 2012). Furthermore, it provided me with a theoretical framework to inform my nuanced understanding and exploration of western 'white' subjectivities in the empirical data.

The theoretical inspiration offered by the intersectional lens (Crenshaw, 1991) and converging critical focus on conceptualising SIEs allowed the exploration of the subjectivities of the 'western women expatriates' in the context of the UAE. Although the redefined 'whiteness' theorising was not imposed on the data collection method or explicitly in the conversational guide, it was explored as it emerged in the co-construction of the accounts of the lived experiences of the participants. Nevertheless, I acknowledge that my own subjective experiences as a situated researcher and the (conscious and unconscious) interpretations of this position influenced the research process including analysis of the empirical data (see discussion on Reflexivity in section 8.3 in Chapter Eight).

### **5.3.2 Analysing participant interviews**

This investigation responds to recent calls (cf. Al Ariss, 2010; Al Ariss et al., 2012) to expand our empirical understanding of SIEs as discussed in the research design (see Section 5.2.3). The focus of the study is on the situated construction and performative effects of the subjectivities of western women expatriates. Therefore, a goal of the research process was to map out the contextual framing and performances of the participants' subjectivities within the research site, and then build upon this empirical framework to explore the concept of the Third Gender (Adler, 1987).

A three-stage, theory-driven interpretative analysis was used to identify emergent and dominant common themes within the contextual relational framework and inform the core theoretical dimensions which informed the re-theorisation of the Third Gender concept within this investigation (see Appendix 3 – for a summary of the coding template, pg. 237). The technique used to analyse the participant accounts can be classed as thematic coding, or specifically template analysis, which facilitates analysis at varying levels of specificity, which is consistent and appropriate for my contextual constructionist epistemology (Flick, 2009; King, 2004). Thematic coding analysis using this technique is flexible, not highly prescriptive, and has clear principles which guide a structured approach to data analysis and provide an organised, logical account of the investigation (King, 2004). The disadvantages include a lack of substantial literature

compared to other techniques, although this was countered by the opportunity to attend two practice based seminars with Dr King as part of the PhD programme of study.

In the first stage of the analysis as outlined in the abductive approach the first three full transcripts were read and reread to familiarise myself with the initial data, and begin to identify some higher order broader codes, pay attention to links and contradictions, and reflect upon emerging and unexpected major themes, e.g. whiteness (Cresswell, 2009). This was a subjective interpretation of empirical data as opposed to mechanistic counting of repetitive words and extraction of fragments where such repetitions occurred, as within thematic coding assumptions between frequency and salience cannot be made (King, 2004:256).

In the second stage of the analysis due to a relatively small total sample and the nature of interviewing processes, qualitative software programs were not relied upon to identify key words and topics from the raw transcripts and organise the data (Fotaki, 2013; King, 2004). When interview data collection was completed all of the accounts were read several times to deepen my level of familiarity and immersion in the data. The transcripts were cleaned up, each colour coded and the data was chunked into discrete sections e.g. of specific incidents that included the question, to situate the response with the line of enquiry, to avoid misinterpretation, and numbered for easy cross referencing.

The initial template had a few broad pre-defined codes, to guide the analysis, so that in the first instance, responses to questions could be broadly collated together e.g. why did you expatriate to the UAE, or how did you find employment? (See Relational Framework Coding template in appendix 3, pg. 237 ). All of the interview texts were then reread and coherent chunks of data initially coded in the right hand column and then copied and pasted into a document for the specific higher order code, which were then further organised into lower level codes as the analysis progressed. There was an inclusive approach to assigning data to a first level code at this stage, and when chunks of data did not fit into these codes then new broad first level codes were developed. Furthermore, parallel coding allowed data to be assigned to different codes at the same level. This initial template is constructed to analyse the text of the interviews, but is revised simultaneously with the process of analysis (King, 2004:258).

Then each collection of data within a higher order code e.g. Employment was analysed to identify emerging lower order codes e.g. entry into employment included third level codes: 1. formal and informal routes to find employment, 2. employment terms and

conditions, and 3. legal work status. This hierarchical mapping was then reanalysed beyond the linear frame to reframe the emerging concepts into three analytical clusters reflecting macro, meso and micro arenas of social life, not dissimilar to what King (2004) referred to as integrative themes. The connectivity between arenas emerged so that for example understandings of women’s social roles in Emirati culture (macro), was reflected in gendered roles in organisations (meso) and enacted in gendered interactions with work colleagues and clients (micro).

The process identified similarities and differences within the accounts within particular coded data sets, which was developed in the analysis using examples and quotes. It sought to explicate the processes by which the participants’ contested and multidimensional subjectivities were produced and their agentic positioning in these discursive spaces (Fletcher, 1999; Janssens et al., 2006). It was important to keep the template flexible to accommodate the fluidity of the analysis and emerging connectivity within and between the analytical arenas. Table 5.11 provides some examples of amendments made to the template through the analysis

**Table 5.11: Example of amendments to template (King, 2004)**

Type	Example	Rationale
Insertion	Communication practices within relations with Emirati codes	Had not anticipated the significance of outlining specific protocols of communications in relational practice between participants and Emiratis
Deletion	Lower order code that explored the participants’ comparative experiences of other host country cultures to the UAE	This comparative information was not necessary to the scope and focus of this study
Changing scope	Refocused the data to include a higher order code on whiteness	The deeper level of detail was required for the study to explore privileges and limitations of their white subjectivities
Changing higher order classification	Change culture and norms to Emirati cultural identity	To distinguish what was culturally and historically distinctive about Emirati cultural identity and distinguish it from the centrality of Islam within social and institutional life.

The thematic analysis of the data was integrated with the literature and the media analysis and presented in a relational multi-arena contextual framework (Syed & Ozbilgin, 2009) which informs the next stage of the analysis. The choice of

presentation was made on the basis that a set of individual case studies of the participants would not illuminate the clarity and connectivity of influences in the multi-arena perspective required for this investigation (King, 2004).

The third stage of the analysis built upon this multi-arena relational framework by using selective recoding of the analysed data. The data was recoded to focus on the three higher order analytical clusters reflecting the core dimensions of the participants' categorical constructions as SIE, woman and western subjectivities. First, the data which was illustrative of their SIE subject positions was extracted from the multi-arena relational framework and synthesised with other sources and discussed in Chapter Six. Then, extracts which related to gender and ethnicity, with particular attention to evidence of the participants own understandings and specific examples of their intersections was extracted, synthesised with other secondary sources and presented in Chapter Seven. Again there was an inclusive approach to coding and assigning the data, however, in reframing the data, there were certain consistent discursive resonances that emerged directly from the participant accounts and provided the thematic focus of analysis for each analytical cluster. The goal was not to disaggregate the data but rather crystallise the data within each cluster to illuminate the most significant discourse that produced intersubjective performances of western women SIEs' interesting subjectivities. Furthermore, there were overlaps in the potential to attribute the data to more than one analytical cluster. Therefore, links were established in the data analysis and interpretation, between different clusters, but the interpretation of the data was presented within the cluster in which it was most salient.

### **5.3.3 Media analysis**

An analysis of contemporary media articles was used as a secondary source of data, to support the interpretation and illustration of themes which emerged in the primary interview data (Saunders et al., 2012). Furthermore, following Marmenout (2010) it provided access to contemporaneous specific illustrative examples which situated the analysis in a rapidly evolving research context. However, it is acknowledged as partial data which provides illustrative examples, but does not constitute a comprehensive analysis. Although this is not a method generally used in expatriate studies, there are contemporary studies exploring how women are gendered through media representations and reporting (Mavin, Bryans & Cunningham, 2010; Mavin and Williams, 2013; Skalli, 2011). Tienari et al. (2009) were informative in showing how small sections of text illuminate the process of outlining and connecting to broader social dynamics in different arenas of analysis. Importantly, this method enabled

access to representation of contextually contingent normative conceptions. This illuminated contingent dominant discursive understandings of the normative conceptions of attitudes and activities appropriate for the sex category of woman (West & Zimmerman, 1987) to which the participants would be held accountable in doing gender in the research context.

While resident in the UAE I collected media articles from the only three English language daily newspapers available to read by the expatriate community in the UAE. The articles were collected from September 2007- July 2009. The collection of articles was refined to include only those that contributed directly to the broad research themes emerging in the data, e.g. excluding irrelevant regional geo-political events. An electronic search of the newspaper sites was undertaken to ensure coverage of key terms 'western and/or foreign and/or women expatriates' and only 30 articles were retrieved. Then the data was analysed using themes that emerged in the full analysis of the participants' accounts, to particularly identify supporting and contradictory evidence of discourses within macro, meso and micro arenas, see Table 5.12 for details of articles and themes included in the archival media data analysis. A summary of themes which emerged in this data are introduced in Chapter Six (see section 6.2, pg. 139). Together with the primary data, this analysis increased the overall trustworthiness of my research and the intersectional theoretical lens employed.

**Table 5.12 Summary of Newspaper Articles**

Number of articles	Theme		
119	Emirati Identity/ Culture/ Citizenship		
108	Emirati Women		
76	Gulf Contextual Issues/Events		
44	Third Country nationals/ Expatriates generally		
30	Western Expatriate women		
Total 377	National (187)	Gulf Times (110)	Khaleej Times (80)

#### **5.4. Chapter summary**

This chapter has outlined the feminist informed RSC epistemological (Cunliffe, 2003, 2008) and processual ontological (Demir & Lychnell, 2014) commitments underpinning this investigation into “How do western women self-initiated expatriates understand their experiences in the United Arab Emirates?” The rationale for the methodological choices and research strategy were outlined, followed by a detailed account of the research design, methods and process (Al Ariss et al., 2012). The chapter highlighted the abductive approach to thematic analysis to inform the interpretation of the research participants’ accounts (King, 2004) supplemented by media sources (Marmenout, 2010). The evaluative framework and researcher reflexivity which will be drawn upon to evaluate the trustworthiness of the research will be discussed in detail in Chapter Eight (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). The next two chapters will outline the synthesis of this research process in understandings of SIE (see Chapter Six) and intersecting Western woman subjectivities (see Chapter Seven).

## Chapter Six: Relational Framework

### 6. Introduction

This chapter will provide a synthesis of the empirical and theoretical data to; construct a multi arena relational framework (Anthias, a, b 2013; Al Ariss, 2010, 2014), which contextualises the contingent production of individual and collective relational subjectivities of western women SIEs' (Leonard, 2010; West and Fenstermaker, 1995, a, b, 2002; West and Zimmerman, 1987), within the specific cultural, structural and temporal research context of the UAE (Fechter and Walsh, 2010). In doing so, it will contribute to the theoretical and empirical expansion of doing difference by West and Zimmerman (2009) and of SIE studies called for by Al Ariss et al, (2012), which will be discussed in the conclusion (see chapter eight). Therefore, this chapter will contribute to answering the first and second research aims to:

- Explore the common and specific experiences of western self-initiated expatriate women working in the UAE
- Contribute further empirical research from an intersectional perspective of western women self-initiated expatriates to the emerging theoretical and methodological expansion of the expatriation theory base.

This chapter provides further details about the participants and, more specifically richer details about their perceptions and experiences of working and living in the UAE, to introduce the reader more fully to the primary sources of evidence and how their common and specific experiences have informed the research process. The chapter begins by summarising the processes of selecting and interpreting the data, relating to a relational multi arena understanding of the experiences of 'western women' SIEs' subjectivities presented in this chapter. The chapter then considers the participants biographies including their routes to entry and employment in the UAE. The next part of the chapter provides a contextual multi arena analysis framework of macro, meso and micro arenas. This is illustrated by selected extracts from the participant accounts and media articles to illuminate the construction and enactment of participants' subjectivities and the discursive and generative resources embedded and leveraged in intersubjective relational processes within each arena.

Emergent themes from the data presented are reviewed, at appropriate points, against existing theoretical and empirical studies presented previously in the literature chapters on intersectionality (see chapter three) and expatriation-migration continuum (see

chapter four). Furthermore, the contested nature of doing difference (West and Fenstermaker, 1995, 2002) embedded within their collective subjectivities as foreign western women is illuminated through interpretive insights and the explication of connecting discursive influences between the three analytical arenas (Anthias, 2013,a).

The chapter concludes by considering the implications of the multi arena relational analysis of the research context outlined in understanding the participants SIE subjectivities within the UAE. This is framed in terms of interpreting how their situated intersubjective relations as SIE subjectivities contribute to a discourse of risk, in understanding their experiences within the context of this study. The themes emerging in the relational framework in this chapter are taken forward into the next chapter, infusing interpretations of the participants intersecting gendered and ethnic subject positions. This dialectical interplay of multi arena influences will be explored from the perspective of providing an original contribution to the discursive reconceptualization of the 'Third Gender' (Adler, 1987) as an analytical concept explored in the following chapter.

In doing so, the chapter will identify some of the multi arena themes constructed and leveraged by the participants in understanding their relational subjectivities, contributing to both the intersectional and emergent SIE literatures. Therefore, this chapter will contribute to answering the third research objective to:

*Provide interpretations of western women SIEs' experiences synthesised within the existing literature to construct a multi arena relational framework which situates the production of their intersubjective relations within the context of this study.*

Through the following sub-objectives to:

- *Offer interpretations of western women SIEs' experiences in the UAE, identifying both similarities and differences between these experiences*
- *Synthesise the empirical data and existing literature to explicate a multi arena relational framework which situates the production of intersubjective relations within the context of this study.*

## **6.1. Data selection and Interpretation processes**

The previous methodology chapter provided a detailed account of the data selection and interpretation processes. Therefore, this section provides a brief summary of the processes relating specifically to the data presentation.

There were several challenges in presenting the empirical data. The presentation of participants' experiences was mitigated by ethical considerations of anonymity and confidentiality which required some of the narrative account details e.g. employers' names to be obscured or excluded this chapter. However, a range of insights from participants' accounts around shared areas of understandings and experiences emerged through the process of analysis, which could be presented here, within the constraints of anonymity and confidentiality required by participants. Furthermore, the integration of data from media articles particularly to illuminate multi arena themes specific to the research context was an integral part of the research design. Therefore, this data are embedded and articulated appropriately within the data presentation to resonate with themes emerging in the participants' accounts. Finally, the multi arena research design sought to illuminate both the distinctiveness and relationality of the different levels of analysis and therefore the primary presentation of the evidence has been organised at macro, meso and micro levels to explicate their distinctiveness. Interpretive insights are articulated as appropriate to identify and explore their relationality (Al Ariss et al, 2012; Forstenlechner, Lettice and Ozbilgin, 2011).

The intention of presenting the empirical data in this way reflects the RSC and processual focus of this thesis (Cunliffe, 2008; Cunliffe and Coupland, 2011; Demir and Lychnell, 2014), emphasizing how the social construction of participants' accounts at the micro level resonates with meso and macro level discursive processes in specific temporal, cultural and historical contexts (Al Ariss et al, 2012). The data are presented to reflect a multivocal rather than singular authoritative account of participants extracts to highlight the similar and different ways in which participants' constructed, interpreted and enacted their understandings and experiences as a western woman SIE in UAE encouraging polyphony of voices (Currie and Brown, 2003) at each level. The discursive resonances and their substantive effects of participants' understandings and interactions are presented and summarised in this chapter (ref). The next chapter will explore how such themes can be reorganised and (re) interpreted to contribute to new understandings of the analytical construction of Third Gender (Adler, 1987) and contributions to the theoretical and empirical research in intersectionality and self-initiated expatriation.

Presenting the data in distinct arenas is not to suggest that they are fixed, separate and impermeable, but rather serves to elucidate analytical distinctions and facilitates an exploration of the relationality of the sources of evidence in a manageable format for the reader (Choo and Ferree, 2010). Importantly, to avoid the impression of a 'stacking' or unidirectional flow between the contexts e.g. macro to meso to micro, they are

framed as 'arenas' rather than levels (Anthias, 2013, a) and as the reader moves through the arenas, influences and effects between the themes are identified are explicated.

Having summarised the processes and purposes of data selection, interpretation and presentation for this Chapter, the next section will provide a short summary of the major themes that were identified in the media analysis to provide contemporaneous documentary resources to illuminate key events, points of interest and nature of reporting that was evident at the time of data collection. The contribution of insights and evidence from the media articles will be articulated as appropriate alongside illustrations of participants' experiences of the themes emerging in the macro, meso and micro arenas, in the main body of this chapter.

## **6.2. Media documentary analysis**

A total of 388 articles have been collected from September 2007 to July 2009 date which include direct reports, editorials, readers' letters and opinion pieces from the three English speaking daily national newspapers written and published in the UAE including the following:

- Khaleej Times
- The National
- The Gulf News

The relevant themes and sources will be embedded into the analysis of the relational framework to illuminate the significant themes emerging in the participants' accounts. However, the next section will provide a summary of relevant themes from the participants' biographies that are relevant to the focus of this investigation. So far very broad themes have been identified which provide a more textured understanding of the research context of this investigation (see Table 6.1).

**Table 6.1: Major themes in documentary analysis of media in UAE 2007-2009**

Theme	Features
National Identity and Citizenship for Emiratis	Key topic in the local press particularly as the President announced 2008 it as the flagship theme of his annual presidential address. This has engaged individuals, organisations, academics, Emirati and expatriate to contribute to the debate. There have been Government and University conferences and debates on the issue, and it is a new subject that has been introduced into the school curriculum for national students.
Changing role of Emirati women	Role of Emirati women is increasingly a frequent news story in the daily press. There are regular stories that seek to promote the positive contribution that Emirati women make and can continue to make if encouraged. They cover several 'firsts' of women becoming ministers and judges or in non-traditional occupations such as pilots and policewomen. Generally the theme is positive of women's emergence into professional roles. Often put in the context of the goals for national economic and social development, where the Emirati population are a significant minority. More recently there have been several articles framed within the debate on Emirati Identity, that suggest that Emirati women should be mindful of leaving childrearing to the 'foreign' domestic help.
Role of expatriates and TCNs'	Role of Expatriates is a complex topic to be reported in the media, as there are very different 'groups' of expatriates. The large population of migrant construction workers particularly from the Indian subcontinent, the significant population of Filipinos working in the in the service sector, the western expatriates in the 'professional' occupations, and those from the wider Arab world in all of the sectors and professions each have issues related to their specific living and working conditions. The reporting often reflects the ethnic readership and editorial team of the newspaper in terms of what and how stories are reported e.g. The Khaleej Times seems to have a particular link to those from the Indian Subcontinent in terms of its stories and readership. In comparison, The National's editorial team ( Ex Telegraph editors) are more western or expatriate Arab and seem more likely to include stories that cover a broader range of expatriates including western expatriates.
Role of expatriate women	Role of Expatriate women is generally less reported than that of Emirati women and the story may reflect the socio-political status of the particular women. There has been significant reporting of the discrimination and abuse of TCN women particularly in domestic service with families, which highlights the role of agents and sponsors, and lack of legal protection. There are stories of successful expatriate women of all nationalities in the professions and business or at sports and cultural events. There are several stories that particularly feature western women tourists and expatriates that contravene UAE cultural and social values and practices particularly in relation to interactions with men in the workplace and social contexts
ME/GCC regional politics and events	Arab region is often reported including social, political, economic and religious issues. This reporting also provides a useful 'temporal' comparative analysis of significant societal and community issues and how they manifest themselves in neighbouring countries. There is a particular interest in reporting religious matters, democracy and representation issue and regional geo-politics.

### 6.3. Biographical Themes

This section will outline and discuss the most significant themes evident in the biographical details of the research participants' SIE . The section will begin by reflecting upon their expatriation life histories and explore their personal and professional motivations for previous expatriation decisions and drivers for coming to the UAE. Secondly, it will explore their routes to residency and reflect upon their search strategies, goals and outcomes in securing employment. Table 6.2 provides details on the participants' demographic data and expatriation choices which will be discussed next.

**Table 6.2: Participant Biographical Data**

Nationality/Ethnicity	All western nationalities, white ethnicity,			
Experience of expatriation	All have previous experience of expatriation except AmE and CE, so have experience of being foreign working women in other cultures to draw from and compare to UAE			
Qualifications	All had degree level education or professional qualifications			
Age range	30-55			
Brief career history before UAE	All but one-AmE had previous living/work experience and established their careers before coming to UAE			
Name	Nationality	Status	Previous expatriate countries	Motivation to expatriate
Amy	American	Divorced	Bahrain	Secure financial future professional organisation and stay in ME for family
Ann	Australian	Married	Germany	Adventure, husband secured employment
Beth	British Australian	Married	Australia	1985 - Initial push from UK economic/poor employment, 2004 to UAE Adventure, lifestyle
Cara	British	Married	Hong Kong, India	1996- Push from UK economic/poor employment and adventure. 2006 to UAE vibrant economy and employment market
Jess	British	Married	Hong Kong, Kuwait, Oman	Adventure, Lifestyle, vibrant economy
Emma	British	Married	Europe (Poland / Germany), Cyprus, Oman,	Lifestyle, work opportunity
Katy	Canadian	Married	None	Adventure, economic push
Sue	Canadian	Single	US, South America, Australia,	Adventure, lifestyle, work opportunity
Fay	French/ American	Married	Sudan, French Polynesia, England, Egypt	Travel, Arabic culture
Lyn	Irish/UK	Married	Hong Kong, France	Leave UK for travel and adventure, went to UAE for economy and employment market

The biographical details of the participants are broadly consistent with the existing SIE expatriation literature in that they have all originated from developed western Anglo-Saxon countries (Harvey, 2012) and expatriated to developing and developed host countries (Al Ariss and Syed, 2011; Richardson and Zikic, 2007; Fitzgerald and Howe-Walsh, 2008), but reflect the increasing number of women generally represented in SIE studies in contrast to research in AEs (Andersen et al, 2012).

### **6.3.1 Expatriation histories**

All of the participants had lived for at least two years in the UAE. However, it was striking that all but one of the participants who had lived in the UAE since 1996 (Katy), had significant previously diverse or longstanding experiences of expatriation elsewhere (see Table 6.2). Certainly, it would suggest that similar to their AE counterparts there is a sense of ‘temporariness’ about their residency in host countries for some consistent with Tharenou, (2010:76) findings, which Al Ariss (2010:341) argues reflects decisions based on ‘choice’ rather than ‘necessity’ compared to SMEs’. Furthermore, it also serves to support Al Ariss (2010) suggestion that expatriates from western countries in contrast to SMEs’ generally are more insulated from local and global restrictions on international mobility and therefore have more passport freedom than other nationalities and access to different degrees of residency and citizenship (Al Ariss and Ozbilgin, 2010). It also highlights how SIEs’ may have been unreported and hidden in plain sight for a long time in expatriation studies generally (Carr et al, 2005). However, there are a number of long term residents, including Amy, Fay, and Sue, who think of the UAE as their home, consistent with Rodriguez and Scurry (2014). Importantly, their previous expatriation journeys are important in providing richer comparative experiences which inform their reflections in exploring their experiences in the UAE which are the focus of this study.

### **6.3.2 Motivations to expatriate**

Broadly, their accounts suggested that initial motivations to expatriate were marked by negative employment push factors, balanced with positive adventure and relationship pull factors. Amy expatriated to Bahrain twenty years ago to join her Omani husband, whom she had met as a student in the US, and Fay was “drawn to the Arabic culture” through her graduate studies and childhood experiences travelling with her father, a professor of anthropology. This resonates with Inkson et al (1997:359) original research highlighting adventure and following relationships and opportunities to ‘explore and learn’ as key motivations for what Howe-Walsh and Schyns (2010:261) refer to as ‘private’ SIEs’ and argues are under researched in current SIE studies, which is supported here.

Furthermore, initial career pull factors featured less and often reflected opportunistic approaches to gaining employment as highlighted in Sue's comments that her expatriation choices reflected "long stints travelling and a little bit of work here and there in hospitality"; and Lyn who after travelling with her partner for a year, went to Hong Kong "on our way back to the UK", *where* they both found employment in construction. However, the women have established careers through their travels and develop more career orientated motivations which is consistent with recent research (Doherty et al, 2011; Richardson and Mc Kenna, 2002)

However, other factors, particularly of dependent children, became a feature of their expatriate and employment decisions. So that when Amy became divorced she was "looking for a way to stay in the Gulf, and I wanted to be able to support myself and my two children"; for others this impacted on their employment choices in their host countries, which will be discussed later. For others including Lyn, Cara, and Jess, this was reflected in decisions not to work for periods when their children were very young. Cara comments "After Hong Kong [and their first son] my husband got a job in India where I didn't work for a whole year, after that we went back to Hong Kong for a short spell and now we are here in Abu Dhabi" where she works as an executive assistant in Banking. However, existing research acknowledges the role of family relationships and the complexities of dual-career couples in expatriation decisions for both assigned and SIEs (Richardson and McKenna 2002; Tharenou 2008). Tharenou (2010) longitudinal study suggests that personal factors may be more of a consideration in women's expatriation decisions in that they are more likely to expatriate when they demonstrate high personal agency and low family barriers. This was a feature of the first expatriation decisions by all but two of the participants; Katy who was the primary driver for expatriating with her husband and young family and Emma who first travelled abroad with her children to accompany her first husband in the armed forces.

Overall, this suggest that there would be value in exploring the life histories and expatriation patterns of women SIEs' to understand the expatriation motivations and choices more fully at different life stages (Tharenou, 2010) and how far their expatriation profiles may reflect gendered choices (Harrison and Michailova, 2012). Table 6.2 summarises the participants' expatriation motivations.

### 6.3.3 Routes to Entry and Employment

The research participants are consistent with the literature in that they are generally highly educated, the majority to at least degree level or have gained professional qualifications and have undertaken skilled or professional roles in organisations (Altman and Baruch, 2012). SIEs are differentiated from AEs by their diverse professional backgrounds and positions (Richardson, 2009), which is reflected in this study by their diverse range of employment sectors and roles (see Table 6.3).

**Table 6.3: Participant entry and employment**

Work Role/Sponsorship Status			
Name	Sector employment in UAE	Current job	Sponsorship for residency and work
Amy	Education	Academic	Self-sponsored
Ann	Training/Trade	Training consultant	Husband sponsored
Beth	Hospitality	HR Director	Self-sponsored
Cara	Banking	Executive Assistant to CEO	Husband sponsored
Jess	Retail / Publisher / Entrepreneur	Publisher/ Entrepreneur	Husband sponsored
Emma	Hospitality/Training	Independent Training Consultant	Self-sponsored
Katy	Education / Training/Industrial	Training Manager in a local finance company	Initial sponsored self and family and then switched to husband
Sue	Hospitality	HR Director	Self-sponsored
Fay	Health	Self Employed Physiotherapist	Husband sponsored
Lyn	Construction	Quality Professional	Husband sponsored
Route to entry/employment			
Amy	Colleagues in Bahrain had applied to the national college and she was impressed by professionalism of recruitment process and so applied		
Ann	Met a woman from same home town in the gym and mentioned she was looking for a job, her compatriot later contacted her about applying for a post in the Australian trade commission		
Beth	Contacted by previous colleague suggested she apply – through UAE organisation referral scheme		
Cara	*Responded to job advert – local recruitment agency put her forward for Executive Assistant to CEO		
Jess	Contacted work colleagues from previous working in retail for British retail firm in ME region		
Emma	Colleague and friend had ME role and then knew Hotel GM from her previous role in Germany		
Katy	Colleague had previously worked in Dubai organisation and encouraged her to apply to national college		
Sue	Knew colleagues from previous temporary/assignment work in Dubai for a International hotel group		
Fay	First job – Waiting for license to practice physiotherapy in UAE. Informal friend contacted her about a job with French cultural organisation; then informally approached to be PA to head of UAE cultural organisation.		
Lyn	Tried previous colleagues from HK now working in UAE without success. Applied through recruitment agency without success, rejected by local company. Encouraged by social friend who gave her CV to MNC construction company working in UAE		

Contrary to the impression in some SIE research (Richardson and McKenna, 2002; Suutari and Brewster, 2000) several of the women worked in senior management roles particularly in Education and Hospitality (see Table 6.3 for specific details).

Entry and employment for expatriates generally requires the acquisition of appropriate residency and work visa documentation sponsored by a registered employing organisation or an Emirati citizen (Forstenlechner, 2009, 2010). Sponsorship criteria and rights are legislated and incur financial costs and potential risks for employers and employees, which is often marked by less generous local contractual terms for SIEs' compared to AEs (see chapter four for discussion). The pattern of initial sponsorship to the UAE is equal among the participants (see Table 6.3), five of the participants are the main sponsor, all but Sue are married or divorced and sponsored their own partners or children. For the remaining five, their husbands are the main sponsored expatriate, and they are able to work on his visa status, this patterning of visa rights has a significant impact on SIE subjectivities.

Luckily in this country there are only a few categories of women who can sponsor themselves- or be sponsored and given all the rights of men , so that I can sponsor my children and get the housing and so on. That is teaching, medical and very few others. There are very few occupations where you can be the sole breadwinner if you like. So you couldn't really just come out here, okay if you're the GM of a hotel, but there are very few sectors where you are able to come out independently as a woman and sponsor your children...Well, when I was in Bahrain I was a wife, and I was a local hire which meant you don't get the whole package, the housing, the sponsorship and so on. (Amy)

Amy's expatriate journey reflects issues in sponsorship which for her means "given all the rights of men," which can only be accessed through very few occupations where you can be the sole breadwinner and which accords her the right to sponsor my children and get the housing and so on. This is consistent with Richardson (2009) study into academic geographic flexibility, but education may not be typical of all work sectors. Her experience in UAE is in sharp contrast to her experiences in Bahrain as "wife" and "local hire" which meant you don't get the whole package, the housing, the sponsorship and so on. Her account illuminates the marginalizing subject positions that are produced through sponsorship arrangements, which are a significant risk factor in SIE subjectivities, and may have a disproportionate impact on women rather than men SIEs, which are not explicitly accounted for in existing research (Richardson, 2009). It

is interesting to note that wives and husbands can change who is registered as the main sponsored individual as their employment patterns change to perhaps reflect improved remuneration packages for one partner and also to reduce employment risks for the other. Katy was the initial main sponsor for herself and her family in 1996 but when her husband secured employment teaching in an international American school, her husband became the main sponsor and she worked on his visa.

What is noteworthy about the participants is the role that personal connections and informal networking play in securing employment opportunities and sponsored entry into the UAE. Beth gained sponsorship contacted through a previous colleague's referral and Jess heard about the job opportunity in Dubai through a friend who worked for a retail company here, so through her I was able to get an interview and they offered me a job. In contrast, Lyn tried unsuccessfully to find work in construction through a recruitment agency and Cara was offered an alternative position after responding to a job advert. However, for some informal support seemed to mitigate against the risk factors associated with relocating and made the transition smoother, as Emma comments "I knew Julie had been there [hotel in Abu Dhabi] and she would support me, and if I had any questions then she would have helped me, and we had a nice handover, so it was very smooth, it was great". This is consistent with Richardson (2009) findings of academics accessing informal networks to gain and sustain international employment opportunities. Therefore the role of knowledge gathering, informal insights, or connections gained from colleagues currently or previously working in the UAE was a significant feature of the sponsorship and job search strategies evident in the participants' accounts and helped to reduce the potential risk factors in expatriation moves (see Table 6.3 for further details).

#### **6.3.4 Career**

The participants have demonstrated in their agentic routes to secure entry and employment in UAE a certain "self-directedness...whereby career success is a personal conceptualisation, not externally formulated" (Altman and Baruch, 2012:245) in securing entry and employment in the UAE, which is reflective of a boundaryless (Inkson and Myers, 2003) or protean career typology (Hall, 1996) as opposed to an organisational one.

Furthermore, they demonstrate flexibility to new opportunities as evidenced by Beth who accepts an expanded role in hospitality HR management on her arrival in the UAE. In contrast this can be reflected in underemployment in roles for which they feel overqualified; Fay takes up part time employment in administrative roles for 2 years

before her licence to practice physiotherapy in the UAE is validated (Al Ariss, 2010, 2014). Cara reflects on her role as an executive assistant when she would prefer to make use of her professional insurance qualifications commenting “it’s not really up my street because I just don’t think there’s any career path right now at the moment and that’s what I’ve got to work on”. Her expression “it’s not really up my street” reflects her feelings of being underwhelmed and her frustration at the lack of any career path right now, however, she acknowledges this as an opportunity for which she has to take ownership in saying “that’s what I’ve got to work on”. Her experiences of underemployment are consistent with other studies with skilled migrants (Inkson and Myers, 2003; Al Ariss and Syed’s, 2011).

However, what does seem to be clear from their accounts is that their work subjectivities are built around a portfolio of skills and competences rather than a job or specific organisation context, and they are more prepared to make inter-organisational and international job moves than their AE peers (Mirvis and Hall, 1994, Banai and Harry, 2004, Biemann and Andresen, 2010). On leaving the private sector Katy has had five jobs in five years, Jess has had three jobs in five years, Sue has had two jobs, Fay has had three jobs, Ann has had three. Furthermore, several of the participants negotiate personal contractual terms or establish entrepreneurial routes, as Jess does through publishing and Emma as an independent training consultant to shape and direct their own lifestyle and career commitments, which also suggests that they orientate more to personal competence building rather than organisational conceptualisations of career (Altman and Baruch, 2012:245) . Crowley-Henry (2012) and Doherty et al (2011) suggests that SIEs’ demonstrate weaker job embeddedness. However, this could also reflect the lack of organisational support for SIEs in comparison to their AE colleagues, a themes which will be developed in this analysis (Howe-Walsh and Schyns, 2010; Richardson and Zikic, 2007).

Overall, their experiences and agentic behaviours are reflective of what Altman and Baruch (2012) suggest are notions of ‘chance’ which are neglected in exploring contemporary careers (Chen, 2005) and the emerging evidence of ‘risk’ as reflective of a new career ‘logic’ (Hall, 2004), whereby individuals grant themselves the opportunity to experiment with new possibilities. Table 6.4 provides a summary of significant themes from participant biographies).

**Table 6.4: Summary of Risk themes from participant biographies**

Primary Topic	Significant Features
Demographic	Age 30-55, majority married,
Expatriation history	Temporariness - All but CT had previous expatriation experience, not a feature of other SIE studies, under-reported in expatriation literature, temporariness related to choice rather than necessity, easier passport mobility for western expatriates
Expatriate Motivation	Range of motivations includes career vs private. Participant expatriation choices more influenced by private personal agendas including adventure and personal relationships, reflecting disposition for risky choices. Impact of children on expatriate choices.
Route to entry and employment	Education/Occupation - Highly educated, diverse occupations and sector experiences in professional or management roles. All but AmE established career before coming to UAE Sponsorship – impact of patterns of being the main sponsor or residing/working on husbands sponsored status. Role of informal networking in securing residency/employment and mediating risk factors in UAE
Career logic	Flexibility- Protean vs Organisational career, agentic and proactive job search strategies, open to new opportunities , but risk of underemployment Personal career orientations - personal skill focus rather than organisational focus to career development Chance and risk as new career logic

#### **6.4. Section summary**

In summary this section has presented and discussed the most significant themes evident in the biographical details of the research participants to provide a deeper appreciation of their specific and common biographical characteristics that inform the production of their subject positions within the multi arena relational framework which will be outlined next in the main body of this chapter

#### **6.5. Discourse of Risk**

This section will explore the participants' intersectional subjectivities by analysing the discursive construction of their self-initiated expatriate subject position within the macro arena and highlight its connectivity, with meso and micro arenas of the contextual analysis. Risk has received limited attention in the SIE literature (see Chapter Four). Richardson and Zikic (2007) were among the first to draw attention to the risks of foreign academics working in international institutions particularly from state and organisational forces; this section has extended the analysis to a broader range of occupations, drawn comparisons with AEs, focused in a specific context and applied an intersectional lens to understand the forces that frame a discourse of risk which constitutes the participants SIE subjectivities.

### **6.5.1 Risk in the Macro Arena**

The risks that are evident in the macro arena relate to the participant biographies (see section 6.3) and themes that emerge in the discussion of the country context (see Chapter Two) particularly as they relate to the legal construction of SIE subjectivities in the scope of this investigation. The discursive elements in the participants' accounts contributing to a discourse of risk are discussed in terms of socio-cultural and legal-institutional themes

#### **6.5.1.1 Socio-Cultural themes**

There were three areas of risk that were discussed by the participants in terms of Emirati cultural norms. They included preconceived cultural stereotypes, lack of cultural integration between Emiratis and expatriates and traditional Bedouin norms and practices.

The mismatch between preconceived cultural stereotypes and experienced reality is evident in several accounts, which also illuminates the temporal dimension to expatriate understandings of Emirati culture and an omnipresent sense of mindfulness to complex and contradictory cues in shared public spaces. Katy reflects upon her misplaced preconceptions about her accommodation when she accepted a teaching contract in Dubai in 1996. Her colonial imaginings of an abject Bedouin native (Al-Fahim, 1995) influenced her assumptions that her accommodation would be "dark and dingy and old and cockroach infested" was in stark contrast to her experienced reality of her apartment which was "just absolutely beautiful". Her response in saying "I was gob smacked" serves to amplify the sense of dissonance between her negative preconceptions and experienced reality of a civilized, postmodern Dubai (Coles and Walsh, 2010), drawing from colonial rather than cosmopolitan discourses (Hutchings et al 2013).

However, the country context chapter (see chapter two) discussed how the UAE has more publicly transformed itself since 1996 and this is reflected in the comments of other more recent expatriates who were surprised by the incongruity of the modern and the conservative Emirati culture in everyday public spaces. Many recent expatriates were struck by the postmodern cataclysmic clashes of cultural and economic globalisation as reflected in the rise of the shopping mall culture. Ann reflects on her first impressions of UAE culture in public spaces saying:

My first memory is 'oh my God there's G-strings in the shop windows,' that was like you know? It didn't faze me or the abayas' what fazed me was just how well - more Westernised it was (AT).

The anticipated colonial imaginings of somewhere less "western" and culturally conservative as anticipated in Emirati women wearing "abayas", was framed as if to suggest their co-presence was incompatible. This was presented in juxtaposition with displays of western sexual promiscuity in shop windows, which is amplified with the preceding expression "oh my god, there's G-strings in the shop windows". It also illuminates the complexities of these contested public spaces and the bewilderment experienced by expatriates on occasions between conservative Emirati tradition and modernity to understand what constitutes contemporary Emirati culture, and importantly how they negotiate their subject positions as outsiders (Jones, 2008). There is a heightened state of mindfulness in regulating their everyday conduct in public spaces, not in any way debilitating, but more mundane, but nevertheless omnipresent in everyday interactional practices (West and Fenstermaker, 2002; West and Zimmerman, 1987). There is a palpable sense in which they understand their embodied presence to be subject to constant low level surveillance in shared public spaces. This is a theme which will be explored in more detail in the next chapter focusing on how the participants understand negotiating their western gendered subjectivities in UAE.

There is a strong sense that prevails for more recent post millennium arrivals that Emirati culture is hidden on an invitation only basis protected from the obtrusive glare of an omnipresent expatriate population. When reflecting on communal spaces Cara remarks that Emirati women, particularly older women seem visibly absent from every day public spaces, Cara remarks "where are they, you never see them in the supermarkets doing their food shopping on a Friday morning", perhaps ignorant of Friday prayers, the possibility that they shop at different stores and the delegation of household chores to a different class of expatriate (Connell and Burgess, 2013). Sue comments

I thought the culture would be more apparent, I didn't realise that you had to actually go out and seek it; in order for me to experience the culture here I had to meet local people and spend time with them. People can live here for years and never experience anything and never know anything about anything ... you really have to try because you have to show interest and you have to show understanding and you have to become friends with people before you're taken into their homes.

What is acknowledged in Sue's comments is the common western expatriate understanding of culture as physically apparent in iconic heritage buildings and artefacts and by many expatriates definition lacking in the UAE. However, she seeks to reposition herself relationally in this colonial theme by demonstrating how she actively seeks opportunities to interact with Emiratis "and spend time with them". This is in contrast with most expatriates who "can live here for years and never experience anything and never know anything about anything". The separation and living of parallel lives to their hosts, with little interactions with Emiratis in public and work spaces is consistent with other studies (Harrison and Michailova, 2012). However, even in the context of a disproportionate small Emirati population (see context chapter), Sue draws from cosmopolitan subjectivity discourses (Richardson and Mc Kenna, 2002), to suggest that expatriates are complicit in sustaining the lack of interaction, out of design or chance, by not initiating social relations with Emiratis (Rodriguez and Scurry, 2014). Ironically, this suggests that this patterning of social relations sustains an interactional arena in which both Emiratis and expatriates are constituted as outsiders in the co-presence of each other (Harrison and Michailova, 2012). Fay has untypical access in providing personal health care to Emirati women inside their homes, and has attended several weddings. She remembers living in Abu Dhabi in early 1990's when Emirati women were visible everywhere, working and going about their daily lives, and reflects ruefully on a comment by one of her clients that their domestic retreat was a response instigated by husbands, fathers and brothers to 'protect' their women from the negative influences of an influx of expatriates including western women. The expatriation literature evidence the risks in a lack of cross-cultural adjustment on the performance and tenure of expatriates , however, there is a suggestion that SIEs' are more proactive in seeking cross cultural opportunities (Peltokorpi and Froese, 2013) which is consistent with Sue's positioning. However, a more significant number of the participants, provided evidence of positive relations with Emiratis in the workplace, but only Sue and Fay, were invited socially into Emirati homes. Therefore, these findings are consistent with Harrison and Michailova (2012) who suggest that the lack of interaction with Emiratis is not a significant risk in UAE, as it may be constructed in other translocations, because of the minority Emirati population, particularly in workspaces and a significant western expatriate community.

A significant risk in expatriation is the cross-cultural adjustment to local cultural norms and values, which Harrison and Michailova (2012:630) suggest involves "learning a new set of psychological and behavioural norms as well as the discernment of how and when to use the new norms" Furthermore, their research from cross cultural studies

suggest that “Western expatriates working in an Arab country can expect to experience significant national cultural differences” Harrison and Michailova (2012:629). There are two key social cultural norms that reflect the Bedouin cultural heritage of UAE (Al-Fahim, 1995), the first is the importance of familial connections often expressed through *wasta* and the second a related tradition of hospitality (Al-Fahim, 1995). Both feature significantly in participant accounts and will be introduced here and extended in the analysis within different interactional arenas.

The practice of leveraging familial connections in terms of *wasta* “cannot be understated” (Forstenlechner et al, 2012: 408), and is an important and integral practice embedded in structuring social relations in workspaces in UAE (Harry, 2007). The influence of *wasta* is generally viewed by the participants as a negative source of power and diametrically opposed to western discourse of equality, meritocracy and competence in the workspace and resonates in all arenas of activity which will be explored further in the analysis of risks in the meso and micro arenas (Al Ariss, 2014; Harry, 2007).

The tradition of extending hospitality even to strangers and ensuring that guests are treated courteously and generously is a practice that is commented on positively by the participants. Al-Fahim, (1995:26) refers to it as a “timeless tradition...and...essential tool of communication” in UAE. Sue refers to this as “*habibi*’ business” following the commonly used greeting used by male Arab friends on meeting each other. Emma reflects on a recent consultancy assignment where the recently appointed western management team, did not appreciate the commercial liabilities involved in their cultural faux pas

when I met the general manager he hadn’t even been to see the local owners yet, the first thing you do is go and drink coffee with the owners they didn’t have a PRO they didn’t think they needed a PRO, and I was just okay, and I thought I had better give them some feedback, about how things are done here and that turned into a long assignment really,

She was astonished by the lack of local cultural knowledge demonstrated by the western management team in admonishing “he hadn’t even been to see the local owners yet”; underlying an appreciation of how power is relationally constructed locally. She demonstrates a commercial understanding of the symbolic value in showing respect by saying that “the first thing you do is go and drink coffee with the owners”. The reference to the PRO “they didn’t think they needed” refers to employing a local Emirati, preferably with influential *wasta* to guide you through the local business and

institutional environment. Finally, her comment “I thought I had better give them some feedback, about how things are done here” suggests that she was knowledgeable about the idiosyncratic social etiquette of doing business locally and that turned into a long assignment really, suggests the significant gap of ignorance of her new western clients, which could prove a commercial liability without the appropriate guidance (Dickens, 1999).

#### 6.5.1.2 Legal-Institutional Themes

There were four areas of risk that were discussed by the participants in terms of the following: Sharia law, lack of robust legal framework, business friendly labour laws and the impact of contract termination.

Similar to other GCC countries, the country context chapter discussed how employment law and practices in the UAE are guided by *urf* (custom) and Sharia law that reflect the need to protect women and create a moral work environment (Metcalf 2008b). The majority of the participants had held management roles including Human Resources and so were familiar with employment laws and regulations in the UAE. The participants all understood that there was limited employment protection for expatriates in comparison to Emiratis. Furthermore, they were aware of limited legislation particularly in terms of sexual discrimination, including sexual harassment, since discrimination is perceived as being embedded within Sharia law (Metcalf 2008b). Therefore, expatriate subjectivities and matters of conduct were judged according to religious rather than civic norms in this regard. There were two key risks associated with Sharia law for expatriates; ignorance and inconsistent interpretation and application in practice. There were no direct experiences reported of encountering sharia law, although it was generally regarded as creating higher risks for expatriates than Emiratis, which is supported by Forstenlechner study of expatriate negative perceptions of host country justice in the UAE (Forstenlechner, 2010). However, the lack of employment protection at this level did permeate the cultures and practices of organisations which will be discussed in the next section.

There are several high profile media reports of expatriate liabilities of sharia codes of conduct, e. g. sexual relations in public places for which participants' generally had little sympathy (Hilotin, 2013). However, others reflected on more nuanced contraventions which were only brought to their attention through media reports e.g. being alone in the place of work with an unrelated male colleague after 10.00pm. Therefore, expatriates

were knowledgeable and mindful that their general conduct which included any intimate inter-gendered relations outside of marriage e.g. could include holding hands and kissing, did not risk contravening prevailing cultural and religious norms for which there were punitive penalties (Simpson, 2013).

UAE is a rapidly developing economy, with a fast-paced, but uncertain legal environment (see country context chapter) which is reflected in frequent changes to residency and labour laws and regulations (Budhwar and Mellahi, 2007; Marmenout, 2010). Generally AEs' were more insulated against the negative impact and administrative burden of changes to in-country laws and regulations, whereas SEIs' were often marginalised by frequent regulatory changes to e.g. introduction of identity cards (Amrikani, 2008), visa rules, housing policies (Samaha & Menon, 2008) and personal insurance requirements. Lyn discusses how she had to deal directly with government institutions and negotiate local regulations, which for her meant changing her married surname to her husband to avoid any legal complications, which routinely included having shipments of house contents refused entry because of different surnames on the paperwork.

There are two key areas in which their marginal positionality as women SIEs' was clearly evident in their employment opportunities; eligibility for sponsorship and independent work visa, which impacted on their illegal part time working and local contract status (see section 6.3.4). The participant's biographies identified that only half of them were the main family sponsor, for both Katy and Amy their recruitment into education was a legitimate occupational entry for women (Gallant, 2006). However after leaving education, Katy's decision to transfer the main sponsorship to her husband who worked for a low risk employer is not untypical. What reinforces this as a gendered process is Sue's reflection on networking with colleagues in hospitality who seemed very keen to offer her employment but not sponsorship. Women working on their husbands work visa were required by law to get their husbands permission to sign a 'No objection certificate' annually to allow them to work, even after 15 years, Fay still felt insulted by this requirement.

Marmenout (2010) argues that this is augmented by frequent changes to the business friendly labour laws "inter alia, no minimum wage, no trade unions, the ability to easily recruit and lay off staff"(Forstenlechner et al 2010:407). The contemporaneous labour laws prohibited part time working for expatriates which meant that they were required to negotiate riskier, technically illegal contractual arrangements with both local and larger transnational organisations, as illustrated in Lyn's initial return into construction

as a contractor, and her employers unrealistic work expectations. It was evident that their 'flexible' employment subjectivity was also reflected in detrimental local contract terms and conditions, with often no access to pensions and insurance. This is in contrast to AEs privileged contract terms which school fees, flights home, and accommodation and living expenses. Cara reports on how she was "lucky" to transfer her apartment into her own name" before she left one employer for another, "before it got complicated" by accommodation regulations. The employment situation was exacerbated by the lack of employee protection for expatriates generally which was even more evident for the SIE participants on local contracts, whose biographies, particularly Katy and Jess reveal a pattern of exiting organisations rather than challenging discriminatory practices. When confronted with sexist behaviour from male colleagues at her fourth employer in five years, Katy comments "I didn't say anything because I didn't want to lose my job". The lack of confidence in organisational protection will be discussed in the meso arena. However, the participants' lack of confidence in UAE law to resolve employee disputes is consistent with Forstenlechner (2010).

Termination of employment for SIEs was high risk. Amy, as a single parent clearly acknowledged the devastating impact this would have on herself and her children. She comments:

My whole world would turn upside down after I lost my job; you know how it is, you would have to move, your children would have to move and lose all their friends....They [Emirati] don't operate under the same constraints.

Employers' were legally required to notify the government when a member of staff was dismissed or made redundant. Their bank accounts were frozen and they were not allowed to exit the country until they could certificate that they had no outstanding debts. Although, UAE government rhetoric during the global financial crisis in 2008-9, tried to downplay its impact, local media reports evidenced what all expatriate residents were fully aware of i.e. expatriates of all nationalities, fleeing their debts in a context where insolvency and bankruptcy is a criminal offence . Normally, expatriates were given 30 days to find alternative sponsored employment or leave the country. As the financial situation deepened AEs' were more able to be reassigned to another posting or return home. However, for SIEs' the options were more limited, particularly in sectors including construction which were disproportionately affected, many moved to other less expatriate friendly countries including Saudi Arabia, and often those who chose to stay or were able to secure alternative employment were employed on

reduced contracts many offering local terms and conditions (Hafez, 2009). Several of the women reflected upon the higher number of their female compared to male expatriate friends who had lost their jobs during the financial crisis, but there is no way of verifying this from institutional sources. Gornall (2009) that westerners were the worst hit financially, but 58% were planning to find another job to remain in the UAE.

Overall, the participants constructed their SIE legal and institutional status as outsiders (Jones, 2008) in comparison to Emiratis. They were familiar with Emiratisation, and reflected upon its impact within organisations which will be discussed in the next section (Marmenout, 2010). They felt particularly “inferiorised” (Jones, 2008:763) by the intersection of their SIE status with their gender, which was experienced in the context of sponsorship and employment opportunities which will be discussed in more detail in the next section. They generally felt that AEs were provided with more protection and support in negotiating institutional and regulatory requirements and would be less vulnerable to the frequent regulatory changes (Marmenout, 2010) and consequences of losing their employment (Howe-Walsh and Schyns, 2010). Their marginalised outsider positioning is reinforced by their temporary legal status on fixed residency contracts of 2-3 years, which sometimes requires exiting the country to ensure compliance. Importantly, cultural and institutional influences in the macro arena which contributed to a discourse of risk were dialectically connected to those in the micro and meso arenas which will be discussed in the next section.

### **6.5.2 Risk in the Meso Arena**

The risks that are evident in the meso arena relate to the participant biographies (see section 6.3) and themes that emerge in the discussion of the country context (see Chapter Two) particularly as they relate to the cultural and legal construction of SIE subjectivities in the scope of this investigation. The discursive elements in the participants’ accounts contributing to a discourse of risk are discussed in terms of the following: Impact of Emiratisation, Organisation Cultures, Diversity policies and practices.

#### **6.5.2.1 Emiratisation in Organisations**

The UAE is consistent with other economies in the region in establishing labour nationalisation policies to create a sustainable future for its citizens (Forstenlechner and Rutledge, 2010), which was discussed in detail in the country chapter (see Chapter Two). The impact of the global financial crisis initiated a whole range of new labour regulations to provide preferential protection for Emiratis in comparison to expatriates

in several ways, including a guaranteed monthly basic salary which was three times that of expatriates (Hartley, 2009); and that Emiratis could only be sacked for exceptional misconduct and certainly not for purposes of operational restructuring in a competitive business environment (Hafez, 2009a). The impact of privileged contractual terms in the public sector for Emiratis e.g. pay rises of up to 100% in 2009 (Forstenlechner, et al, 2012) creates unequal contract terms for expatriate public workers (Marmenout, 2010). Emiratisation policies are anticipated to have a differential impact on the expatriate labour market, where those that occupy front line jobs in the service or construction sectors would be largely unaffected, but those in management and skilled jobs (generally where western expatriates work) are likely to be more vulnerable (Marmenout, 2010).

There is evidence to suggest that Emiratisation creates tensions in the workplace and that expatriate employers and their employees may manifest resistance for a range of reasons (Al-Ali, 2008; Forstenlechner and Rutledge, 2010; Forstenlechner et al 2011; Rees et al, 2007). What emerges from the three participants' accounts, directly responsible for Emiratisation policies in their organisation's is that they acknowledge it as a legitimate business strategy particularly as all three work in quasi-government organisations in Hospitality (Beth, Sue) and Finance (Katy). The concerns they raise at an organisational level relate to the quality of its implementation including: quantity prioritised over quality; lack of resources to do it effectively; targeting young vocationally orientated Emiratis; and optimising successful Emirati employees as mentors and role models, which resonates with other employers comments in the UAE (Forstenlechner et al, 2012).

The impact of Emiratisation was experienced directly by the participants through the policy of *wasta* appointments and promotions which paradoxically undermined the process for all involved (Al-Ali, 2008; Forstenlechner et al 2012). While the participant's generally acknowledged the legitimate policy goals of Emiratisation, they contested the preferential impact of Emiratisation policies on colleagues within their organisations; they nevertheless understood that this was a contingent feature of working in the UAE.

There is a sense in which participants draw on western discourses of performance and equality in the workplace based on competence and criteria to reposition themselves in relation to the preferential treatment of Emiratis particularly in early promotion to senior management roles. Sue comments, on an Emirati woman peer she is supporting in the organisation:

I'm not connected to anybody, I'm like hey, I did the career ladder because of the output. She's where she is – well she's also got – I have to be so careful – OK, she's – she has the capability and the ability so she's been placed in that role, she hasn't demonstrated it yet but we know she can do it so that's why she's where she is and there's no right or wrong – don't get me wrong – yeah, but there's a big difference”.

The intricate contradictory subject positioning between a western rhetoric of “output” producing self-regulating talk, “ I have to be so careful” illuminates the complexities of managing expatriate-Emirati social relations at work which will be explored further in the micro arena. She states “there is no right and wrong” to suggest that she is aligned with Emiratisation goals , yet takes up a contradictory position in stating “I'm not connected to anybody” and “ I did the career ladder” to set herself apart from a discourse that would position her as an “inferiorised” outsider (Jones, 2008;763). This is consistent with Janssens et al (2006) who suggest that women would draw from an alternative enabling discourse to reposition a marginalised subject position.

This marginalised subjectivity contributes to feelings of insecurity and transience, reflecting the inevitable redundancy of expatriates as “experts” (Rodriguez and Scurry, 2014) in this context as expressed by Sue's comment “I know it's only a short time and they won't need us”. This resonates with Rodriguez and Scurry (2014:200), in their account of SIEs in Qatar, and the impact of HR policies upon their employability which will be discussed in more detail later in this section. Several of the participants had longstanding personal and professional commitments invested in the UAE and the organisations that they worked for and the increasing impact of Emiratisation was eroding their employability, and undermining their aspirations and ability to relocate the longer they remained, as evidence by other SIEs' in other translocations (Lan, 2011; Maher and Lafferty, 2014; Rodriguez and Scurry, 2014).

#### 6.5.2.2 Organisation cultures

Historical western influences have informed organisational and institutional structures, systems and practices in both the private and public sector, which is sustained by a succession of western expatriate managers and bureaucrats in senior roles (Coles and Walsh, 2010). Many of the participants worked in organisations with multicultural workforces. However, a consistent theme was the high number of western expatriates, usually male, in senior management roles. However, there was a sense in which academic institutions were framed as less risky employment choices. Amy and Katy

had both worked in the Education sector and were impressed by the fact that they worked in professionally managed institutions which reflected the western community college model on which it was founded and had been a key factor in their decision to expatriate to the UAE. Amy expresses how this contrasts with her experience at a university in Bahrain and implies that her organisations professional approach may not be the norm in the UAE. So organisations based on western principles and practices of organising are discursively framed as exemplars of good practice.

Mahler and Pessar (2006:42) argue, transnational spaces can transform gender relations and provide “even greater opportunities for the reinforcement of prevailing gender ideologies and norms”. While, there are formal country specific laws and regulations and transnational company policies and procedures, nevertheless the spaces between the rules and the realities experienced by the SIE participants was inflected by their gender (Janssens et al, 2006). The participants performance of work was refracted through more widespread and powerfully gendered global discourses that frame women’s work as worth less than a man’s (Berry and Bell, 2012; Metcalfe and Rees, 2010). Interestingly, several of the participants attributed this pernicious patriarchal influence to cultures and practices imported through transnational corporations and their male dominated structures and practices, rather than emerging from the cultural context of the UAE. Their premise is in contrast to others studies that suggest transnational organisations reshape policies and practices to local requirements (Dunning, 1998). What is evident from the analysis is that transactional organisational spaces remain gendered in unequal ways that can result in discrimination in the workplace. A significant risk consistently reported by the participants was the unequal gender relations within their organisations policies and procedures particularly as they related to issues of Diversity.

### 6.5.2.3 Diversity

Several studies have explored the absence and complex realities of initiating and implementing diversity policies and practices in the Middle East (Budhwar and Mellahi, 2007; Metcalfe, 2008). Al Ariss (2014), Forstenlechner et al (2011) and Marmenout (2010) have explored the diversity constraints and enablers within different arenas within the UAE and illustrate the complexities from different Emirati and expatriate perspectives (Marmenout, 2010). While it is clear that the participants acknowledge the Emirati cultural influences of their situated gendered subjectivities within the UAE, nevertheless, the diversity theme that dominates their accounts reflects their western values and expectations of how organisations should and ought to conduct their

employee relations based on principles and values of equality of opportunity and treatment (Forstenlechner et al 2011). The participants were unequivocal that expatriates particularly western expatriates and organisations that espoused western diversity rhetoric would be held accountable against this standard. The significant themes relating to diversity included themes of policy, pay, protection and pregnancy.

The participants' reflected on their company's diversity policy: "Amy commented I have never felt a gender bias in my professional career [Education] And if there was, it is the old boy's club from the west, I certainly have felt that ", while others generally felt that there was either a generic apathy, absence or avoidance stance by their employers. Others, including Lyn, felt that there was a distinct lack of commitment to any espoused policy in implementation and comments "Yes we had our ethnic policy which was saying that everybody had to be treated equally and there was to be no favouritism that was displayed in every office", but when asked whether this was implemented she responded "No I don't think so, unfortunately". This is consistent with more recent findings by Al Ariss (2014) when he interviewed Emirati managers, which will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

Participants generally felt that they were not paid in salary, and certainly in terms and conditions the same as their male peers. As outlined earlier in the biography section, the sponsorship status of the participants was critical in determining their pay and particularly their allowances. The participants generally suggested that SIEs were more likely to be offered less preferential total financial remuneration packages than their AE peers (Harvey, 2012). Several participants were employed on less preferential terms than their male peers on local contracts which reflected gendered assumptions that they were not the principal earner in the family. What is clear from the participants' accounts is that they felt that male SIEs were financially better rewarded throughout their careers than their female peers. Cara reflects on her frustration at the fact that all-female executive assistants in the bank paid a monthly secretarial allowance of 200dirhams, rather than the professional allowance starting at 2,000dirhams a month that male peers receive doing similar roles.

The paucity of employee protection policies was another theme evident in the participants' accounts. This was particularly reflected in participants' accounts of being subject to and witnessing the bullying and harassment of others particularly third country nationals (TCNs'). This was evident at all levels in the organisation: Cara discussed how a senior manager was bullied into removal by two Emirati peers, and her western CEO could not get involved and Amy reflected on the prejudiced attitudes

of some of her female Emirati students who were less willing to accept the expertise of non-western colleagues. However, some of the participants' also reflected on their own experiences of being bullied and harassed by male western and other foreign expatriates and is a theme that will be explored further in the micro arena.

Pregnancy and the implications of childcare were a significant theme in the participants' accounts. There was no federal regulatory protection for loss of employment for pregnancy in the UAE, the legal minimum obligation for paid maternity leave was 45 days, compounded by the fact that part time working was technically illegal for expatriates' and few employers offered flexibility in terms of place or times of working. The consequences of this were that pregnant women were fearful of termination as reflected in Katy's comments on the behaviour of a pregnant HR colleague who worked excessive hours before taking maternity leave as she was worried about being made redundant. Furthermore, the lack of flexibility resulted in several of the participants leaving their employment and seeking alternative opportunities, for example, Jess cites this as a key reason for establishing her own business. Importantly it also meant that often women with childcare responsibilities had no other option but to enter into technically illegal contractual arrangements to work part time, as Jess initially did at the local lifestyle retail company and Lyn agreed to work as a contractor working 3 days per week in the western construction company.

Therefore the participants' accounts illuminated the absence, avoidance or aberration of diversity issues as understood within a western paradigm of equality as equal opportunity and treatment. This finding is broadly consistent with other studies who illustrate the complex realities and issues with promoting diversity in the UAE (Al Ariss, 2014; Marmenout and Lirio, 2014; Forstenlechner et al, 2011)

Resourcing issues were previously introduced in the analysis of the participants' biographies through exploring their routes to entry and employment particularly, through informal connections and sponsorship arrangements for expatriates, and in the macro arena through labour market interventions including Emiratisation policies which were operationalised within organisational systems. The dominant theme about recruitment practices is that they were blatantly discriminatory, with little regard for treating people equally in any of the nine protected characteristics that are recognised for example in the 2010 UK Equality Act. Lyn reflects upon her opportunity to work in construction that:

turned into a bit of a long term thing because they grew to trust me, but they needed me at the time, they were desperate and they just couldn't get anybody in quick enough but I'm sure if they had time it would have been a man.

The key discriminatory characteristics that were cited by the participants focused on sex, race, marital status and pregnancy and maternity. Sue reflects on attending networking events by saying "people always ask me questions about jobs and I always think how come they don't want to sponsor me, if I was a guy wouldn't they be offering to sponsor me – you know it's very strange". Recruitment adverts in newspapers routinely specify gender, age, nationality and sometimes marital status. Croucher (2013) reported recently on an advert for a receptionist which stated "only attractive women from the Philippines, Russia, or Arab countries need apply". Critically, when concerns over Emiratisation were extracted from their comments, the focus of their discontent was gendered and related to negatively stereotypical views about the role of women in the workplace, and more broadly in broader society, which will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter. However, this not consistent with more positive accounts of the lack of discrimination in the workplace given by some expatriate women in telephone interviews speaking with researchers in New Zealand (Hutchings, Michailova and Harrison, 2013).

A key theme emerging in the participants' accounts related to their own agency in driving their personal, professional and career development and this was generally attributed to their expatriate status. The privileged access by Emiratis to financial support, structured development plans, guidance and mentoring, was widely reported and largely supported although this elicited frustration on some Emirati colleagues' lack of commitment to make the most of the opportunities.

What was evidenced in their accounts was their agentic approach to their own development taking responsibility for sourcing and securing their own access to training, qualifications and coaching from familiar sources often western universities and professional institutes and training organisations e.g. CIPD. Amy comments:

I am probably doing here what I would do at home, and search for my own opportunities, at home though if I was in a University, they would probably pay for it or pay for half. Here because you're a foreigner, they are not going to pay.

This is consistent with other studies that acknowledge that expatriates recruited as "experts" are routinely not included in organizations' training budgets (Al Ariss, 2014; Marmenout, 2010; Rodriguez and Scurry, 2014). The substantive impact of these

pressures resulted in organisations losing qualified, experienced women expatriates. Consequently, some women disenchanted with their career opportunities in UAE enacted riskier alternative options including entrepreneurship in order to achieve the flexibility they required. Entrepreneurship was risky because of the lack of guidance on legal regulations and criminal status of financial business failure (Singh, 2008).

This section explored the significant themes contributing to a discourse of risk that emerged in the participants' construction of their SIE subjectivities in the meso arena within the research context. The distorting influences of Emirati regulatory frameworks and western historical and masculine normative legacies were illuminated in the analysis. There are clear marginalising gender and ethnic themes within organisational cultures that infuse organisational norms, systems and practices. These resonate with themes in the participants' biographies e.g. less preferential terms and conditions of recruitment and employment. Furthermore, gendered cultural values in the macro arena facilitate a space for masculine values to permeate organisation cultures and practices, producing outsider and "inferiorised" subject positions for women SIEs, particularly in terms of diversity (Jones, 2008:763). Labour laws and regulations constrain the opportunities for women in the workplace, creating riskier employment opportunities e.g. illegal part time working and lack of flexibility constrain their employment choices and result in less privileged working conditions. The following section will illuminate the relationships between the themes emerging in the participants accounts in the meso and macro arena as they relate to emergence of risks in the participants interactional practices in the micro arena.

### **6.5.3 Risk in the Micro Arena**

The risks that are evident in the micro arena that will be discussed in this section relate to the participants relationships with other western expatriates. The final chapter which explores the relevance of the Third Gender concept (Adler, 1987) in this study, focuses specifically on the participants gendered and ethnicised subjectivities from the perspective of their relations with Emiratis and other third country nationals, in the research context, and therefore are not included here to avoid duplication. All of the participants interacted with western expatriate men and women, however, their accounts focus predominantly on their relations in the workplace rather than in social contexts. The discursive elements in the participants' accounts contributing to a discourse of risk in their relations with western expatriates are discussed in terms of their interactions with male and then female expatriates.

### 6.5.3.1 Positive relations with Western expatriate men

Some participants cited positive work relations with men, for example, Jess described her managing partner at the lifestyle retail group “a real inspiration” commenting that, “He was well educated, well-travelled, he had a big heart and cared about people, and the company culture was that it was important to treat people respectfully, it was really refreshing, he was used to dealing with women, his wife was working up a ladder in the first store. Two thirds of the senior managers were female out of 10, not male dominated and he was a very professional business person.”

There is a sense in which Jess’s description of the managing partner reflects a strong theme of drawing from western discourses of equality in inter-gender relations in the workplace, which provided senior roles for women in the organisation, where “Two thirds of the senior managers were female out of 10”. The manner of his interactions were suggestive of someone who was “used to dealing with women” in a respectful and caring way, demonstrating what may be considered as qualities indicative of femininities, which is juxtaposed with “it was really refreshing” to suggest that this was not the norm. Her idealised description is contrasted with “it was not male dominated” to suggest that this was the dominant norm from her experience working in the UAE, and her use of the word “dominated “ suggests that she experienced such organisations as oppressive and marginalizing , and this was attributed to a masculine culture (Acker, 2006). Several women talked about positive relations in the workplace with other expatriate male colleagues. Cara felt that the senior male western expatriates at the bank were very professional. Katy had a good relationship with her male boss from her first job in the private sector who offered her a position in a new organisation.

### 6.5.3.2 Theme of Disgust

However, these positive experiences are largely overshadowed by an overwhelming theme of disgust at the behaviour of a significant number of the western expatriate men in the workplace. SUE captures the zeitgeist of the theme when she refers to it as a “Freakin Zoo”.

People leave their home country and they come here and they act like this is a freakin' zoo and they can do whatever the heck they want to and all those values and things that they may have - whatever, they come here because there's such a structure – it's nothing to do with the culture here because it's very value-driven, it's the fact that they're in a place where maybe there's less

control over it and it's not a social norm because there's so many different cultures that they do things that are totally unacceptable - anywhere.

The 'Freakin Zoo' was characterised by sexism, bullying, the old boys' network, and a domineering style of management. The attitudes and behaviours reflected the worst of a masculinised stereotype of macho managing (Bryans and Mavin, 2003) yet seem to be imported as a toxic residue of another place and another time. There is a sense in which she feels that the lack of a robust legal framework to guide, direct and sanction peoples conduct creates spaces for some people to knowingly behave offensively to others. She is clear that she does not attribute this to Emirati culture as "it's very value-driven", but rather the diverse multi-ethnic patterning of social relations creates opportunities for inferiorising processes (Jones, 2008). This particular ethnic dynamic of social relations within the UAE will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

Cara reflects upon her Bank CEO's aggressive style of communication and comments that "as soon as I make a mistake it's poof you know, fireworks so the there's very little forgiveness". Cara gives the impression of an unforgiving and volatile style of managing using the expression "fireworks". Ann reflects on a "nightmare client" she had to deal with saying:

he can be bullying, threatening, can be quite derogatory, insensitive... Oh yes, everyone cops it, he doesn't discriminate, every nationality gets it. I've known a situation where he's gone mental over a local woman and he's a man! to the point where, in any other situation that woman had every right to call the police or security and have him physically removed. A complete case study: textbook.

She draws attention to the fact that he behaves this way to an Emirati lady a "local woman", which she suggests heightens the risk factors and reinforces the sense in which he operates with impunity. However, some of the participants are willing to confront the offensive behaviour in a similar fashion in order to reposition their marginalised subject position. Lyn reflects on how she only gained respect from her manager after they had a "blow out" and reflects on the incident commenting that:

it came to a crunch point where I said you know I don't need to do this I don't need the money, I was doing this for my career... [but after the blow out] we had a good working relationship very professional and he respected what I had

to say... and also the fact that I was actually able to stand up for myself.

Lyn had struggled to find work in her professional field, and despite the long journeys and problems with childcare arrangements she persevered as she was focused on re-establishing her career after a few years out looking after her children. There is a sense in which she feels she is trying to develop her career, despite a lack of support in her work environment. The lack of trusted support networks or any organisational support often makes childcare commitments more challenging for working mothers. The lack of employee protection also suggests that she felt her options were limited and so she responded in a way she anticipated would be taken seriously in construction environment.

The degrading influence of everyday sexism was demonstrated through unfiltered comments in management meetings Sue comments "I sat in a meeting yesterday and listened to a senior person in the company say about a colleague 'she needs to sort her personal life out before I give her that job'". It included jokes that were clearly derogatory Lyn reflects on her male line manager who would say "it's another blonde moment and he'd quite often send me really sexist articles you know and the Irish jokes and questions that should never have been asked in a recruitment interview". Recruitment practices have previously been discussed as discriminatory, which seems to encourage some male colleagues to ask questions they now would be sanctioned in their home countries. So that Lyn was asked "why do you want to do that job, is it not difficult for you being a woman?" The accounts are consistent with Forstenlechner (2010:186) who reports that expatriates in the UAE have a strong feeling of host country injustice and comments that "A major point of dissatisfaction in the UAE was the lack of transparency of rules and regulations regarding the workplace and the lack of belief in the option to take a non-conforming employer to court."

Several participants commented on incidents where they had been personally intimidated at work or had witnessed different degrees of bullying and derogatory behaviour of others within and outside of the workplace, particularly staff of other nationalities. Katy reflects upon her first job in the private industrial sector and the western male managements' derogatory attitude to TCN employees and an intimidating experience with two British senior managers and herself alone in the boardroom. She recalls there was "some very intimidating body language" and "he leaned into me and said, I told you not to do that" she comments on how she could feel "my eyes welling

up” as if to suggest disappointment at not being able to hide her feelings. She sought to reposition herself more assertively by saying “I said to him that his e-mail was out of order and he should never have sent that” and in response he “picked up a box of Kleenex and he threw it at me across the table”, rather than acquiesce she “picked it up and said ‘did you mean to throw that at me’” at which point he seems to have realized that the encounter had escalated and she was not going to be intimidated, and he said “ No, no, no’ “ to which she said “good and I quit”. There are several examples when women have chosen to respond in very challenging ways to reposition themselves in difficult encounters, which is consistent Janssens et al (2006), and Forstenlechner (2010).

All of the women describe incidents, when they are bullied by a more senior western male colleague and none of them seek support from within their own organisations. Which reinforces the suggestion that organisations lack commitment to diversity and equality in UAE? This is consistent with Forstenlechner (2010:186) who comment that “The UAE on the contrary was perceived as an almost hostile environment to employee rights, with little opportunity to bargain except for one self out of a strong position, thus again adding to the feeling of transience and a lack of perceived justice”.

Such marginalizing gendered relations extended into the old boys network and formal business forums. Ann comments on the Chamber of Commerce, saying:

that’s probably the biggest boys’ club...I’m not being proud of that but I’ve avoided the Chamber of Commerce ...I’d wait until my boss came down or my colleague came down who were male and say ‘right, now we go to the Chamber.

There certainly is a sense in which some networking events are masculinised and BR reports that one of the reasons she established the women’s business network was that a “lot of women felt uncomfortable” in established professional networks and comments that “one woman stopped giving out her business cards as she kept getting text messages requesting dates”.

The lack of national regulatory frameworks for employee protection was exacerbated by derisory diversity and employee relations policies and practices in the organisational arena that gave employees inadequate protection or access to redress when they were intimidated or bullied in the workplace. This evidence is not consistent with recent research by Hutchings, Michailova and Harrison (2013) who offer a more positive

perspective on employee relations in the workplace in the UAE. Tzeng (2006) offers evidence that ethnic or cultural similarity of female expatriates with their peers elicited negative responses, and Omair (2009) study demonstrated that female Emirati respondents were intimidated by Muslim men in the workplace when choosing to 'cover'.

Therefore, while this section reflected generally limited examples of positive inter gender relations between women and western expatriate men, their interactions with their male peers was significant in illustrating a theme of disgust with some men in terms of their conduct towards women and other expatriates at work.

#### 6.5.3.3 Relations with western expatriate women

The participant accounts reflected on very few interactions with other western expatriate women except in the context of networking. For some attendance at the formal international business women networking groups was a social rather than professional endeavour. As Ann comments:

"it's nice to meet people and if they want to ask me to do something I'm happy to oblige but I don't find I need to ask them many things very often or need anything...it's a more a social thing for me".

In contrast, for others like Katy, such networking groups enabled her to "surround myself with strong women" who became a key source of emotional as well as professional support during difficult times in her working life, particularly after she had just been made redundant. She comments: "I spent three months building up a network of all of these fantastic women. So I have been meeting with women and consciously advocating women, and people have been so wonderful to me, men and women". This is consistent with the positive outcomes of networking for women expatriates' identified by Shortland (2011) and the entrepreneurial business environment encouraged in the UAE (Marmenout, 2010). Therefore, networking was seen as a strategy by the women to mediate risk, and support their adjustment in host cultures which is consistent with findings by Harrison and Michailova (2012) with other women expatriates in the UAE

## 6.6. Section summary

This section has presented and discussed the significant themes that emerged in the participants' accounts within the relational framework. The macro arena discussed themes contributing to risk for SIEs' in Emirati culture, Islam and Institutions and

governance. The meso arena included themes of the impact of Emiratisation and western influences on cultures and gender organising and HR policies and practices that contributed to risk for the participants. Finally, social relations with other western expatriate men surfaces a theme of disgust in contrast with supportive networking with western expatriate women. Table 6.5 provides a summary of the themes that contribute to a discourse of risk in the relational framework.

**Table 6.5: Summary of Risk themes from Relational Framework**

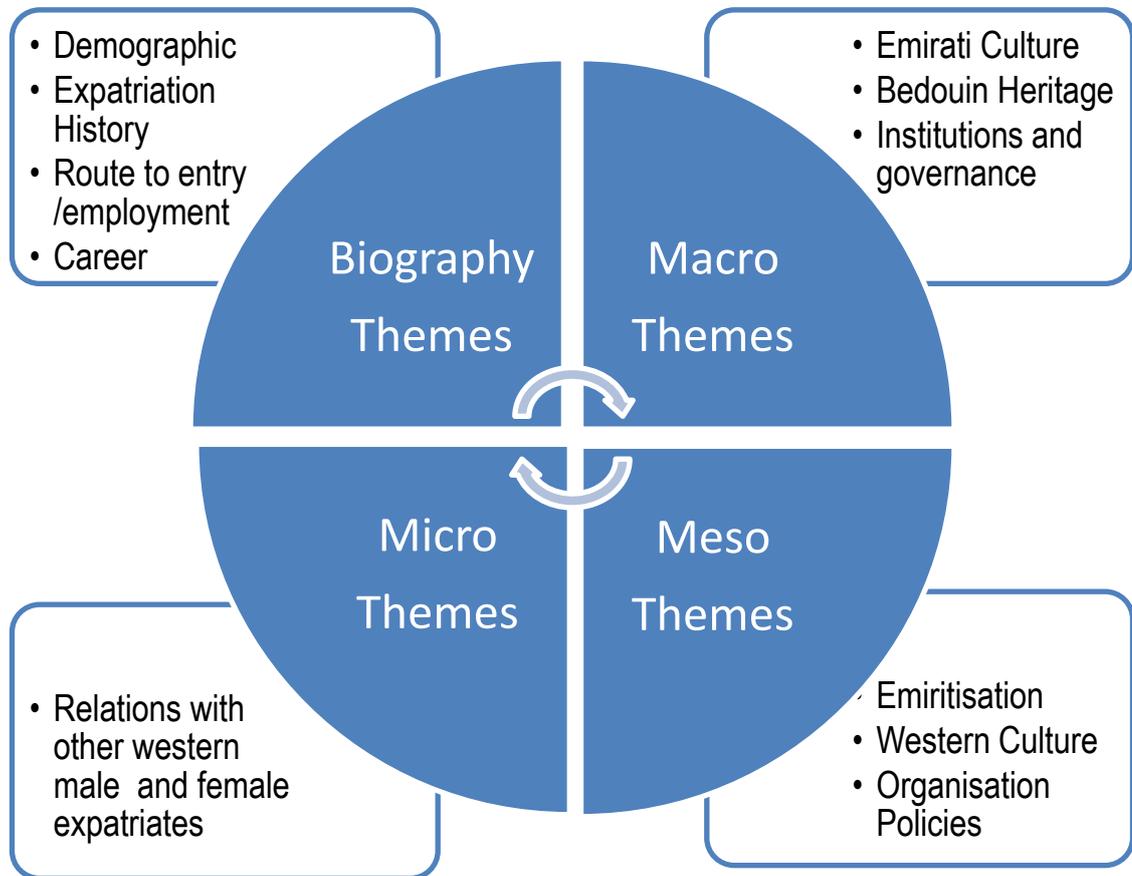
Arena	Secondary Themes	Significant Features
MACRO	Socio-Cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Preconceived cultural norms and juxtaposition of modern and traditional</li> <li>➤ Bedouin Cultural values – wasta and hospitality</li> <li>➤ Parallel Lives- lack of cultural interaction</li> </ul>
	Institutional-Legal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Sharia- lack of employment protection e.g. harassment</li> <li>➤ Lack of robust institutional or regulatory frameworks – frequently changing</li> <li>➤ Business friendly labour laws create risks for employees to challenge bad practices. Sponsorship regulations define gender, occupational and racial criteria</li> <li>➤ Contract termination- detrimental impact on Expatriates</li> </ul>
MESO	Impact of Emiratisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ General support of policy principles</li> <li>➤ Emirati privileging and Expatriate repositioning</li> </ul>
	Organisation Cultures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Western influences on organisation cultures, practices</li> <li>➤ Creates spaces for reinforcing prevailing gender relations</li> </ul>
	Diversity policies and practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Diversity- lack of commitment as evidenced in pay, protection, pregnancy and flexible working</li> <li>➤ Resourcing – discriminatory practices and gendered assumptions</li> <li>➤ Development – lack of support for expatriate development</li> </ul>
MICRO	Relations with Male Expatriates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Some, but limited positive experiences reported</li> <li>➤ Dominated by negative experiences of working with male western expatriates'. <i>Freakin zoo</i>, as illustrated by sexism, bullying, offensive management style and old boys network</li> </ul>
	Relations with Female Expatriates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Networking – support cultural adjustment to working and living in UAE</li> </ul>

## 6.7. Chapter summary

This chapter has outlined and discussed the significant themes identified in the participants' accounts emerging in the analysis of their biographical details and the macro, meso and micro arenas of relations. The analysis has been framed in the context of the review of the literatures on the UAE country context, intersectional lens and the expatriation-migration continuum to identify areas in which it is consistent or contradictory with the current theoretical insights and empirical studies.

The multi arena analysis of the participants' relational framework focused on constructing an understanding of the participants' subject position as an SIE. The themes which emerged in the analysis contributed to a Discourse of Risk in framing the experiences of the participants SIE status in the research context. The discourse of risk emerged dialectically within the macro, meso and micro arenas and connecting to themes discussed in the participants biographies. The emerging influences of this framework on the participants' subjectivities in the research context will now be considered in the next chapter in terms of their gender with ethnicity subject positions. This will explore their contribution to our understanding of the third gender in illuminating the intersection of gender and ethnicity in the participants' subjectivities as western women SIEs within the UAE. A summary of the themes contributing to the Discourse of Risk are presented in Figure 6.1.

Figure 6.1: Discourse of Risk



# Chapter Seven: The Third Gender Revisited

## 7. Introduction

This chapter provides an analysis of the Third Gender concept in relation to the relational subjectivities of western women SIEs' within the specific cultural, structural and temporal research context of the UAE. Therefore, this chapter will contribute to addressing the third research aim:

To analyse the experiences of western expatriate women self-initiated expatriates in the United Arab Emirates through the discursive theorisation of the Third Gender to contribute insights into expatriation and intersectional studies.

This chapter provides the opportunity to explore and extend the concept of the Third Gender (Adler, 1987) from the assigned expatriation literature to a new category of self-initiated expatriate located in an under-researched country context in the UAE (Harrison & Michailova, 2012). In doing so the chapter will contribute to addressing the fourth research objective:

To provide insights which contribute to understandings of women SIEs' experiences from an intersectional perspective through the concept of the Third Gender.

The chapter begins by briefly revisiting the Third Gender concept and exploring participants' understandings as illuminated in their accounts. The main body of the chapter outlines two significant discourses of respect and complex ethnicity which reflect the discursive reconceptualization of the Third Gender within the context of this investigation. This provides a complex analysis of the research evidence illustrated by selected extracts from the participant accounts to illuminate the construction of participants' subjectivities as enacting a Third Gender. Furthermore, it will explore and illustrate the discursive resources leveraged by the participants in navigating their complex and sometimes contradictory subject positions.

Emergent themes from the data presented are reviewed, at appropriate points, against existing theoretical and empirical studies presented in the literature chapters on intersectionality (Chapter Three) and expatriation and migration (Chapter Four) and the SIE relational framework (Chapter Six). The chapter concludes by considering the implications of the analysis of the illustrative data presented in this chapter in the

context of providing an original contribution to the discursive reconceptualization of the 'Third Gender' as an analytical concept for future study.

## **7.1. Third Gender revisited**

### **7.1.1 Third Gender concept in this study**

The concept of the 'Third Gender' (Adler, 1987) has been adopted within this study to frame and analyse the intersectional subjectivities of foreign western SIE women constituted by the intersection of their gender and ethnicity in a specific Arabic host society. Adler's (1987) research suggested that western expatriate women were perceived as foreign first and women second, which allowed them to construct different and privileged subjectivities in comparison to local female colleagues. She argued that "Whereas women are considered the 'culture bearers' in almost all societies, foreign women in no way assume or are expected to assume that role" (Adler, 1987:187).

There has been contradictory evidence supporting and disputing Adler's (1987) concept and Varma et al. (2006) suggested that further analysis should explore the nuances of third gender subjectivities through attention to the specificities of particular country contexts. This is particularly relevant for our understandings of ethnicity, constituted in the participants' intersectional subjectivities, within the UAE as a postcolonial contact zone (Yeoh & Willis, 2005b).

Tzeng (2006:384) in her comparative study of white and ethnically Chinese American female expatriate managers working in Taiwan found that while white participants were viewed as "curiosities and deserving of special treatment" in support of Adler's (1987,1994) findings, in contrast, their ethnically Chinese expatriate peers were judged according to local norms for female behaviour. Importantly, she notes that:

similar to their Chinese counterparts, the white female expatriates occasionally experienced obvious acts of gender prejudice at the hands of male colleagues from the same ethnic background, that is, some white women were well received by locals but had to deal with white male supervisors who criticised their management style...one interview told me...he [her supervisor] thought I was simply too sensitive and emotional. (Tzeng, 2006: 384)

In contrast to Adler (1987,1994) who argues that there is no gender bias in host countries, Tzeng's (2006) research demonstrates that it may exist but among people or more precisely males from the same ethnic background. Her study serves to highlight the complexities of ethnic categories and the need to problematize constructions of ethnicity and nationality specifically in attributions of western status.

This thesis contends that the complex and dynamic contextual framework in which the situated intersubjective relations of women expatriates are performed and which were interwoven with the 'Third Gender' concept have never been explicitly theorised. Consequently, this thesis argues that place, space and time and the multi-arena dominant discourses that shape and enact intersubjectivities are fundamental in theorising the concept of the Third Gender (Al Ariss & Ozbilgin, 2010; Coles & Walsh, 2010; Leonard, 2008, 2010). Therefore, the second research aim is to explore the concept of the third gender through the experiences of participants in the specific spatial-temporal context of this study.

The participants' subjectivities are understood within this thesis as negotiating simultaneous oppositional subject positions, marginalised by their gender as the Other and privileged as the One by their western ethnicity (Mavin & Grandy, 2014). The Third Gender concept is framed within this thesis as challenging the marginalising subject positioning of woman through foregrounding a privileged ethnic positioning as western, so that as foreign women they are not held accountable to local gendered cultural norms. Therefore, following Mavin and Grandy (2014) this analysis will explore how the participants experience their paradoxical intersecting subjectivities as both western One and woman Other.

This investigation of the Third Gender is distinctive in three ways: firstly, it delineates a complex bounded scope for the research context, secondly, it adopts an intersectional lens to explore the participants' situated subjectivities and finally it applies the concept to an emergent type of expatriate in self-initiated expatriates in an under-researched context (Harrison & Michailova, 2012).

The theoretical framework for this analysis includes two significant discourses which emerged in the participants' accounts and preceding discourse of risk (see Chapter Six). While both discourses in this chapter are understood as distinctive, nevertheless they are dialectical in nature and each intersects with the other to produce discursive and substantive effects which are inflected by the participants' gender, race and SIE positionality (Crenshaw, 1991). Each discourse foregrounds a particular characteristic of the participants' intersectional subjectivity and explores how it is constructed and experienced within the context of this study. Therefore, the discourse on respect foregrounds and explores the culturally gendered 'woman' construction of the participants' marginalized subject positions as western Woman (Fernando & Cohen, 2014; Mavin & Grandy, 2014; Radhakrishnan, 2009). This complements the discourse on complex ethnicity, which foregrounds and explores the privileged ethnically

gendered construction of the participants' subject positions as Western woman in a postcolonial context (Berry & Bell, 2012; Fechter & Walsh, 2010).

Firstly, this chapter considers the participants' perceptions of whether their situated subjectivity as western women SIEs constituted an advantageous or detrimental subject position in the UAE (Adler, 1987).

### **7.1.2 Emerging understandings of western women in the UAE**

UAE is an Arab gulf society with embedded Islamic values which condition a set of gendered cultural values and workplace practices (Marmenout, 2010; Metcalfe, 2006). A generational survey on work attitudes in the UAE conducted by Whiteoak et al. (2006) found that negative attitudes toward women at work correlate with females being less accepted as supervisors and co-workers. More recently, Harrison and Michailova (2012) and Hutchings et al. (2013) conducted telephone interviews from New Zealand with similar samples of western women expatriates in the UAE. Harrison and Michailova (2012:637) contradicted Adler's findings by suggesting that the participants were viewed as women first and professionals second "but which became less of a barrier once their competence was proven". Interestingly, Hutchings et al. (2013:304) stated that women adapted their behaviour to "ensure cultural and religious sensitivity" between the genders at work. They also believed that women were expected to work within the confines of what is acceptable behaviour for local women "which crosses over from the social realm into the work domain" (ibid: 305). Nevertheless, they supported Adler's findings that foreign women claimed that they were not subject to cultural or gender stereotyping in their multicultural workplace which they suggested may be due to the fact their workplaces comprised very few Emiratis and comment that:

the perceived expectations of behaviour in the, albeit, very multi-ethnic workplaces, could be argued to result from an auto-stereotyping in which they expected they were required to behave in a certain way because of perceptions that it would not be acceptable if they behaved as they would in their home countries. (Hutchings et al., 2013: 306)

However, Hutchings et al. (2013: 306) disputed Adler's (1987) findings by suggesting that foreign women are generally judged against cultural norms for local women in the non-work environment, particularly in terms of what constituted acceptable behaviour within Arab and Muslim culture. Their analysis, particularly of relations in the workplace, appears to preclude any detailed exploration of the specificities of the multi-ethnic work spaces in which these subjectivities are situated. Specifically, their analysis

fails to situate the participants' intersubjective relations within a population characterised by asymmetrical power relations. Within the UAE, Emiratis constitute less than 5% of the total labour market and incredibly less than 1% work in the private sector, where the vast majority of expatriates work (Forstenlechner and Mellahi, 2011). So while traditionally expatriate studies have considered the potential prejudice of host country nationals as the most significant factor, less attention has been paid to the co-presence of other expatriates or TCNs, which is a substantial feature of intersubjective relations in the UAE (Al-Khoury, 2010).

### 7.1.3 Participants' perception of their 'Third Gender' subjectivity

During the interview process, the participants were asked directly or indirectly, depending on the conversation flow, whether they felt that their subject position as a 'foreign or western woman was an advantage or disadvantage. Table 7.1 summarises their understandings as articulated in their accounts.

**Table 7.1: Summary of participants' perceptions of Third Gender**

Overall do you think it is an advantage being a foreign woman in the UAE?		
Name	Comment	Indicative Evidence
AmE	Yes, positive cultural norm but disadvantaged by masculine practices at work	AmE feels that there is a positive Emirati cultural stereotype that values women. She comments that she works in a "gender neutral organisation", and her students prefer a woman head of department and do not consider her a "second tier man". However, she feels there is an increasingly privileged positioning for Emirati colleagues and does feel marginalised by the "old boys' network" and colleagues who she describes as "just men in their shoes".
Fay	Yes at work with Emirati clients but not by her legal status in UAE	Fay acknowledged it as an advantage that her Emirati boss at the cultural organisation could not refuse her work requests, and found her current Emirati clients curious but not prejudicial. However, she did feel disadvantaged by her lack of legal rights e.g. the fact she still needed to get a written No objection certificate (NOC) annually from her husband to work.
Ann	Yes at work with Emirati but not other Arab males. No in public social spaces	Ann felt advantaged at work with her Emirati clients as they feel less intimidated with a woman, and were generally well travelled and not surprised she was a woman. However, she felt disadvantaged in her professional role by relations with male Arab colleagues and clients and at male dominated business networking events. She felt disadvantaged in public social spaces, particular with her older Emirati landlord and South Asian expatriates.
Beth	Not an advantage but not a disadvantage	Beth felt that her age and high organisational status was an advantage as people assumed she must be very good to be in that position as a woman; she previously had negative encounters with Arab male colleagues.

Table 7.1 continued

Cara	Disadvantage	Cara was a minority woman, one of only a few western women in the bank and felt that she lacked the professional status to compete with Arab masculine dominated organisational culture.
Jess	Disadvantage in previous organisations but currently felt it was <i>not an advantage but not a disadvantage</i>	Jess felt disadvantaged in a previous incident with Emirati police and a female Emirati shoplifter when in retail. Also felt disadvantaged by lack of diversity practices in organisations and her female SIE status when establishing her business. However, felt that women generally were advantaged because they are naturally good communicators and good at establishing good business relationships and 'clients see their passion for what they do'.
Emma	Advantage in current independent work role but disadvantaged in previous hotel work environment	Emma felt that she was advantaged in her current independent training consultancy by her mature age and international work experience, and her native English as this is the "lingua franca" of the international business world. However, she felt disadvantaged by a hostile "watch your back" multiracial working environment in hospitality organisations in the UAE which she chose to leave.
Katy	Yes previously advantageous with Emirati male clients, but no with some other male expatriates	Katy's contact particularly with Emiratis in Education over the last 15 years has generally been positive and she was treated with "a little bit of curiosity and a lot of respect" by Emirati placement providers. However, disadvantages in the workplace were the result of masculinised work cultures and practices particularly from other expatriates.
Sue	Yes generally, but not in specific incidents in work and social spaces	Sue felt that it was culturally advantageous being a woman in the UAE, although there was a serious risky incident with the police in which she felt she was treated inappropriately and a specific incident at work when she had been overruled by a male Emirati colleague with significant consequences. She feels that her ability to travel easily as a western expatriate has been advantageous personally and professionally. However, she felt disadvantaged by a male bias in work spaces in the UAE and the hospitality sector generally.
Lyn	No in securing employment but Yes as a white woman engineer but not in personal situations	Lyn thought that it was disadvantageous in securing employment. When in employment it was advantageous in her visibility as a white female engineer on construction site where 'you get noticed'. However, a disadvantage with local Emirati clients and interactions in social public spaces outside work e.g. landlord and his wife who just ignore her. However, she found masculinised and sexist culture at work challenging but not untypical of the construction sector in the UAE.

Although their accounts illuminate the complexities of living in contested multi-ethnic spaces, nevertheless, consistent with Adler's (1987) findings, the majority of participants broadly felt that there were advantages in their construction as

foreign/western women expatriates in the UAE. Although this often differed between work and social spaces and there were specific contrary incidents discussed for most of the participants. Nevertheless, Katy's comments are typical of this perspective:

I mean 14 years ago, for me to be in a business meeting with a national man was something, maybe the same would not be true now, but sitting with a western woman in a meeting, was quite a different thing that they hadn't experienced, so I think they were curious about how we would conduct ourselves.

[BS] And did you feel that they treated you in a certain way as a result of how they perceived you?

Yeah with a little bit of curiosity and a lot of respect, as I said I never really had any negative experiences, apart from that one phone call that time, but they were always very welcoming.

Katy appreciates that her business interactions with Emirati men was something exceptional rather than the norm, and suggests that the transitioning labour market may imply that 'the same would not be true now'. She articulates her subject position as ethnically gendered as a "western woman", and suggests that this position frames their interaction as "quite a different thing". She articulates an awareness of how her performance will be held accountable through "how we would conduct ourselves" and judged by the other party in this situation. However, she interprets the motives of her interactant as "curious", which does not suggest a negative predisposition to her subject position which is reinforced with her reference to "a lot of respect". Her fluid subject positioning is illuminated with the contradictory statement "I never really had any negative experiences, apart from that one phone call that time". This contradictory statement resonates with a number of the participants' accounts, which diminish the impact of particular negative experiences within an overall positive framing of social relations with Emiratis. It could be argued that in constructing their opportunity for direct experiences of interactions with Emiratis as a privileged positioning not commonly experienced by other expatriates, especially western women, they chose to be less attentive to those specific occasions that diminish this privileging subject position, as reflected in her final comment "but they were always very welcoming".

The juxtaposition of a "little bit of curiosity and a lot of respect" resonates directly with respondents in Adler's (1987) original study and comments of the western expatriate women in Hutchings et al. (2013) study. Hutchings et al. (2013) argued that the focus of enquiry into their personal circumstances actually suggested that they were expected to behave the same as local women as far as the traditional roles of 'mother' and 'wife' were concerned. However, the Emirati source and mode of delivery was prioritised in interpreting the whole experience more benignly. In contrast with Adler

(1987) but consistent with Hutchings et al., (2013) many women felt that they were judged according to local and religious cultural norms for Arab and Muslim women (Metcalf, 2006). This was advantageous when they complied with appropriate codes of conduct and behaviour but disproportionately disadvantageous when they didn't (Ramahi, 2009).

Additionally, an unanticipated finding, which had not been evident in any previous research, was the claim by four participants that the most advantageous social position was that of an educated, well connected through *wasta*, Emirati woman, and that an ideal subjectivity would be one in which they could transpose their western gendered knowledge into an Emirati female subject position as expressed by comments from Sue, "is it to my advantage that I'm a foreigner here? No, I wish I was a UAE national woman here, I think I'd kick some serious ass". Sue is unequivocal in expressing her understanding of the privileged subject position of Emirati women and their potential to "change the world". Some participants felt that their positioning as 'foreign woman' was subject to more scrutiny than their Emirati peers.

[BS] Do you think there are different expectations?

No I think the expectations are higher on a foreign woman.

[BS] So what do you think would be the expectations if an Emirati woman was doing your role?

I am sure that whatever she did they would think it was wonderful.

The privileged subject positioning of Emirati women is expressed in contrast to foreign women where "expectations are higher", and their performance is judged more leniently so that "whatever she did they would think it was wonderful". Furthermore, the participants contend that an Emirati woman subject position in employment was more assured as Amy comments in relation to her Emirati peer "she would never get fired in a million years". These comments serve to augment the participants' perception of a privileged positioning of Emirati women in comparison to their own, which is supported by the legal and policy frameworks of Emiratisation (Marmenout, 2010).

Furthermore, although the success of some Emirati women in leveraging this positive positioning was acknowledged it was interpreted as detracting from other women's performances of competence to achieve higher professional status (Mavin and Grandy, 2014). Beth comments that an Emirati female senior manager she recruited but who left after a short period "had been successful elsewhere because she had managed her career so far as an Emirati woman". The mode of strategic intent is suggested in the use of the word "managed" and the source of qualifying criteria is attributed to her

subject position as an Emirati woman. Overall, the comments suggest that gender similarity may require more nuanced understandings of ethnically different intra-gender expatriate social relations (Mavin and Grandy, 2014).

The contradictory interpretations of subject positions suggest that there are complex competing multi-arena influences that constitute their situated subjectivities as western women SIEs within the context of this investigation (Harrison and Michailova, 2012; Hutchings et al., 2013). Therefore, the main body of this chapter will problematize the concept of the Third Gender and reconstruct the participants' subject positions as western women SIEs as framed through the discourses of respect and complex ethnicity to illuminate their intersectional subjectivities of gender and ethnicity respectively within this study.

## **7.2. Discourse of respect**

This section explores the participants' intersectional subjectivities by analysing the discursive construction of their culturally gendered Other marginalising subject position as western Woman (Mavin and Grandy, 2014). A theme that emerged in the participant accounts and relational framework (see Chapter Six) reflected understandings of respect in their social relations. Respect is not a discourse that is explicitly constructed in the expatriation literature, however, it is an emergent concept in the gender literature and a term and understanding that is used frequently in the participants' accounts to frame their own experiences (Fernando and Cohen, 2014; Mavin and Grandy, 2014; Radhakrishnan, 2009). The concept of respectable femininity (Radhakrishnan, 2009) has been informative in exploring the participants' culturally infused woman Other subject positioning in this study. This section extends the analysis of respectable femininity to a new context and constituted in performances of non-local women in contrast to previous research (Fernando and Cohen, 2014; Radhakrishnan, 2009). Therefore, this section explores how understandings of respect emerge in the participants' enactments of their western Woman subject positions to constitute a discourse of respect through which their performances of doing difference are held accountable (West and Fenstermaker, 1995 a, b, 2002).

Respectable femininity is a concept which traces the infusion of historical, cultural, ideological and religious discourses coalescing into prescriptive models of idealised femininities and practices of doing gender. These constitute contemporary cultural constructions of respectable women's subjectivities, for which they are accountable to achieve woman status (Fernando and Cohen, 2014; Mavin and Grandy, 2014; Radhakrishnan, 2009).

A detailed analysis of Emirati women's enactments in terms of 'respectable femininity' would provide insight but unfortunately is beyond the scope of this investigation. Therefore, the concept of respectable femininity will inform our understanding of the norms and values that frame contextually contingent understandings of respect in constructions of Emirati women's subjectivities for which western Woman participants will be held accountable.

### **7.2.1 Emirati constructions of 'Respectable Femininity'**

Emirati constructions of woman are infused with idealised femininities and practices of doing gender that articulate a model of a respectable Emirati woman. This prescriptive model coalesces Islamic religious influences with contemporary understandings of reimagining Emirati national identity (Marmenout, 2010). Following on from Radhakrishnan (2009, pg. 200) the impact of globalisation on historical discourses is refracted through inevitably gendered binaries. The outer world of work and commerce is dominated by the west and enacted essentially by men, which contrasts with the inner world, and the realm of the "spiritual," in which the Islamic Middle East is framed as superior to the West and which must remain free of contamination. Therefore, maintaining the respect and virtue of Emirati woman is fundamental to constructions of the reimagining of Emirati national identity which "attests to the power of gendered icons in securing a claim for the nation's cultural superiority" (Radhakrishnan, 2009:200)

Metcalfe (2006, 2008b, and 2011b) has illuminated how women in the Middle East are subject to cultural and religious expectations which frame their participation in the labour market and their normative gendered relations (Chapter Two). Rapid economic development challenges the traditional balancing of civic and religious norms particularly relating to performances of woman in UAE society (Gallant, 2006, Marmenout, 2010; Metcalfe, 2011b). There were two key enactments of Emirati respectable femininity which were directly relevant to this study and through which the participants were held accountable; their prescribed gendered roles and their positioning as culture bearers of Emirati respect, virtue and chastity.

### **7.2.2 Gendered roles**

This section illuminates how understandings of respect are infused within Emirati constructions of gendered woman roles to which the participants are held accountable. Sheikh Zayed, the founding father of the UAE, supported Emirati women saying:

Women have the right to work everywhere as long as they are given the appropriate respect ... their basic role is that of bringing up children but, over

and above that, we have to support a woman who chooses to perform other functions as well. (UAE Interact, 1997)

The centrality of the family in “bringing up children” constituted by gendered roles and responsibilities is the foundation of coalescing ideological and cultural discourses through which the superiority of an Islamic national culture is declared and sustained (Al Rahami, a, 2009; Metcalfe, 2006; Safdar, 2009). UAE is reported to have the highest divorce rate in any Muslim country in the world, and an increasing cause for concern, where western influences are seen to have an influence (Elass, 2009). The participants were cognisant of culturally gendered expectations of women’s positioning in Emirati society which centralises their roles as wives and mothers (Gallant, 2006; Whiteoak et al., 2006). This suggests that constructions of feminine respectability were still central to and legitimated through its connections to the family.

### **7.2.3 Family first**

Those with responsibilities for young Emirati women’s education and training at work expressed their frustration at how they prioritise family rather than work (Radhakrishnan (2009). Emirati women are expected to demonstrate respect to their family members by prioritising their interests (Ramahi, b, 2009). Sue reflected on the frequency of phone calls from young Emirati women employees asserting that “I can’t come in, my mother wants me to be at home” as a legitimate reason for absence from work. Sue repositioned herself in opposition to prioritising family by saying:

there was a real contradiction between the expectation her family has, about the fact that family comes first, versus the fact that I was depending upon her to be in the workplace and providing her salary based on that.

Therefore, several participants challenged understandings of respect that required prioritising family over work interests. The notable exception to this was the participants with dependent children which were discussed in terms of SIE risks in managing family commitments in the UAE (see Chapter Six). Therefore, it is significant to explore to what extent the participants’ performances were judged according to this construction of the centrality of family and their role as wives and mothers by Emiratis (Gallant, 2006; Metcalfe, 2006; Marmenout and Lirio, 2014).

### **7.2.4 A little bit of curiosity and a lot of respect**

The participants interpreted the personal line of enquiry in business encounters as a cultural idiosyncrasy which reflected “a little bit of curiosity and lot of respect” (Katy) and did not take offence at this blurring of the personal and professional. The

simultaneity of nearness and distance which frames these encounters resonates with Czarniawska and Sevon (2008:404) construction of the objectivity of strangers in understanding foreignness, which “does not simply involve passivity and detachment; it is a particular structure composed of distance and nearness, indifference and involvement”. However, there were two specific comments which highlight how this transference of cultural norms to the participants was not always positively intended or received.

Ann describes a specific incident with an ‘Arab’ senior manager, who leverages the same line of questioning to marginalise and devalue her professional subject position at work by reference to what he suggests is a respectable role for a woman as a wife and mother in the domestic space. She reflects on a business conversation in his office when “he’d throw in these lines about – ‘so when do you plan on having a family because I think that’s a really good role for women’” which she interpreted as his inability to “handle it, this whole concept of having to deal with a woman” at work. His interpretation of her prioritisation of work over family means that she compromises her status as a respectable woman. His articulation of respectable femininity is framed in the discourse of “tradition”, but the inference is clear, there is a role for respectable women and it is not in the workplace. She demonstrates her “appropriate” “interpretation” of her subordinate positioning but does not want to risk jeopardising the business relationship (Janssens et al., 2006:144). So, she disengages emotionally from the interaction and responds tactically in a conciliatory tone “‘well you know Inchalla, when it happens it happens you know,’ when God wills it, it will happen and I said it with a very *genuine* look, I made sure it was genuine I mean inside I was like boiling”. The deliberate display of a “very *genuine* look, I made sure it was genuine” establishes this as a performance she feels compelled to enact to comply with cultural norms of respect. However, she repositions herself, in an “enabling discourse of gender” (Janssens et al., 2006:137) in drawing on femininities which is consistent with Napier and Taylor (2002).

### **7.2.5 Good woman/Bad woman**

The attribution of respect to traditionally gendered roles of wife and mother is frequently experienced by western women in the public sphere. Ann reflects on how she developed a different tactical response to deal with such inquiries, by enacting a performance of comedic drama in which her role as mother becomes an increasingly elaborate charade:

sitting in a taxi and for the first six months 'are you married sister?' 'yes I am,' 'so how many children do you have?' 'None.' 'Oh you're a bad woman then,' I was a bad woman for the first six months and then after that I said I had six children so I was a good woman after that!

Her account illustrates binary understandings of a good and a bad woman which are directly attributed to a woman's capacity to reproduce as a wife and mother to achieve status as a respectable woman. What is illuminating is the assumption of familial connection in the taxi drivers' use of the term "sister", which seems to position her in a desexualised and familial subjectivity which legitimates his personal enquiry with an unknown female customer and the frequency of similar enquiries "in the first six months" suggests that this is as a common occurrence.

### **7.2.6 Treat me as another wife**

Another example of the way in which this continuity of respectable femininity is enacted within the workplace is in line management relationships. This is illustrated by Cara, who comments that she could not work for an Emirati Director as his executive assistant as 'he would not respect me as a professional...but treat me as another wife'. Her interpretation suggested that he would conflate both subject positions as mutually reinforcing' marginalising her to a subjugated positioning (Gherardi and Poggio, 2001). She seeks to renegotiate this potential subjectivity by rejecting any possibility of it occurring in reality.

### **7.2.7 Women's role as culture bearers of Islamic virtue in UAE**

There was a broad understanding among the participants about women's role as culture bearers of Islamic virtue and how values of respect, modesty and chastity are central to women's achievement of a respectable subject positioning in Emirati society (Gallant, 2006; Metcalfe, 2006).

Radhakrishnan (2009:206) argues that "At the core of the reshaped discourses of respectability discussed here lies the issue of women's sexuality", and although this may be articulated in a range of ways "at the core is a rejection of promiscuity as a product of 'Western' culture". Therefore, within this context Emirati women's virtue is constructed as the exemplary "Islamic" value of respectable femininity that is threatened by the presence of a dominant, especially expatriate, population (Omar, 2009).

Critically, this augmented the construction of women's bodies as a sign of the moral status of the nation, because women are perceived as culture bearers in their societies (Adler, 1987; Radhakrishnan, 2009). Respect in this context manifests in explicit constructions of women's appearance and conduct, particularly in inter-gender relations (Metcalf 2006, 2011b; Omair, 2009). In the UAE dress has a particular social and political significance as a potent marker of national identity which enables Emiratis to redefine their place in a new modern world (Omair, 2009:422). Omair's (2009) study of Emirati women managers identified the significance of wearing the *niqab* as a religious, social and cultural norm for Emirati professional women.

Some of the respondents stated that the morality in society depends on how women dress. Khawla, an elderly top manager in the private sector stated: I think it is women who stand for the morality of society to a great extent. Yes, men have a part to play also, but what we can control is how our women behave. If women behave and dress modestly, it keeps society pure. A similar idea was given by Mona, a middle manager in the public sector who covers her face: "It is important to wear the niqab today because of the immorality in society". (Omair, 2009:421)

What this clearly illustrates is the moral imperative that is imbued within the nature of women's respectable participation and representation within this context. However, the source and scope of the "immorality" that Mona refers to is unclear. The niqab was also seen as a social norm in achieving respect because it was ubiquitous among family members and subject to peer pressure, as Katy described in her observations of the speed at which young Emirati women covered on entering college. Furthermore, Emirati attire was associated with preserving local traditions and customs in the UAE in the face of cultural pressures from a dominance of expatriates:

Mariam, a middle manager in the public sector: We have given up so many things under the name of "globalization", we have invited the "world" to live with us, we cannot give up our culture, as now more than ever we need to protect it. (Omair, 2009:421)

Therefore, in line with Adler's (1987) research, the extent to which the participants were held accountable to embodied enactments of normative expectations of Emirati respectable femininity will be explored (Metcalf, 2008a).

### 7.2.8 Dress

There was a consistent understanding among the participants about the importance of dressing appropriately in order to enact practices that will achieve personal and professional attributions of respect in work and public spaces.

Feminist scholars have stressed that the construction of women's subjectivities in contrast to men in the workplace has focused on visual appearance. Women's professional attire symbolically communicates and legitimates their subject positions as professional and gendered in masculine orientated organisations (Gherardi, 1996; Metcalfe, 2007). More recently, Mavin and Grandy (2014) extended this analysis to understandings of how women's dress and demeanour at work contribute to achievements of respectable femininity. This is amplified in a context which conflates disrespectful western dress with immoral behaviour and publicly regularly reminds residents and tourists of the consequences of not conforming (Hilotin, 2013). AT's comments are illustrative of a consistent "interpretation" (Janssens et al., 2006:144) of the participants:

I'd go to these meetings, the way I dressed had a very big impact and I was never cast an eye over quite obviously, it was very subtle but I dressed very conservatively and I felt that, because I was like that, because I didn't flaunt anything in particular and because I was honest about whether something could happen or not as well I think that earned me a lot more respect. (AT)

The choice of attire enacts a performance (Metcalfe, 2008a) for which women self-regulate and regulate others' achievement of respectable femininity (Mavin and Grandy, 2014). The self-conscious performance of respectable femininity through their choice of attire is recognised as having a "very big impact" on interactions and avoids being "cast an eye over". This suggests that the women are acutely aware of being active agents in constructing their own gendered performance (Gherardi and Poggio, 2001). This largely reflected accommodating local normative conventions of dressing "conservatively", and neutralising sexuality, as reflected in Ann's comment that "I didn't flaunt anything", suggesting that other women were less "honest" in their sexualised performances of femininity (Mavin and Grandy, 2014). Ann's "interpretation" (Janssens et al, 2006) in saying "I think it earned me a lot of respect", suggests that working expatriate women deliberately connect their embodied enactment of respectability through their dress and conduct to performances of cultural competence, valued in the global economy (Earley and Ang, 2003). She draws from a professional discourse to repositioning herself positively, demonstrating a performance of superior cosmopolitan

and business know-how in her cultural adaptability in translocational places (Howe-Walsh and Schyns, 2010; Janssens et al., 2006). In contrast, she comments:

I saw other ex-pat women who dressed provocatively in my opinion, or weren't quite sensitive to this environment and you could see and observe how much respect they got from all the men, the men loved it of course and then ended up having a bit of a conversation as such, but you know the deal would never go through, you know she wouldn't get the work, you know that if they liked the company then they'd use her connection to get to any other man in the company probably. And I think, from my experience, I just think that the way I dressed had a big impact (AT)

What is significant in the analysis of the participants' accounts is that it is the western women themselves, as illustrated in Ann's account, who are enacting disciplinary practices or "gendered regimes of intra-gender regulation" (Mavin and Grandy, 2014:7) in monitoring their own and other women's enactments of respectable feminine conduct and appearance in work spaces (Mavin and Grandy, 2014). The majority of the women comment on being conscious of dressing respectfully particularly in business contexts that conform to local standards of modesty. Furthermore, they have scant regard for western women who flagrantly contravene such conventions and even less sympathy with tourists who find themselves subject to criminal proceedings (Harnan, 2009). Sue comments "it's totally disrespectful...if you're going to show off your chest then people are going to look at it so get ready for it, you know, you bring it on yourself". This perspective emphasises the culpability of women who contravene the normative dress codes in receiving deserved sanctions for enacting "alternative femininities" (Radhakrishnan, 2009). Women, whose demeanour is constructed as "disrespectful" (Sue), are positioned as emphasising their sexuality and in doing so risk damaging personal and business reputations. However, there is a sense in which this individual breach of conduct is configured as damaging to all western women's performances in this context, and should not be condoned. This resonates with Mavin and Grandy's (2014:9) regime of regulation which suggests that women regulate the "borders of disgust" and position women transgressors as "suspect to disgust and a loss of status and respect".

The *niqab* worn by Emirati women also conveys a message about the wearer's chastity and deserving of respect, it becomes an interactional boundary for inter-gender relations which enables Emirati women's participation in both work and public spaces (Metcalf, 2006; Omair 2009:424). However, one of the most frequently cited

undesirable behaviours, inflicted usually but not exclusively on western women who are deemed not to dress respectfully i.e. uncovered in public, is the 'leering', 'staring' and even 'spitting' behaviour particularly of other Arab and south Asian male expatriates (Ghafour, 2009). This is consistent with Hutchings et al., (2013:306) who suggest that such behaviour is in response to the women being "stereotyped by locals or other conservative expatriate groups – as being of loose morals" and unworthy of respect.

### **7.2.9 Conduct**

A key aspect of enacting respectable femininity is performed through conducting inter-gender relations marked by modesty, chastity and respect. There is a code of modesty, which supported by the practice of *qiwama* (male protection of women), effectively circumscribes respectable gendered relations in public and private spaces (Gallant, 2006). There were some examples of unconventional generous relations with male Arab business clients, who referred to the participants as 'daughters' and 'sisters', which suggest that this familial referencing enabled legitimate and respectful inter-gender interactions. The women understood and practiced the local gendered conventions of not shaking hands until offered, and lowering their gaze and avoiding direct eye contact in work and public spaces. In this way the women self-regulated and reinterpreted these local cultural norms into their own embodied interactions, which is consistent with Hutchings et al. (2013). Their performances demonstrated self-disciplinary practices in order to de-sexualise their subjectivities and reconstitute their professional subject positions as respectable in the workplace (Mavin & Grandy, 2014; Metcalfe, 2008a).

The participants were cognisant of mediating their working practices to enact performances of respectable femininity (Radhakrishnan, 2009). This normally involves alternative indirect strategies to presenting their opinions, evaluations, judgements and especially disagreements in work relationships, which is consistent with Hutchings et al. (2013). Sue describes an incident with a male Emirati work colleague who sought her advice as the HR policy holder and then ignored it and did the opposite, with significant consequences for the business. She felt that he had positioned her as a woman rather than a professional and would not have ignored a male colleague in the same way. She drew from an enabling organisational discourse to reposition herself and reframe the issue as a serious organisational policy issue that needed to be addressed by the senior management team, which is consistent with Janssens et al. (2006). Her reluctance to challenge her Emirati male colleague's sexist behaviour directly as inappropriate is amplified by her reference to "I'm not going to change a thousand years of culture" which augments her "interpretation" (Janssens et al,

2006:137) of the historical and integral durability of such gender relations to contemporary encounters.

Therefore, contrary to Adler (1987), but consistent with Hutchings et al. (2013) this study argues that western women are judged accountable to local cultural norms through enactments of dress and conduct. It is significant that western women were regulating their own and other women's demeanours on the "borders of disgust" and subjecting transgressors to "disgust and a loss of status and respect" (Mavin and Grandy, 2014:9). Importantly, this is framed in a cultural context which amplifies the moral and abject subject positions of western women as culture bearers of western sexual freedoms (Radhakrishnan, 2009). This is reflected in the disrespectful behaviour particularly of south Asian male expatriates in regulating the inter-gendered "borders of disgust" in everyday encounters in public spaces (Hutchings et al., 2013). Anything less than quintessential enactments of respectable femininity were deemed as "alternative femininities" and broadly attributed to performances of western immorality (Radhakrishnan, 2009).

#### **7.2.10 Role of workplace in supporting respectable femininity**

There was consistent evidence that work organisations contributed to supporting, shaping or sanctioning particular kinds of respectable femininity (Radhakrishnan, 2009). From a feminist perspective, organisations maintain the gender system by supporting enactments and beliefs about men's greater status and competence (Acker, 2006). Omair (2009:426) concludes that constructions of woman as a manager in the UAE are "still loaded with traditional ideas that women are inferior to men and therefore less capable in leadership positions".

The participants acknowledge that Emirati constructions of respectable work for women (Gallant, 2006) meant that they were able to secure opportunities e.g. in construction and hospitality, which would not be appropriate for Emirati women. Sue comments that even though she has a female Emirati peer as a director, her colleague's job is configured very differently, without the same responsibilities for operational activities and interactions with front line staff. The conditions of gender relations within these work spaces would compromise the values of chastity and modesty that are central to maintaining an Emirati woman's respectable positioning (Gallant, 2006). Therefore, while the participants acknowledged their marginalised normative cultural status by working in less respectable roles they drew from an enabling discourse to reframe the professional benefits accrued as ultimately beneficial to their expatriate trajectories (Janssens et al., 2006) to diminish the loss of respectable status in their employment.

The analytical separation of family and work spaces denies the discursive and substantive ways in which the workplace supports, detracts or enhances performances of respectable femininity (Radhkrishnan, 2009). Sue comments on her role as a HR manager and the protracted negotiations with Emirati women, or rather their fathers and brothers, to recruit and retain them in the organisation. In contradistinction to the lack of equivalent formal procedures for expatriate women, such arrangements highlight the acceptance and support for Emirati women to help them enact particular forms of femininity which are simultaneously denied to their expatriate peers, which was discussed in the discourse of risk (see Chapter Six).

There was consistent evidence that some of their male expatriate colleagues demonstrated a lack of respect to the participants through enactments of misogynist and sexist behaviour in the workplace. This behaviour was interpreted as disrespectful by the participants in rejecting normative western cultural understandings of equality in the workplace and is discussed extensively in the discourse of risk (see Chapter Six). The situation was exacerbated by the lack of procedural or legal protections at the organisational and institutional level within the UAE, which seem to privilege ideological rather than civic norms of equality and diversity (Marmenout, 2010). Some of the participants attributed this masculine hegemony to the influence of imported ideologies and practices from external forces, contrary to Marmenout (2010). This enabled some male expatriates to reconfigure the local cultural gendered positioning of women to their advantage, by knowingly enacting gender regimes which would have been constituted as illegitimate and subject to sanctions in their home countries.

#### **7.2.11 Section summary**

Therefore, contrary to Adler's (1987) findings, the western women SIEs found that they were held accountable to culturally and religiously infused social expectations of respectable femininity as enacted through women's role as wife and mother, and as culture bearers of virtue in work and public spaces (Gallant 2006; Mavin and Grandy, 2014; Metcalfe, 2006, 2011a; Radhkrishnan, 2009). They navigated these contested subject positions through a range of different strategies to reconfigure, reject or subvert these subject positions through creating psychological distance, enacting an elaborate performance, anticipating a pre-emptive rejection, repositioning issue from an organisational perspective and reframing their positioning from an advantageous professional perspective (Gherardi & Poggio, 2001; Janssens et al., 2006)

Table 7.2 summarises the key features of enacting performances that constituted a discourse of respect in understanding the participants' experiences as western Woman.

**Table 7.2 Discourse of Respect**

Main Theme	Significant Features
Gendered Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Emirati constructions of gendered roles</li> <li>➤ Disclosure of personal family role gendered information at work</li> <li>➤ Marginalised gender role positioning at work and public spaces</li> </ul>
Culture bearers of virtue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Emirati constructions of idealised femininity of virtue</li> <li>➤ Dress</li> <li>➤ Conduct</li> <li>➤ Role of organisations</li> <li>➤ Enactments of masculine hegemony</li> </ul>
Agentic strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Diverse range of strategies including: creating psychological distance, enacting an elaborate performance, anticipating a pre-emptive rejection, repositioning issue from an organisational perspective and reframing their positioning from an advantageous professional perspective</li> </ul>

### 7.3. Discourse of complex ethnicity

This section explores the participants' intersectional subjectivities by analysing the discursive construction of their ethnically One subject position as Western woman (Leonard, 2008; Mavin and Grandy, 2014). A theme that emerged in the participant accounts and through a discourse of risk in understanding their SIE subjectivities reflected understandings of their ethnicity in framing their social relations (see Chapter Six). The literature review explored how ethnic constructions of difference may construct expatriates as outsiders (Rodriguez and Scurry, 2014), but not necessarily inferiorised Others, (Berry and Bell, 2012; Jones, 2008) so that "inferiorisation is not an essential characteristic of being an outsider but rather inscribed by gender, class, ethnicity, race and postcolonial positioning" (Jones, 2008:763).

This section explores enactments of the participants' ethnicised gender subjectivities negotiated interactionally within the ethnic dynamics of the UAE. Understandings of culture, nations, peoples and places are informed by collective imaginings about cultural characteristics and difference, which illuminate particular ways of seeing and interacting (Al Ariss, 2014; Marmenout, 2010). Coles and Walsh (2010) argue that such imaginings are spatially and temporally contingent and reconfigured to produce context specific substantive effects. Al Ariss (2014, pg. 1990) concludes that the ethnic

dynamics of expatriation present a “complex reality” in the UAE. This section will explore how the participants’ subjectivities are discursively constructed and enacted through a discourse of complex ethnicity which emerged in this study to explore the concept of the Third Gender. Complex ethnicity is constituted in two ways. Firstly, it situates the participants’ ethnic subjectivities within an understanding of the ‘complexity’ of local ethnic dynamics. Secondly, it explores the ‘complexity’ of situated understandings of their foreign, western and white subject positions in the postcolonial context of the UAE (Coles & Walsh, 2010; Marmenout, 2010).

### **7.3.1 Complex ethnic dynamics in UAE**

The ethnic diversity of humanity is represented in the UAE and most notably in Dubai and Abu Dhabi in which the research participants lived and worked (Malecki and Ewers, 2007). This contributed to a distinctive ethnic dynamics in social relations within macro, meso and micro arenas (Al Ariss, 2014; Marmenout, 2010; Walsh, 2011). The particular distinctions within ethnicity were also marked by the differential status of nationality and citizenship and their intersections with gender, class and religion.

### **7.3.2 Local ethnic stratification**

The state would normally have a central role in structuring the ethnic diversity of its expatriate population and labour market through immigration, foreign investment and economic policies (Al Ariss and Ozbilgin, 2010; Malecki and Ewers, 2007). Chapter Two detailed how the UAE government has sought to balance immigration with ambitious economic goals which has culminated in creating a ‘demographic time bomb’ and highly segmented labour market (Forstenlechner and Rutledge, 2010). The analysis of participant accounts detailed a fairly consistent understanding of the “very layered” (AT) local ethnic hierarchy, in which local Emiratis “rank people in their stations” (AmE). This resonates with other studies which explored expatriate and Emirati (Al Ariss, 2014; Marmenout, 2010; Walsh, 2011); Malecki and Ewers (2007:477) suggest that there are “multiple layers of distinct divisions between public and private sector, between national and expatriate and between male and female”. The studies are generally consistent in the broad ethnic hierarchical positions of Emirati, affluent Arab and western expatriates and Asian expatriates, although levels are subdivided when intersected with class and cultural origin. Table 7.2 provides a summary of ethnic stratification in the UAE drawn from relevant studies.

**Table 7.3: Ethnic stratification in UAE**

Hierarchical Level	Ethnicity	Evidence from other studies
First Level	Emirati Sheiks and families	<b>“At the very top of the social hierarchy are Sheikhs and their families” (p.519)</b> <i>“the indigenous Arab population sits at the top of the social division of labor, holding posh government jobs and allotted with Unparalleled social contracts from the government.” (p.477)</i>
Second Level	Emirati nationals, wealthy Arab/Persian migrants	<b>“Emirati nationals (of Arab or Persian origin), and then wealthy migrants from Iraq, Palestine and Egypt, some of whom have been given Emirati national citizenship”. (pg. 519)</b> <i>“After UAE national any remaining jobs will be offered to GCC nationals” (p.11)</i>
Third Level	Wealthy, professional elite	<b>“A wealthy and professional elite form the next tier, including upper and middle-class Indian, Lebanese, Iranian, Russian, Chinese and European migrants.” (p.519)</b> <i>“Other Arab nationals (UAE Yearbook, 2009)” (p.11)</i> <i>Evidence that nationalities were paid differentially for similar roles and that western expatriates were paid more than peers in certain sectors (pg. 13)</i> <u>“Emirati managers give better organisational positions to Western expatriates compared with other cultures.” (p.1990)</u> <b>“Westerners occupy the highest [expatriate] social strata, as they tend to occupy the higher executive and technical positions. Other Arabs from North Africa or the Levant occupy the second level of social stratum.” (p.477)</b>
Fourth Level	Skilled migrants	<b>“Skilled Migrants from South and South-East Asia, predominantly India and Pakistan, but also Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and the Philippines, forms the lowest social tier in this hierarchy.” (p.519)</b>
Fifth Level	Low skilled migrants	<b>“Low skilled migrants Skilled from South and South-East Asia, predominantly India and Pakistan, but also Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Indonesia and the Philippines, form the lowest social tier in this hierarchy.” (p.519)</b> <i>Broader migratory factors meant that some nationalities, notably lower skilled south east Asians could be expected to accept less in terms of occupational roles(pg. 10)</i> <b>“Even within this lowest stratum there are wage differentials, with Indians generally receiving higher wages than Bangladeshis and Sri Lankans.” (p.477)</b>

Summary table adapted from studies by Al Ariss (2014:1990) underlined: Malecki and Ewers (2007:477) italic and bold; Marmenout (2011:10-13) in italics and; Walsh (2011:519) in bold.

The participants' social position as western 'white' expatriates constituted a relationally privileged subjectivity within the prevailing ethnic structure in the UAE. Emma outlines what she suggests is a common understanding of the ethnic hierarchy:

The way I've had it expressed to me was that you had Emiratis, then you have other Arab ex-pats then you have white ex-pats, then you have maybe the Filipinos and the South East Asians, then you have the Indians, Bangladeshis... that's the way it seems to me and that's how I've heard it been said as well.

She makes references to this understanding as "the way it has been expressed to me" to imply its prevalence in local discourses. The "Arab ex-pats" she refers to include references to Arabs from the GCC, who have more status than those from across the ME. She also marks western to mean 'white' and as a distinct ethnic group (Leonard, 2008, 2010). Emma continues to elaborate on the hierarchical ethnic positions which frame everyday interactional relations (West and Fenstermaker, 1995 a, b, 2002), by commenting:

When you go to supermarkets or the shops, you observe the way an Emirati would talk to me and then turn around and talk to the service staff person who was a different nationality it's just – the dichotomy of that communication is so obvious.

This illuminates the higher subject positioning of the 'Emirati' who is named in contrast to the 'different nationality' of the "service staff person" who is constructed as an 'inferiorised Other' (Jones, 2008) in an interaction centred on "me". Such everyday racisms which would be open to challenge within their home cultures were generally accepted as part and parcel of living in a foreign place where 'they do things differently'. 'Difference' was to be expected, and remained an immutable barrier, although several provided examples of when they had challenged or sought to subvert its detrimental impact particularly on those deemed lower in the local ethnic hierarchy 'without obfuscating the line between 'self' and 'other'" (Yeoh and Willis, 2005b:278).

The participants' accounts reflect an understanding that Emiratis positionality reflects a level of influence, protection and privilege that frames interactions within macro, meso and micro arenas. It provides subject positions that contest the imaginings of a postcolonial project where western expatriates assume a primordial place in the local ethnic hierarchy (Coles and Walsh, 2010). This is not to suggest that Emiratis are always in higher social positions as the intersections of class and gender or, more often, tribe and *wasta* are powerful dynamics in this context (Harry, 2007; Omair, 2010).

The UAE has a framework of formal institutional and regulatory structures that protect the local population from fluctuations in global economics; through a 'social contract' and implementation of Emiratisation policies (Forstenlechner and Rutledge, 2010; Marmenout, 2010; Rees et al, 2007) (see Chapters Two and Six). The Labour laws provide protected employment and designated occupations for Emiratis (Al Waqfi and Forstenlechner, 2012; Marmenout, 2010). The discourse on risk outlined how the participants non-Emirati citizen status intersected with gender to shape their marginalised subject positions through their experiences of routes to entry, visa sponsorship and temporary residency status (see chapter six).

### **7.3.3 Ethnicised workplaces**

The participant accounts explored how social relations are imagined and negotiated illustrating the continuities and disruptions of colonial and culturally infused discourses in structuring ethnic dynamics within contemporary workplaces in the UAE (Al Ariss, 2014). Leggett (2010:1269) demonstrates how a "colonial imaginary" infiltrates the structures and practices replicating colonial ethnic hierarchies. Al Ariss (2014:1989) reports that while many Emirati managers recognise that skills are the key selection criteria, some tend to distinguish between expatriates according to their ethnicity or nationality in recruitment decisions. For example, the quote below illustrates the way some cultures are stereotyped at various organisational levels by an Emirati manager:

At the higher management level, since we are an oil company, we have already employed and continue to employ Westerners, such as French, American, and British people. Here, I do tend to prefer Westerners. At mid-management level I would say Arabs for easy communication. A directive by the UAE government has been issued stating that most governmental as well as private business communication needs to be in Arabic. So it will help employing Arabs since they speak and write Arabic. From my experience I have no problems employing Indians and Asians. Although I believe that Indians tend to sometimes hide information and to be very submissive and dash; even if you are wrong, they always agree with you: they would never challenge you. Filipinos are very clean and hygienic people and have a good work ethic (Sharif, Emirati top manager).  
Al Ariss (2014:1989)

The participants' experiences reflect how organisational hierarchies tend to reflect the local ethnic hierarchy where Emirati owners or those with high external *wasta* were in significant influential roles, and often dictated strategic and policy decisions e.g. Emiratisation goals, as illustrated in several studies (Forstenlechner et al., 2011; Marmenout, 2010). Katy reports on how the Emirati owners of her finance company direct senior recruitment decisions "it's our parent company who is saying you must have a national HR Director". This hierarchical positioning is reported by, for example, Sue and Beth in hospitality and Cara and Katy in finance and banking. Katy reflects on

her experiences at a shipping company where senior management were “100% expat, the CEO was British, his no 2 and 3 were British and everybody else was Pakistani”. Western and Arab expatriates dominate the most senior operational roles over a broader workforce including a range of south East Asians; this same pattern was reported across all sectors in which the participants were employed which are consistent with Al Ariss (2014), Marmenout (2010) and Walsh (2011).

#### **7.3.4 Ethnic group balance**

Marmenout (2010:14) reports that several participants felt that it was important to maintain a diverse ethnic balance within the workplace environment, one of her participants comment “We have a policy of not having more than 30% of any nationality. We currently have a freeze on certain nationalities. We need to actively manage that, so that when an Indian leaves we give priority to UAE nationals, Gulf or Arab countries” (Banking, Emirati). The negative impact of dominance by particular nationality groups in workspaces was reported by several participants, including Katy who felt there was an “Australian mafia” in one organisation in which she worked and Cara who was wary of the “Lebanese faction” in the bank commenting “the Lebanese are there and the Palestinians are there... and sort of never the twain shall meet and that’s just something that’s gone on”. So the negative and often divisive impact of a disproportionate balance of ethnicities within an organisation’s structure was reflected in the participant accounts.

#### **7.3.5 Ethnic group relations**

The participants did engage in stereotyping of Other ethnic groups. However, they tended to attribute their production of negative constructions as constituted by the contingent ethnic dynamics in the UAE. Emma reflects upon when she worked in hospitality that an individuals’ nationality seem to dictate their occupation. She commented that:

oddly enough different nationalities seemed to want to do different jobs like the Indians would want trades such as carpentry maybe because at home their family’s trade was that. A lot of Filipinos did a work programme at home so they quite frequently had F and B experience so their cultures pick their work for them.

Understandings of ethnicities were constructed around their occupational positions which were attributed to the nature of exported labour from non-western countries i.e. skilled in trades rather than professions (Malecki and Ewers, 2007). Subsequently,

other ethnic groups' positions within low class occupations or lower positions in the organisation's hierarchy was normalised as 'inferiorised others' (Jones, 2008:763).

Ann was acutely aware of her own levels of racism which she found "shocking" when she reflected upon her attitude towards other non-western expatriate males. She felt that her direct negative personal experiences with an Egyptian colleague and another Egyptian client allowed her to justify her negative stereotypes of all Egyptians:

It's not fair because I don't think that every single Egyptian would steal your grandmother and sell her back to you. I've only had one close relationship with a male Egyptian and in that situation he lied, consistently lied to me so that's my experience.

She acknowledged her own levels of racism but legitimised her negative construction of Egyptians on the basis of her relational experiences "so that's my experience". She elaborated further to suggest that the ethnically structured dynamic in the UAE amplified the negative relations between different expatriate groups, in comparison to an increasingly multicultural Australia. In this way she was able to circumscribe any personal responsibility to confront her own racism as it was constructed as a normalised production of contested ethnic dynamics in the UAE (Jones, 2008; Lan, 2011).

### **7.3.6 Maintaining distance**

The stratified ethnic dynamics of the UAE enabled the construction of psychological and physical distancing in social relations through the deployment of particular ethnic Others. Leggett (2010:1271) argues that western expatriates can draw from their privileged subject positions to diminish the impact of culture shock by constructing "psychological and physical barricades, or by maintaining "distance" in ways reminiscent of "colonial cultural strategies". Leggett (2010:1272) demonstrates the extent to which the "colonial imagination" was reflected in organisational relations and interactional practices of using specific ethnic assigned "middlemen" to create distance between expatriates and indigenous people.

What is striking in the UAE is the reproduction of this colonial strategy by Emiratis in using expatriate 'others' as the 'human barrier' to create distance between themselves and the sometimes messy practices of business preferring to delegate that for example to 'Other Arabs' who featured prominently in the participant accounts and is cited by one of Al Ariss' (2014:1989) Emirati senior manager as "best capable of finding the easiest way to solve problems or make decisions". The perceptions of several participants were that some 'other Arab' and western male expatriates leveraged their

'middling' position to be deliberately obstructive and often sexist in their relations with white western women. This buffering practice was clearly illustrated in Ann's account of the typical interactional protocols when she visited Emirati owned enterprises as part of her trade role.

### **7.3.7 Intersubjective relations**

There are formal country-specific laws and regulations, company policies and procedures and informal understandings of intercultural relations; nevertheless, the spaces between the rules and the realities experienced by the participants at times reflected an 'anxious state' Leggett (2010:1266). The participants' problematic encounters with expatriate and 'Other Arab' males has been outlined in the previous discourse of respect.

The participants western subjectivities in UAE could be constituted as positioning them as numerically smaller but highly visible in contrast to TCNs who were simultaneously everywhere yet unseen. Several participants sought to reconfigure their postcolonial subjectivities as 'guardians' supporting TCNs with less social and economic capital as a strategy to subvert a palpable uncomfortableness within this ethnically divisive environment. In contrast, many were simultaneously complicit with the local practice of employing such women to undertake childcare and domestic chores as part of the 'nanny chain' to support their own lifestyles and freedoms to work (Metcalf & Rees, 2010).

Therefore, the contextually contingent complex ethnic dynamics of the UAE constituted a distinctive framework of social relations in which the participants' Western woman subjectivities were enacted. Their performances instantiated understandings of complex foreign, western and white subjectivities which will be explored next in the context of this study.

### **7.3.8 Foreign woman**

Central to the concept of the Third Gender is the construction of foreignness in the intersubjective relations between expatriates and HCNs. Everyone is foreign somewhere, and the construction of 'foreignness' is fluid and contingent on connections between individuals' subjectivity and their access to discursive and substantive resources within a specific time, place and space (Al Ariss & Syed, 2011; Fechter & Walsh, 2010; Rodriguez & Scurry, 2014). There are imaginings and connections that serve to create a sense of closeness and distance between collective groups of people coexisting in the same temporal, spatial contexts that frame their

formal and informal relations (Czarniawska & Sevon, 2008). This section will outline how the participants' subjectivities are constructed as foreign and how this is illustrated in their intersubjective experiences in this study.

The participants are constructed as foreign in this context by a deficit of similarity with Emiratis. Their nationality and occupational/professional status determines their potential to apply and secure access to certain types of residency, work and terms and conditions of employment (Marmenout, 2010), (see Chapter Six). Their legal rights and obligations are framed by their non-citizen status and their behaviour and conduct is structured by local cultural and social norms and sanctioned by Sharia Law (Metcalf, 2006) as discussed in the discourse on respect.

The participant accounts highlight that many of them worked with colleagues in multicultural work spaces, where their ethnically privileged western subjectivity positioned them positively even in lower roles in the organisation hierarchy. Cara was privileged by her British subject position working for the British head of an Emirati bank. Amy comments 'I don't feel foreign at work, as we are all foreigners there'. This is consistent with views expressed by women expatriates in Hutchings et al (2013) study. Furthermore, the culture, policies and procedures of these workspaces were familiar, generally described as working in line with western paradigms of workplace performance and practices (Leggett, 2010). However, they all acknowledged that their foreignness was constituted in their privileged terms and conditions of work compared to marginalised Other ethnicities, which is consistent with Al Ariss (2014) and Marmenout (2010). However, this intersected with gender to produce marginalised Other subject positions which have been discussed in the discourses of risk and respect.

In contrast, the participants generally felt foreign when in government offices and institutions, or airports, but not in shopping malls or hotels, particularly spaces frequented by tourists or that served alcohol. In their social worlds, their children attended international schools and often lived in separate housing spaces, sometimes designated by the authorities for Emiratis or foreigners, which facilitated coexisting in the same place but not necessarily the same space. This is consistent with findings by Hutchings et al. (2013) which illuminate how expatriates can be constructed on a continuum of cosmopolitan subject positions in the UAE, embedded in large expatriate communities with little interaction with their Emirati hosts, and not feel disadvantaged by this patterning of everyday social relations.

### 7.3.9 Western woman

The concept of western superior modernity extended to organisations' cultures and practices, where western paradigms of organising and managing were deemed to be superior (Leggett, 2010; Metcalfe & Woodhams, 2012), as illustrated by Amy's comment that she applied to work in a college in UAE because:

they followed institutional western practices...was built upon a model of Canadian Community Colleges, So the first people who started ...even though it was Sheikh Nayhan's vision, he did hire many Canadians. So it started with processes, procedures and practices, and drew staff from Canada. It was lovely to work in a place that seemed like it had rules.

The "institutional western practices" which were framed as the norm extended to performance paradigms. This included a focus on competence and centrality of work in contrast to family, which were presented as superior principles of managing, and characteristic of the ideal worker (Acker, 2006). This was explored previously where Emirati womens' workplace subjectivities were constructed as marginalising organisation interests in the discourse of respect. Several participants reflected on their roles supporting Emirati peers and colleagues to aspire to such western modernity as Sue comments "my job is to get her to where I am". She juxtaposes the temporal connections between the western modern world to which she belongs to the less accomplished world of the UAE from which her colleague is emerging (Leggett, 2010). This resonates with postcolonial continuities reflected in western expatriates' roles in the Emiratisation process which connect their past and present contribution in a shared civilising mission of modernisation and economic advancement in this emerging dynamic state (Metcalfe & Rees, 2010; Metcalfe & Woodhams, 2012). In this construction of self as One and Emirati as Other, the colonial imagination does more than create a reality that denies the contemporaneousness of human populations; "it operates also as a high-powered medium of domination that recalls the asymmetry of colonial relations" (Leggett, 2010:1270).

However, asymmetrical social relations are difficult to legitimise when confronted with an emerging Emirati business cadre whose education, linguistic skills, and business acumen have found success within, outwith and across transnational corporate spaces. "However, through the colonial imagination, distance both spatial and temporal is maintained, so that such confrontations rarely take place" (Leggett, 2010:1270). Therefore, the accounts demonstrate the way that western expatriate ideologies may

draw from a neo-colonial imaginary to implicitly and explicitly ground a sense of cultural and ethnic superiority (Berry & Bell, 2012; Holvino, 2010).

Western expatriates in UAE are more strongly associated with being British rather than American (Fechter & Walsh, 2010); however, Leggett (2011) suggests that nationality matters less than the collective imperial imagination of Westerners. Therefore, Fechter and Walsh, (2010:1199) argue that “in some ways, a shared Western tradition of viewing the Other with a sense of superiority seems to transcend the particular national heritages and specific colonial cultures”. Ethnically similar western group membership was extended to culturally similar nationalities which were broadly positively constructed in the participant accounts, which is consistent with Varma et al. (2011). Western privilege is transformed into social capital through expatriate networking, social and professional spaces become hubs of interconnections (Leonard, 2008, 2010), which become “the seedbeds for the growth of social ties” (Lan, 2011:1684). This capacity for expatriate connectivity is clearly illustrated in the accounts of the participants and is consistent with findings from other studies (Harrison & Michailova, 2012).

The previous chapter identifies two important characteristics of this connectivity; firstly, that this network of relations extends beyond the local to the global and provides a valuable point of entry and exit to different places. This is particularly important to SIEs who are more economically vulnerable than their AE peers, and more likely to travel with the ebb and flow of global capital to new hot spots of economic activity, as demonstrated in the migration of several participants from Hong Kong to UAE. Secondly, the analysis of the participants’ accounts illustrates the gendered nature of local networking which inhibited the participation of women in professional male dominated events and was a fundamental driver for Jess in establishing a women only network for entrepreneurs, and is consistent with findings by Harrison and Michailova (2012). Rodriguez and Scurry (2014) report that the preference for participating in ethnically similar networks can detract from expatriates’ development of career capital, which the participants countered through gender similar networking, often with ethnically different expatriate women to gain support and mediate risk (see Chapter Six).

Culturally similar ethnic groupings may dominate particular social spaces including social clubs (Walsh, 2011) which for some resonated uncomfortably with historical colonial continuities e.g. The British Club, and were spaces that some of the

participants purposively chose to avoid preferring more multicultural spaces, which is consistent with findings from Leonard (2008) in Hong Kong.

Within this thesis, several participants draw attention to the distinction made between nationality and ethnicity in constituting expatriate subjectivities within the UAE. Sue reports on the experiences of friends of mixed heritage from western countries, illustrating the paradoxical relationship between ethnicity and nationality:

You could be like a third generation Canadian but be ethnically from the Philippines and you come here to Dubai and people just assume you're from the Philippines... I've had very serious cases, even with colleagues who have been taken into custody for activities and...once they received the passport that they realised they have a Canadian or British passport they get treated a little a bit differently.

This serves to illustrate that western nationality is a privileged subjectivity which meant that people “get treated a little a bit differently” in formal situations with legal implications e.g. residency and employment visas, which is consistent with Al Ariss and Sayed's (2011) study of Lebanese SMEs in France with dual US citizenship. However, ethnicity was a principal signifier of privilege and routinely the primary characteristic by which people were positioned. A western national of non-white or mixed heritage constitutes a hybrid subjectivity (Anthias, 2008) and disrupts the colonial imaginary shared by westerners, Emiratis and other expatriates. Lan (2011:1679) demonstrated that non-white westerners disturbed local Taiwanese constructions of being ‘proper’ and ‘real’ westerners because they weren't ‘quite white enough’. What is clear from the participants' accounts is an acknowledgement that these distinctions were made sometimes to the detriment of fellow western nationals and often irrespective of their organisational status. Therefore, for many there is a conflation of western and white, which is rarely problematised in the expatriate literature (Al Ariss and Ozbilgin, 2011; Berry & Bell, 2012). For the participants, the traces of colonial imaginings manifesting in the present mean that their white ethnicity rather than nationality, was constructed as a significantly visible feature of their subjectivity (Peisker and Tilbury, 2007). Importantly the salience of their white subjectivities was acknowledged as a visible marker of difference denoting a privileged positioning and “an organising principle of the social fabric” within the local hierarchical ethnic order (Leonard, 2010:1249).

#### **7.4. White woman**

It has been argued that ‘western’ often stands as a synonym for white (Leonard, 2008, 2010) and this emerged in the imaginations of western expatriates and in the broader community (Fechter & Walsh, 2010). White expatriates, particularly British ones, inherit

a particular nationality-based relationship to the legacy of their colonial influence with the UAE, and constitute the largest western nationality in the country. Walsh (2011:519) argues that “for white Britons, the status attributed to their nationality is amplified by the racialisation of their whiteness in post-imperial spaces” like the UAE. Furthermore, this experience is magnified within the highly segmented labour market and social hierarchy (Forstenlechner, 2010). Yeoh and Willis (2005b) argue that contemporary western organising and cultural practices are infused by colonial understandings and relations that enable white people to maintain, rework and extend privileges across borders and sites of activity (Fechter & Walsh, 2010).

While acknowledging the contingent particularities of whiteness, the participants’ accounts reveal how their whiteness is constantly reworked securing access to symbolic and substantive resources. Walsh (2011) argues that in the context of the UAE, white people irrespective of education, skill or salary, are relatively advantaged in comparison to other expatriates. Amy reflects upon the attitude of her Emirati female students who tend to accept and respect a white western teacher sooner than one from “for example south east Asia who they definitely give a harder time”. Ann reports on the Pakistani managers in one company who want her to conduct a training course to enable their Emirati staff to understand what is expected of them in the workplace “as they take no notice of us”. Work is one of the key spaces through which white privilege is maintained in the global system, and embedded in the everydayness of the micro-practices of working contexts (Leggett, 2010; Leonard, 2008).

#### **7.4.1 White privilege**

Leonard (2010:1249) comments that whiteness is revealed as a “process through which white people are socially produced, maintained and constructed as privileged”. Lan (2011:1680) comments on a participant who refers to her white privilege as ‘positive racism’ and explores how this provides social and economic value for herself and any western products or services he provides. This mirrors AT’s comment of “positive discrimination” to describe the use of informal western expatriate networking to secure her first job in the UAE.

Lan (2011:680) argues that white privilege is omnipresent in everyday lives where local others have “implicitly succumbed to the symbolic prestige of the West as the superior other”. The hegemonic English language allowed the western expatriates to undertake their everyday lives with few complications and obviated the necessity to learn Arabic, which is consistent with findings from Harrison and Michailova (2012). The only constraints experienced by the participants were when they were accessing institutions

and utilities; however this was largely overcome by the excellent English language skills of Emirati and other expatriate staff.

Lan (2011:1670) demonstrates how white expatriates in Taiwan leverage “flexible cultural capital conversion” by transforming their native English language skills as a form of global linguistic capital, into social, economic and symbolic capital (Al Ariss & Syed, 2011; Rodriguez & Scurry, 2014). However, Lan (2011) demonstrates how this privileged positioning is mediated and intersected by class, nationality, ethnicity and gender through macro forces and institutions. The hegemonic linguistic capital is highly ethnicised in this context in that it has to be attached to a “white skin” and a “proper accent”, American is preferred in Taiwan (Lan, 2001:1679). However, he argues that this “cultural essentialism” creates a “double edged sword” where linguistic privilege creates opportunities but also restricts employment opportunities beyond this which effectively deskills their other qualifications and expertise resulting in marginal employment (Lan, 2011:1670). This mirrors Cara’s experience at the bank, where her linguistic capital and ethnicity secured her employment as an executive assistant to the Western CEO but simultaneously constrained her opportunities for converting her experience and qualifications in reinsurance gained in Hong Kong into a career in the bank in UAE. Importantly, Lan (2011) demonstrates that hegemonic white privilege is territory-bound and does face structural limits through institutional norms that regulate access to residency, citizenship and work opportunities, as outlined earlier in the discourses on race and respect.

Linguistic privileging through the dominant use of English also serves to complicate the potential for equitable communication between ethnicities. This allows western expatriates to draw on the colonial imagination, which positions others in a temporality prior to the modern global world (Leggett, 2010:1270). Expatriates continually spoke of their inability to communicate with TCNs. Sometimes it was phrased in terms of linguistic obstacles, for example Jess comments on her time in retail saying “It was so frustrating trying, they just nodded and said yes, even when they didn’t understand”. At other times, the presumption appeared to be that TCNs were incapable of grasping the “complicated technological language” of quality engineering, as expressed by Lyn and which influenced her strategy of explaining it “in a way in which they could understand”. This emphasis on technological language marked more than differences in education. Leggett (2010:1271) argues that the technological discourse served as a marker of modernity and, as such, a temporal marker of difference. So that when TCNs “didn’t understand” Lyn and her western peers, it was constructed to suggest that this was

because the language the expatriates used was of a present to which the TCN subcontractors were not yet a part.

#### **7.4.2 Gendered white**

This thesis has sought to explore the construction of gendered white subjectivities within the contextual location of this investigation. The analysis of participant accounts illuminated the ways in which their gendered white subjectivities elicited privileges and problems. However, Amy's comment illuminates the complexities of seeking to deconstruct the salience of individual subject positions to identify the exact positionality which elicits privileged relations. She reflects upon several occasions when she has been asked to go the front of a queue in the airport, and reflects:

Is it because I am a woman, is it because I am a woman with two small children, is it because I am a blonde woman, or because I am western... I don't know which one [of those factors] gave me that preferential treatment but I get it and you get it often.

The intersection of gender "woman" with "two small children" and ethnicity "blonde" and "western" woman complicates interpretations for privileged positioning. However, other participants demonstrate how this intersection of gender and ethnicity enacts a visibility which they interpret as advantageous. As Lyn comments on her impact in walking onto a construction site:

Definitely I don't see it as being a disadvantage although I do look like a woman, I think the shock factor is so big here with a woman walking onto the site (*laughs*) apart from the secretaries but generally the secretaries are Filipino so yeah it's definitely the woman the white woman (*laughs*) who dares to put her boots on and her hat

The juxtaposition of her privileged subject positions as an engineer and a white westerner and her marginalised gendered Other as a woman, create discontinuities with prevailing masculine hegemonic and colonial discourses (Leonard, 2010). However, she sees advantage in her white gendered visibility (Peisker & Tilbury, 2007) so that although she is constructed as an outsider she is not "inferiorised" (Jones, 2008:762). She distinguishes herself from this marginalised subject position as a woman in repositioning her privileged white ethnicity and professional class in contradistinction to "the secretaries" who are "generally" "Filipino" and therefore positioned as the "inferiorised" Other (Jones, 2008:762).

Paradoxically, in a different space such visible presence may also serve to be a negative positioning (Mavin & Grandy, 2014). Lyn's visibility as a gendered white engineer was simultaneously a marginalised positioning with Emirati male clients where she felt that there was an "informal" company policy which discourages face-to-face encounters between Western women expatriates and Emirati males in the construction business. This is supported by guidance from Kate Dickens, (1999:89), based in the UAE in her book *Serve Them Right: A Practical Guide to Multicultural Customer Care in the Middle East*, she advises that:

Western women should not normally be assigned to liaise with locals, as the roles of men and women are still influenced by adherence to religious beliefs. If female colleagues are attending a meeting, ensure they are seated amongst their colleagues rather than close to the locals to avoid embarrassment to either party.

Therefore, it is problematic to view whiteness as a unitary construction as argued in the literature review (Chapters Three and Four) without acknowledging the intersection of, for example, gender and class as illustrated in the participant accounts in this study (Fechter & Walsh, 2010; Gunew, 2007; Lan, 2011).

### **7.4.3 Younger white**

Western white ethnicities are complex and unsettle the essentialist binaries suggested between white and Other (Gunew, 2007). Most western countries including the UK are more widely considered as multicultural societies (Aspinall & Song, 2013). White ethnicities will often draw from immigrant heritages who identify themselves as the colonised rather than coloniser (Sin, 2007:482). Sue constructs herself as "Hungarian" and "Irish" and "totally Canadian" and is genuinely hurt when her commitment to Emiratisation is questioned, because she strongly identifies with the policy as the "right thing to do".

The arrival of younger white expatriates educated in the multicultural communities that 'home' itself now is, may serve to disrupt unitary constructions of western white expatriates that has underscored the growing interconnection of the region with the global forces and ideologies at play in the contemporary world (Metcalf, 2011b). Sue draws on cultural connections outside work, where she talks with her young Emirati neighbours, and socialises with her multicultural friends to construct an oppositional subjectivity. Although, she attempts to reposition her privileged ethnicised positioning, her white positionality is still treated as meaningful in work spaces which make this difficult to achieve successfully (Leonard, 2008). However, in these small interactions

of everyday life her postcolonial subjectivity attempts to challenge the lingering legacy of colonialist relations.

#### 7.4.4 Section Summary

Table 7.4 summarises the key features which constitute the discourse of complex ethnicity which informs enactments of the participants' subject positions as western, foreigner, white women in this study.

**Table 7.4: Discourse of Complex Ethnicity**

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Significant Features</i>
Ethnic dynamics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Local Ethnic hierarchy moral order</li> <li>➤ Ethnic dynamics in the workplace</li> <li>➤ Ethnic balance in organisations</li> <li>➤ Ethnic group relations</li> <li>➤ Maintaining distance in social relations</li> <li>➤ Intersubjective ethnic relations</li> </ul>
Foreignness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Why? Not Emirati, not regional, share no cultural, historical connections or same language</li> <li>➤ What? Distinguished by nationality, ethnicity, dress, work sectors, occupations</li> <li>➤ How? Legal status and liabilities, residency criteria, work visa, lack of access to public services e.g. health and education, behaviour held to account to local Sharia law</li> <li>➤ Where? government sector, utilities, and public spaces but not in multicultural workplaces</li> </ul>
<i>Western</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Western contested superiority</li> <li>➤ Nationality vs ethnicity</li> </ul>
<i>White</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ White privilege</li> <li>➤ Gendered white</li> <li>➤ Complex heritage white</li> <li>➤ Younger white</li> </ul>

#### 7.5. Discursive construction of the Third Gender concept

This chapter has offered a discursive theorisation of the Third Gender concept (Adler, 1987), which is constructed to explain the paradoxical privileging of western expatriate women's privileging subject position with host country nationals. Subsequent studies have extended the concept to empirical studies in other places e.g. Tzeng (2006) to Taiwan, but not explicitly theorised its construction. Some studies have drawn attention to problematising the 'foreign' subject position of the women as it intersects with ethnicity (Tzeng, 2006) and the ethnic or cultural similarity with host country nationals (Varma et al., 2011). Hutchings et al. (2013) in a study of cultural and gender stereotyping in the UAE suggested that western expatriate women were judged against local social norms for Emirati women, contrary to Adler (1987), which is consistent with

the findings in this study. However, Hutchings et al. (2013) argue that given the lack of contact with Emiratis that this could be the result of their own “auto-stereotyping” of what they assumed was locally acceptable behaviour (Hutchings et al., 2013:305). Furthermore, Hutchings et al. (2013:310) suggest that there was “mixed” responses to whether the women were subject to gender and cultural stereotyping at work and concluded that they did not experience either “significantly”. This is disputed and contrary to the analysis in this study.

Therefore, this study offers a discursive theorisation of the intersecting subject positions of the western women SIEs’ subjectivities as marginalised by their gender as a western Woman Other intersecting with their privileged subject position as a Western woman One (Mavin & Grandy, 2014). This chapter offers two discourses to progress understandings of the third gender concept (Adler, 1987).

The discourses offered are not put forward as comprehensive or generalisable indeed the contextual contingency nature of their emergence is central to the argument and theoretical framework constructed in this thesis (Ozbilgin, 2011). Discourses are offered here to provide understandings of how western women expatriates’ experiences may be intrinsically embedded within processual flows of othering and privileging within the specificities of the dominant forces within the context of this study (Demir & Lychnell, 2014; Fechter & Walsh, 2010). Discourses are understood here as “generative” (Demir & Lychnell, 2014:4) and in the process of establishing normative expectations they also construct spaces for the Other (Jones, 2008). This implicates the contested dialectic between agency and structure and the creation of discursive spaces (Fletcher, 1999) which crafts opportunities for participants to draw, challenge and adapt discourses simultaneously in framing their relational subjectivities (Sunderland, 2007).

The UAE context is central to the construction of the theoretical framework for this study in order to “re-contextualise content” (Boje, Oswick & Ford 2004:571) and is understood as constituted by specificities of time, space and place (Al Ariss, 2014; Metcalfe & Woodhams, 2012). This understanding informs the processual construction of global-local (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005) historical, cultural, political and economic discourses that frame the constructions of the participants’ subjectivities (Metcalfe & Woodhams, 2012). It explores the processes through which continuities and discontinuities of global hegemonic discourses of colonialism and masculinity infuse local understandings of gender and ethnicity (Coles & Walsh, 2010; Leonard, 2008, 2010). They illuminate the discursive theorisation of the participants’ experiences

as gendered through a discourse of respect (Mavin and Grandy, 2014; Radhakrishnan, 2009) and ethnicised through a discourse of complex ethnicity (Al Ariss, 2014; Jones, 2008; Lan, 2011). The discourses acknowledge the simultaneous reinforcing and contradictory tensions that frame multiple enactments of privileging and othering (Leonard, 2008; Lan, 2011) which shape the participants' experiences of the third gender (Adler, 1987). The discourses are constructed as overlapping within and between each other and different relational macro, meso and micro interactional arenas and contingent on the participants' situated subject positioning (Anthias, 2013, a; Marmenout, 2010; Roof, 2007).

The discourse of respect draws inspiration from the analytical concept of respectable femininity as articulated by Radhakrishnan (2009) and Mavin and Grandy (2014) which is useful in weaving together coalescing historical, ideological and cultural understandings of woman's archetypal subject positions (Gherardi, 1996). This facilitated an exploration of the contemporary continuities and discontinuities of these gendered discourses, refracted through the understandings of the participants' accounts (Roof, 2007). The importance of family and women's primary roles as wives and mothers lies at the centre of the cultural and ideological legitimacy of women subjectivities within Emirati society (Gallant, 2006; Metcalfe, 2006; Omair, 2010). Among Emirati women the accomplished enactment of respectable femininity, particularly through dress and conduct allowed them to embrace and work in multicultural workspaces outside of the home (Gallant, 2006 Omair, 2009). The western expatriate women self-consciously enacted idealized performances that conformed to these norms (Hutchings et al., 2013). However, they demonstrated individual and collective strategies to reconfigure their contested subjectivities in the discursive terrain of work and public spaces. Therefore, the discourse of respect establishes a framework of normative expectations for which women are held accountable, and the agentic strategies of the participants in challenging these dominant understandings in the context of this study. The contribution of the discourse of respect in theorising how western Woman expatriates' experiences are constructed in relation to the third gender (Adler, 1987) is outlined in Table 7.4

**Table 7.5: Discourse of Respect**

Main themes	Impact on western Woman experiences
Gendered Roles	The participants' gendered performances were held accountable to Emirati normative expectations of a woman's roles which prioritised the family and being a wife and mother. The prioritising of family over work created tensions with the participants in their work roles. They were frequently subject to personally focused questioning which was used by some male expatriates to marginalise women in the work arena, and in public spaces e.g. taxis. Finally, there was an expectation that women and wife roles may be conflated in professional relations which made one participant wary of directly reporting to an Emirati manager.
Culture bearers of virtue	The participants' performances were held accountable to Emirati normative expectations of a woman's role as culture bearers of Islamic virtue and to embody values of respect, modesty and chastity. There was a sense in which western women's sexuality was conflated with understandings of western culture, which framed understandings of the participants' experiences. The choice of attire enacts a performance for which western women self-regulate and scrutinize others' achievement of enacting respectable femininity (Mavin & Grandy, 2014). Dress judged as disrespectful was sanctioned and subject to unpleasant behaviours in public places, particularly from south east Asian migrant workers. The participants were cognisant of and regulated their embodied interactions to conform to Emirati normative standards of inter-gender conduct. This also influenced the nature of working relationships which avoided direct communication strategies, particularly in decision making and areas of conflict resolution.
Agentic strategies	The participants demonstrated a diverse range of strategies including: creating psychological distance, enacting an elaborate performance, anticipating a pre-emptive rejection, repositioning issues from an organisational perspective and reframing their positioning from an advantageous professional perspective (Janssens et al., 2006).

The discourse of complex ethnicity explored the way the participants' experiences were constructed through their Western woman subject positions and drew inspiration from Jones' (2008:763) distinction between 'outsiders' and "inferiorised" others. The postcolonial lens facilitated an exploration of enactments of ethnicity which illuminated processes of "inferiorised othering" (Jones, 2008: 763) and "privileging" (Lan, 2011:1679).

This process was informed by a discursive framework of postcolonial collective imaginings and their substantive effects constituted in a hierarchical positioning of ethnic subjectivities within the UAE (Al Ariss, 2014; Marmenout, 2010; Malecki & Ewers, 2007; Walsh, 2011). This framework of asymmetrical ethnic dynamics operated

as an organising principle in structuring social relations in both work and public spaces, and was embedded in everyday interactional practices (Al Ariss, 2014; Leggett, 2010). The local ethnic dynamics framed the women's available social positions and influenced their potential agency to discursively reposition themselves within this framework (Leonard, 2008).

The discourse of complex ethnicity problematised unitary and fixed constructions of foreign, western and white subjectivities to explore the privileges and limitations in these subject positions as discursively constructed and enacted in this investigation (Gunew, 2007; Lan, 2011). The focus on whiteness was usefully explored through ethnic and migration studies (Fechter & Walsh, 2010; Lan, 2011; Leonard, 2008). This responds directly to a call for the theoretical expansion of SIE theorising particularly with migration studies by Al Ariss et al. (2012). Therefore, the discourse on complex ethnicity offers a discursive framework to explore the specificities of foreign, western and white situated subjectivities constituted within contextually contingent ethnic dynamics of postcolonial locations (Al Ariss, 2014; Leonard, 2008, 2010). The contribution of the discourse of complex ethnicity in theorising how western woman expatriates' experiences are constructed in relation to the third gender (Adler, 1987) is outlined in Table 7.6.

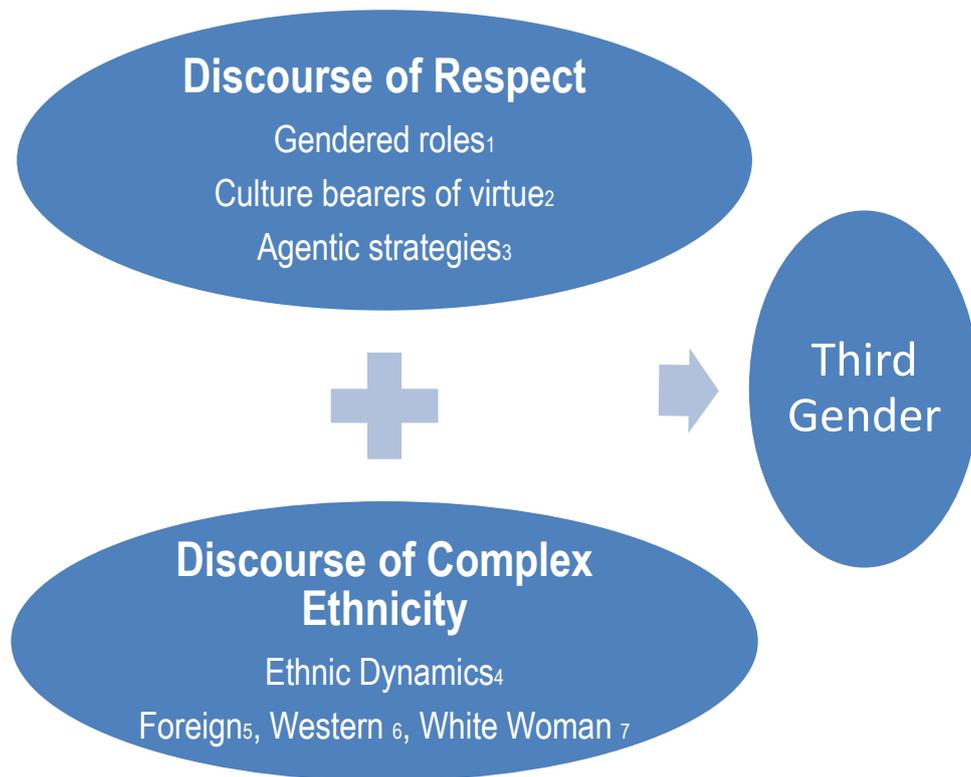
**Table 7.6: Discourse of Complex Ethnicity**

Main Themes	Impact on western women’s experiences
Ethnic stratification dynamics	There was a consistent understanding of western expatriates’ social location within the stratified ethnic dynamics within the UAE, as below Emiratis, some equivalency with other Arabs, but above South East Asians. This was reflected in organising structures, where western expatriates’ were generally privileged in more senior or professional roles, as reflected in the participants’ work roles. Ethnic group imbalances created tensions in the work place which made some of the participants wary and marginalised. The strategic use of ethnic groups e.g. other Arabs was enacted to maintain distance in the workplace with Emiratis. Several participants sought to reposition their colonial subjectivities by enacting behaviours of guardianship with particular TCNs’ which was discussed in discourse on risk (see Chapter Six).
Foreign	The participants are constructed as foreign because they are nationally, ethnically and culturally dissimilar to Emiratis. This is particularly evident in a marginalised legal status, access to, and condition of employment opportunities. They generally feel foreign in institutions and interacting with government officials, but less in multi-cultural workspaces, and public social spaces e.g. shopping malls, hotels.
Western	Several of the participants drew from colonial discourses of development in understanding their contribution to Emiratisation initiatives, “inferiorising” the performances of Emiratis in the workplace. Furthermore, collective understandings of ‘western’ dissolved barriers of nationality, between the western expatriates and facilitated privileged global-local networking. However, participants were aware how non-white ethnic heritages intersected with western status to marginalise non-white western nationals in social relations.
White	The participants’ white subjectivity was amplified by the ethnic stratified dynamics and colonial discourses enacted in the UAE. The linguistic hegemony of the English language creates privileges in everyday interactions, and facilitates an “inferiorisation” of other non-native English, but also marginalises their other professional competences. Intersections with gender create complex subject positions of privileging in public spaces e.g. airport queues. Conversely, women’s visibility in the workplace created marginalised Other subject positions, but their enactments of whiteness “inferiorised” (Jones. 2008:763) culturally different ethnic Others. Younger white expatriates were understood to be more cognisant of complex white heritages and expectations of multicultural relations which shaped their broader social relations particularly outside the workspace.

## **7.6. Chapter Summary**

This chapter offers a discursive theorisation of the Third Gender concept to explore western women SIEs' experiences in the UAE during 2007-2009. The chapter briefly revisited the Third Gender concept and explored the participants' understandings within this research process. The main body of the chapter outlined the two significant discourses of respect and complex ethnicity which constitute the discursive theorisation of the Third Gender within the context of this investigation. This provided a multifaceted analysis which explored and illustrated the discursive forces and resources which shaped the subject positions constructed by the participants in navigating their complex and sometimes contradictory subjectivities. The implications for this study were outlined in offering a discursive framework to extend the application of the conceptual understanding of the Third Gender to female expatriation theorising. Furthermore, the discursive construction of the particularities of foreign, western and white subjectivities outlined in this thesis is offered to expatriation and emerging SIE studies to make an original contribution to extending the existing theory base.

**Figure 7.1: Discursive construction of Third Gender Concept (Adler, 1987)**



Source References

1. Gallant (2006), Hutchings et al (2013), Metcalfe (2006), Radhakrishnan, (2009), Whiteoak et al (2006)
2. Gallant (2006), Hutchings et al (2013), Mavin & Grandy (2014), Metcalfe (2006, 2008), Omair (2009),
3. Janssens et al (2006),
4. Al-Ariss (2014), Jones, (2008), Lan (2011), Leggett, (2010), Malecki & Ewers (2007), Marmenout (2010), Metcalfe & Rees (2010), and Walsh (2011)
5. Czarniawska & Sevon, (2008), Hutchings et al (2013), Harrison and Michailova (2012)
6. Fechter and Walsh (2010), Leggett (2011), Leonard, (2008, 2010),
7. Lan (2011), Leggett (2011), Leonard (2008, 2010), Harrison & Michailova (2012), Jones (2008),

# Chapter 8: Conclusions and Reflections

## 8. Introduction

This chapter will conclude the thesis, outlining how the research question “How do western women self-initiated expatriates understand their experiences in the United Arab Emirates?” research aims and objectives have been addressed within the study.

The chapter addresses the final research objective which aimed through the development of the thesis, ‘to make original theoretical and empirical contributions to the fields of expatriation, female and self-initiated expatriation and intersectionality’.

An overview of the findings is presented, further highlighting the original contributions to knowledge emerging from this study. The research process and consequent decisions are evaluated before areas of future research are outlined.

### 8.1. Review of findings and original contributions

This section will provide a summary of the evidence to demonstrate achievement against each objective and highlighting the original contributions offered in this thesis.

#### 8.1.1 The first research objective

The first objective guiding the research process was:

- To develop an intersectional lens to apply to connections between expatriation and migration studies in order to construct an analytical category of SIEs from both literatures; through which western women SIEs’ experiences can be interpreted and which contributes to new insights into intersectionality and the expansion of self-initiated expatriation studies

The intersectional lens developed for this investigation is distinct in incorporating aspects of contextualisation in juxtaposing time, space, and place dimensions through multi-level framing in articulating categorical constructions (Anthias, 2013, a ; Choo & Ferree, 2010; Metcalfe & Woodhams, 2012). The intersectional lens was drawn from feminist theorising. Importantly, as part of the development process, literature from race and ethnicity literatures was drawn upon to explore ethnicity and whiteness in translocations (Fechter & Walsh, 2010; Gunew, 2007). The intersectional lens of gender with ethnicity (Broadbridge & Simpson, 2011), with a focus on exploring the contextualised particularities of situated subjectivity formed the first part of the theoretical framework for this thesis.

Therefore:

*This research offers to intersectional studies an intersectional lens of gender with ethnicity which embeds a concern for multidimensional contextualisation of discourses and their generative effects to explore the particularities of western white women's subject positions in postcolonial contexts*

This thesis was framed by a call from within expatriation studies, specifically SIE studies, to draw from and work with migration studies to provide a theoretical and methodological expansion of understandings of global mobility (Al Ariss et al., 2012). The review of expatriation and migration studies for this thesis highlighted that the field was contested through the development of parallel studies reflecting divergent positional interests and theoretical perspectives, which was reflected in their focus of divergent and shared interest and units/levels of analysis which converged at the boundaries in their construction of self-initiated expatriate (SIE) and skilled migrant (SM) respectively (Al Ariss & Syed, 2011; Berry & Bell, 2012; Holvino, 2010).

The intersectional lens facilitated an extension and detailed articulation of the divergent interests and shared territory between expatriation and migration studies as outlined by Berry and Bell (2012). This research developed the expatriation and migration continuum to articulate analytical categories of global mobility positioned by gender, ethnicity and class (Jones, 2008; Shortland, 2009), which responded directly to a call for the theoretical expansion of SIE studies by Al Ariss et al. (2012)

Therefore:

*This research offers an intersectional perspective to expand expatriation studies by drawing on migration studies in constructing a theoretical framework that maps the shared and divergent interests, foci of analysis and characteristics of categorical constructions of different types of global mobility.*

This thesis was positioned at the nexus of the theoretical borderland between expatriation and migration fields of study to articulate a construction of SIEs' that emerged from expatriation studies but extracted complementary but different theoretical and empirical insights from migration studies (Al Ariss & Syed, 2011).

This perspective provided an analytical construction of self-initiated expatriation informed by relevant studies on skilled migration, particularly on western, white expatriate subjectivities in postcolonial places (Fechter & Walsh, 2010; Lan, 2011; Leonard, 2008, 2010). The literature review identified that despite a significant focus on gender as a distinct field of study in expatriation (Shortland, 2009) few contributions offered a feminist perspective on theorising and empirical studies (Janssens et al.,

2006). Furthermore, expatriate studies had not explicitly addressed intersectionality issues of gender, ethnicity and class or drawn upon intersectional studies literature in any concerted endeavour (Al Ariss et al., 2012; Berry & Bell, 2012).

This offered an opportunity to make a theoretical contribution to the field, by fusing the intersectional studies lens and contextual turn in expanded expatriation studies to critique the construction of knowledge by making visible the paradoxical subject positions of western white women expatriates through the study of their experiences (Jones, 2008; Leonard, 2008).

This fused focus provided the second part of the theoretical framework through which western white women SIEs were constructed as productive categories for analysis within expatriation studies. This served to illuminate the contextualised multi arena generative discourses (Demir and Lychnell, 2014) with which situated subject positions were integrated and which constituted the intersecting privileging and marginalising subjectivities of western women SIEs.

Therefore:

*This research offers an intersectional perspective on the construction of SIE subjectivities as a productive category for analysis.*

Importantly, there was a concern for how the contextualisation of subjectivities contributed to understandings of the particularities of categorical constructions (Gunew, 2007), and to account for how wider multi arena discourses as discursive resources contribute to shaping western women SIEs' experiences (Leonard, 2008; Metcalfe & Woodhams, 2012). Furthermore, this was extended to include a perspective on how western women SIEs account for and respond to the effects of their paradoxical positioning within their experiences (Gherardi & Poggio, 2001; Janssens et al., 2006,).

Therefore:

*This research offers an intersectional lens which embraces a concern for the construction of contextualised discourses and their specific generative effects on the intersubjective experiences of women SIEs' discursive positioning in the research context.*

The categorical contested construction of ethnicity, foreign, western and white was made theoretically visible within expatriation and migration studies (Al Ariss & Ozbilgin, 2010; Gunew, 2007; Jones, 2008). This offered an opportunity to make a theoretical

contribution to the expatriation field by fusing the intersectional studies lens and merged expatriation-migration studies to critique the construction of the third gender concept (Adler, 1987) by making visible the paradoxical subject positions of western One and women Other (Mavin and Grandy, 2014) self-initiated expatriates, and their differential access to discursive resources, through the study of their experiences in specific translocational contexts.

The productive contribution of the intersectional lens is returned to in 8.2.3 and 8.2.4, relating respectively to objectives 3 and 4 as it is through these objectives that the intersectional lens presents one way of theorising expatriate subjectivities as productive categories for analysis in expatriation studies.

Therefore:

*This research offers to expatriation and intersectional studies an intersectional lens which articulates the intersectional categorical construction of expatriate subjectivities and embeds a concern for multidimensional contextualisation of discourses and their generative effects to explore the particularities of western woman expatriates' subject position as a Third Gender*

### **8.1.2 The second research objective**

The second research objective guiding the research process was:

- To design and implement a research approach and methods to contribute to the methodological expansion of understanding the contextualised subjective experiences of western women SIEs in the UAE in order to explore the concept of the 'Third Gender'

The philosophical orientation of the thesis was developed to encompass a constructionist, processual, relational understanding of the social world (Burr, 2003; Cunliffe, 2003, 2008; Demir & Lychnell, 2014). This acknowledged that social categories that constituted subjectivities were contextually constructed and mutable (Sergi & Hallin, 2011). Organizing contexts were understood as constituting temporal and spatial dimensions (Demir & Lychnell, 2014; Sergi & Hallin, 2011). Constructed through a multiplicity of voices and meanings (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2011; Currie & Brown, 2003); and processes of relating, infused with differential access to privilege (Cunliffe, 2008:128) and embedded in broader historical, social, political discourses (Boje et al., 2004). Feminist theorising informed researcher reflexivity on the co-construction of knowledge (De Vault & Gross, 2007; Richardson, 2007), and a focus on

processes of othering (de Beauvoir, 1972), particularly in organisations (Acker, 1990, 2006; Gherardi, 1994, 1996) and within wider historical and cultural discourses (Holvino, 2010; Berry & Bell, 2012).

Therefore:

*This research offers a feminist perspective and multidimensional, discursive interest to extend current social constructionist philosophical approaches to emergent SIE research.*

This thesis responded directly to a call for methodological expansion of SIE research by outlining a multi-arena approach to the research design of the study (Al Ariss 2010; Al Ariss et al., 2012). In line with the philosophical orientation, the origin of experience is understood as social and relational (Cunliffe 2008), with a focus on the interpretative and embodied nature of sensemaking through dialogue and interaction (Cunliffe & Coupland, 2011; Metcalfe, 2008a). Therefore, the research approach centred on collecting participants' accounts to: explicate and amplify (Riessman, 2008) the situated subjectivities of western women SIEs' and to provide in-depth (re)interpretations of their experiences. This was augmented by an archival analysis of contemporaneous secondary media sources to explore the construction of the participants' subject positions and performances enacted in the research context (Mavin & Williams, 2014; Tienari et al., 2009). It provides a multi-arena relational framework, outlined within temporal and spatial dimensions as an approach to 'recontextualize content' (Boje et al., 2004:571). A thematic coding approach explicated the contextual relational framework (Al Ariss 2010; Al Ariss et al., 2012) which highlighted the multi-arena (Anthias, 2013, a) macro, meso and micro influences (Demir & Lychnell, 2014:4) that framed enactments of western women SIE subjectivities in the study.

Therefore:

*This research offers a temporal, spatial, multi-arena relational framework, which draws from contemporaneous participant accounts and media sources to contribute to the methodological expansion of SIE research.*

Building upon the contextual relational framework, the data were selectively recoded to explicate the dialectical discursive construction (Cunliffe, 2008) of three core subject positions enacted through performances of gender, ethnicity and SIE status (Adler, 1987). The explication of generative discourses (Demir and Lychnell, 2014) offered the opportunity to analyse the research participants' experiences and explore the

simultaneity of the discursive construction of their distinctive intersecting subject positions and differential access to discursive resources (Carabine, 2001; Fotaki, 2013) to accept, reject or reconfigure their intersecting subjectivities.

Therefore:

*This thesis offers a distinctive contribution to the methodological expansion of expatriation studies. It provides an analytical approach to explicate the dialectical discursive construction of distinctive and overlapping intersecting categorical subject positions within a contextual multi-arena approach.*

How this methodological orientation has contributed to the original empirical and theoretical contributions of the thesis is outlined in the following sections.

### **8.1.3 The third research objective**

The third objective guiding the research process was:

- To provide interpretations of western women SIEs' experiences synthesised within the existing literature to construct a multi arena relational framework which situates the production of their intersubjective relations within the context of this study.

Chapter Six addressed two research sub-objectives. The first sub-objective was:

- Offer interpretations of western women SIEs' experiences in the UAE, identifying both similarities and differences between these experiences.

Chapter Six drew directly from detailed interpretations of the accounts of ten western women SIEs and an analysis of contemporary media in the research context. The chapter was constructed as arenas of themes within and across the participants accounts to support an understanding of organising arenas as plurivocal, and polysemic (Currie & Brown, 2003), highlighting that there was no single authoritative account, and accounting for both similarities and differences in experiences between participants.

This produced an analysis which enabled readers to appreciate the resonances between participants' understandings, yet also highlighted the different ways in which participants interpreted and (re)presented their experiences. This reflected the first part of the methodological orientation of this thesis which argued that we are both meaning makers and meaning takers constructed through influences emerging in and between

macro, meso and micro relational arenas (Gubrium & Holstein, 1997; Saukko, 2000; West & Fenstermaker, 1995a, b, 2002).

Therefore:

*This research offers a multi-arena relational framework as an approach to presenting and analysing accounts of intersubjective experiences which surfaces contextualised plurivocality and polysemy.*

The second research sub-objective in Chapter Six was:

- To synthesise the empirical data and existing literature to explicate a multi arena relational framework which situates the production of intersubjective relations within the context of this study.

Empirically, the thesis responds to the invitation to reach out to migration studies to enrich understandings of expatriates, and particularly SIEs', who share similarities with skilled migrants, but are often explored through different empirical frames of reference and remain under-theorised within the already limited SIE literature (Al Ariss et al., 2012; Berry & Bell, 2012). The multi-arena analysis was informed by primary and secondary sources to make integrated, contextually contingent interpretations of western women SIEs' experiences. This was facilitated through a fusion of the intersectional lens (Anthias, 2013, b; Dhamoon, 2011) and expatriation and migration studies (Al Ariss et al., 2012; Berry & Bell, 2012; Fechter & Walsh, 2010), to frame a multi arena perspective (Al Ariss & Syed, 2011; Anthias, 2013, a). This analysis and interpretation was informed by research from the Chapter Two (Al-Khoury, 2010; Forstenlechner & Rutledge, 2010).

Therefore:

*By providing in-depth interpretations of the research participants' experiences, using a multi arena relational framework, in a previously under-researched context this research makes an original empirical contribution to the expansion of the emergent self-initiated expatriation literature.*

Through the fusion of literatures, and the methodological orientation of this thesis, new insights into the discursive construction of SIE subject positions were identified and provide an original contribution to the SIE literature.

The participants' SIE subjectivity was articulated through a discourse of risk. The multi arena relational framework highlighted significant discursive themes and generative

effects which framed the discursive production of their SIE subject position. The macro arena identified the global, institutional and regulatory structures which provided a cultural, legal and ideological discursive framing of risk in the participants' SIE subject positions. The meso arena illuminated organisation cultures, policies and practices which produced and sustained complex discursive marginalising of the participants' SIE subject positions. The significant discursive themes, relating to the discourse of risk, in the micro arena outlined the intersubjective interactions with Emiratis, western expatriates and TCNs' which illuminated differential marginalising and privileging of SIE subject positions. Finally, in line with the epistemological and methodological focus of this study, the dialectical relations between the multi-arena discursive themes were explored. This enabled an understanding of how complementary and contradictory forces in the macro and meso arenas framed the intersubjective relations of the participants' subjectivities, in the micro arena, through a discourse of risk.

Therefore:

*This thesis makes an original empirical and theoretical contribution to SIE studies by identifying multi arena discursive themes which contribute to a discourse of risk, which is drawn upon in the construction of SIE subjectivities.*

The multifaceted discourses which produce western women SIE subject positions highlighted the complexities of negotiating intersubjective relations in the micro arena infused by discursive forces within macro and meso arenas (Budhwar & Mellahi, 2007). Importantly, the discursive production of subjectivities was informed by understandings of processes of othering, which distinguish outsider subject positions from "inferiorised" ones (Jones, 2008:763). This study identified the diversity of participants' performances in negotiating their complex SIE subject positions (Janssens et al., 2006).

Therefore:

*This research makes a unique contribution to the self-initiated expatriation literature surfacing the complexity of negotiating and repositioning SIE subject positions in the micro arena which are infused and framed by the discourse of risk in macro and meso arenas.*

The themes which emerged in the discourse of risk in chapter six were taken forward into chapter seven to explore how they interplayed with discursive constructions of the Third Gender (Adler, 1987)

#### 8.1.4 The fourth research objective

The fourth objective guiding the research process was:

- *To build upon this synthesis to identify insights which contribute to understandings of women SIEs' expatriation from an intersectional perspective through the concept of the Third Gender.*

Chapter Seven argued that western women SIEs' experiences of the third gender (Adler, 1987) were constructed discursively. This perspective explored the participants' accountability against normative expectations of how their gender intersected with ethnicity, within the specificities of the research context (West & Fenstermaker, 1995, a, b2002) to constitute a third gender (Adler, 1987).

First, the analysis explored the empirical data from the participant accounts which identified that overall the majority felt that it was advantageous to be a western woman SIE in UAE, which was consistent with Adler (1987) and other subsequent studies (Tung, 2004). However, this conclusion was inconsistent with the complex evidence from the multi arena relational analysis of their SIE subjectivity outlined in Chapter Six and required further exploration. Paradoxically, some participants suggested that being an Emirati woman was an even more advantageous subjectivity. The preference for a local gendered subject position in preference to a western one has not been expressed elsewhere in the expatriate literature and was worthy of further exploration.

The analytical framework explicated the discursive construction of the third gender concept as constituted by the participants' intersecting subjectivities as western woman. Their western subject position foregrounds a privileged One positionality, in contrast with their woman subject positions which framed a marginalising Other subjectivity (de Beauvoir, 1972). Therefore, their paradoxical subjectivity was explored as a privileged Western woman One (Leonard, 2008) intersecting with a marginalised western Woman Other (Mavin & Grandy, 2014). Their gendered subjectivity as a western Woman was constructed through a discourse of respect (Radhakrishnan, 2009), and their western subjectivity was understood as produced through a discourse of complex ethnicity (Al Ariss, 2014; Jones, 2008).

The discourse of respect explored how their gendered subjectivity was held accountable against local normative constructions of gendered roles and understandings of women as culture bearers of society (Metcalf, 2006). The concept of respectable femininity (Mavin & Grandy, 2014; Radhakrishnan, 2009) was

informative in illuminating embodied performances framed within the discourse of respect. Furthermore, the analysis identified a diverse range of agentic strategies enacted by the participants to discursively reposition their subjectivities (Janssens et al., 2006).

The discourse of complex ethnicity (Al Ariss, 2014; Jones, 2008) explored how their ethnic subjectivity was constructed in the context of the complex stratified ethnic dynamics of UAE (Al Ariss, 2014; Marmenout, 2010). Furthermore, their complex ethnicity was problematised through understandings of foreign, western and white subjectivities which illuminated continuities and discontinuities with overlapping colonial and masculine hegemonic discourses (Metcalf & Woodhams, 2012; Leonard, 2008). Furthermore, it presented diverse enactments of postcolonial constructions of foreign, western and white subjectivities and illuminated the particularities of white privileges and liabilities in the context of the study (Fechter & Walsh, 2010; Lan, 2011).

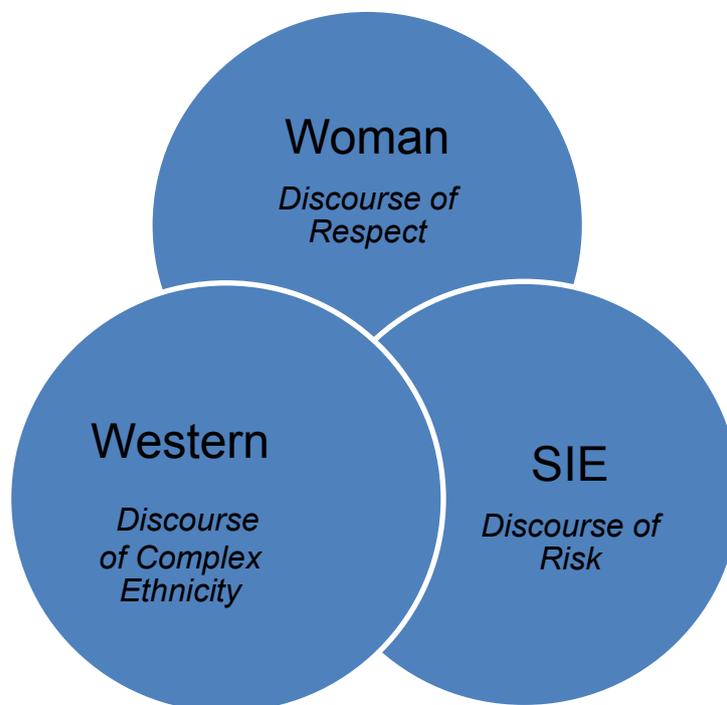
Therefore:

*This research provides a discursive theorisation of the third gender concept and offers the discourses of respect and complex ethnicity to take forward in future expatriation, female and self-initiated expatriation studies. It makes a unique contribution to expatriation and SIE literatures in surfacing the discursive complexity of negotiating and developing intersecting subjectivities within translocational contexts.*

#### **8.1.5 Section Summary**

This section has outlined the research process which has contributed to the achievement of the research objectives for this investigation. In doing so, it provides a discursive framework for understanding the experiences of western women SIEs' in the UAE (see figure 8.1)

**Figure 8.1: Discursive framework for understanding participants' experiences as western women self-initiated expatriated in the United Arab Emirates**



This chapter now considers the evaluative framework for this study.

## **8.2. Evaluative framework**

In keeping with the constructionist and processual orientation of this thesis, this study draws upon an evaluative framework emphasising processes and outcomes (Cunliffe, 2003, 2008; Demir & Lychnell, 2014). Lincoln and Guba (1985:290) outline a trustworthiness framework for the interpretive study of the social world, which enables a researcher to outline how she will persuade her audience that research findings are worthy of consideration. Four criteria are suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985) to contribute to establishing the trustworthiness of research; credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability; additionally ethics will be included in this section. These criteria will be reviewed to outline how each has been addressed through the research processes informing this investigation.

### **8.2.1 Credibility**

It is important that qualitative research studies are credible and that the reader can have confidence in the research process and findings of a particular inquiry (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Bryman (2004:274) reports that two ways to establish confidence in the credibility of the research process are 'peer debriefing' and 'member checking' (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:301). However, as discussed in the methodology chapter, the research design did not include any commitment to member checking, as this was deemed impractical within the conditions of this particular study of expatriates and my own expatriate status within the UAE. Therefore, I will outline the ways in which I have engaged in peer debriefing during the research process.

I have engaged in peer debriefing in five main ways, internally as part of the regular supervision process and as part of formal stages of PhD progression, and with external research peers through a conference paper and journal article submission. I have had meetings with my supervisory team throughout the research process, which helped me explore, discuss and defend aspects of the research process and outcomes. The process of explaining and defending my ideas, insights and actions was useful in enabling me to challenge my own thinking and explicate assumptions and tacit knowing that was implicitly driving my research journey. I have maintained records of these meetings, including feedback, actions and outcomes.

The progression through the PhD research process also includes formal stages of presenting a reflective progress report and examples of evidence to an internal panel. As part of this process I submitted an example of my draft Chapter Four 'Expatriation-Migration Continuum' for consideration and discussion with a panel of two internal experts and PhD supervisors in expatriation and intersectionality. I was required to explain, discuss and defend some of my research positions, decisions and evidence which were very helpful in enabling my research to progress to the next stage.

I also engaged in supportive discussions with two UAE resident expatriate academics when I was living in the UAE; both were engaged in teaching and research with Emirati women and were very helpful in sense-checking my understandings of Emirati culture and social life beyond my immediate experience. I was invited to attend two research seminars, disseminating their own research which provided me with opportunities to discuss broader societal level cultural influences upon my own work.

Furthermore, I presented a conference paper about my research to peers in the research community outside my own institution. I presented a paper at the doctoral symposium of the University Forum for Human Resource Development on my research methodology and methods. It was useful in receiving feedback, particularly as a member of the audience, from a quantitative methodology perspective was unfamiliar with my particular approach and was keen to explore different details in the research process. Therefore, it was useful to help me challenge and clarify my own researcher positionality and reflexivity within the research process. I was given positive feedback on the clarity of my presentation by one of the chairs of the symposium.

Finally, I submitted a journal article (Stalker and Mavin, 2011) which was published in *Human Resource Development International Journal*. The focus of the paper was on the *Learning and Development Experiences of Self-Initiated Expatriate Women in the United Arab Emirates*. Therefore, the participant account data was selectively coded to extract the relevant information for analysis and synthesis with appropriate literature for the specific purpose of the publication. There was a formal feedback stage, in which a detailed review document from each of the three external peer reviewers outlined the areas of strength and weakness in the original submission. The feedback was particularly helpful in crafting the clarity of the progression of the argument, evidence and detail of analysis to directly answer the research scope and focus of the investigation. Importantly, the review process provided me with insightful comments and interpretations, which facilitated the development of my understanding and the theorisation of my thesis over time. On the basis of this submission, I was asked to peer review another article for the journal on expatriate informal learning. Furthermore, the article has received three citations to date (Doherty, 2013; Harrison and Michailova, 2012; Hutchins et al., 2013). Therefore, establishing myself as credible and persuasive (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) to my academic peers has contributed to the trustworthiness of this research.

### **8.2.2 Transferability**

Lincoln and Guba (1985:316) argue that transferability, or confirming external validity (Bryman, 2006), is not feasible with a research philosophy which theorises from an understanding of the social world as constructed, contextual, and emergent. Therefore, they argue the assessment of research transferability is a judgement to be made by the reader.

The temporal, spatial and translocational framing of this investigation (Demir & Lychnell, 2014) seeks to explore particularities of subjectivities, that are not constructed as easily transferable to other contexts, times and places. My goal is to offer contextually embedded “interpretive insights” (Cunliffe, 2008:126) rather than prescriptive findings, that may be generalised to other studies. However, a range of direct extracts from across the participants accounts has been integrated into the thesis in Chapters Six and Seven to allow the reader to decide whether the evidence offered within this study resonates with my interpretations. Transferability is understood here as usefulness in moving the research forward (Cresswell, 2008) to support understandings of the particularities of other situated subjectivities in different contextual studies (Leonard, 2008, 2010).

I have found that my own researcher reflexivity in unmasking the invisibility of whiteness has had the most profound impact on my teaching reflective practice and critical thinking to undergraduate and postgraduate students, and I have discussed my own reflexive journey to prompt discussion and illustrate the contribution of critical reflexive practice to their own professional development. The Stalker and Mavin (2011) article has been included on the reading list for UG and PG International HRM/D modules within Newcastle Business School.

### **8.2.3 Dependability and confirmability**

Lincoln and Guba (1985:318) advise that further credibility of the study can be given by presenting the process which helps to determine dependability and the products which support its confirmability to examination by the reader. Dependability is primarily concerned with providing a detailed plan of the research decisions made throughout the design and data collection process. Confirmability is concerned with the transparency of how the choices were made during the research process either methodologically or interpretatively and are able to connect back to original sources.

I have provided a transparent account of the details of the decision making methodological and interpretative choices and commitments I have made during the research process, throughout the study and particularly in the introduction, methodology, and this final chapter. Furthermore, I have sought to explicate my cognitions, values and motivations in providing a reflexive account of the rationale for my research decisions as the research inquiry developed. The articulation of my abductive approach to the inquiry provides a clear example of opening up the research decision making process for scrutiny. Abduction embraces an iterative process

reflecting the to and fro between data and theory in which theory is used to understand data and in enhancing understanding of the data also helps to develop, modify and refine emergent theory building (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2000; Fotaki, 2013). My account details the experience of confronting unexpected data relating to the white construction of the participants' western subjectivities in the initial analysis of the first three interviews. This had not been a characteristic of difference marked in the expatriation studies in international management literature (Berry & Bell, 2012), and reoriented my epistemological and methodological decision making to inspire the construction of an intersectional lens of gender with ethnicity (Broadbridge & Simpson, 2011:473), which was attentive to the visibility of whiteness (Gunew, 2007). This lens was applied to the fusion of expatriation and migration studies which explicated the construction of intersectional SIE subjectivities on the borderland between two distinct fields of study (see Chapter Four). Furthermore, the exploration of whiteness was reflected in methodological decisions to support talk on whiteness if it emerged during the interview process (see Chapter Five), and selectively code data on whiteness, when exploring the analytical construction of the participants' ethnically constructed Third Gender subjectivity (see Chapter Seven). Finally, interpretation of the participants' accounts synthesised with recent studies particularly from migration and ethnicity (Fechter & Walsh, 2010) illuminated the contingent nature of white privilege and its limitations, particularly as it intersected with gender in the context of this study (Lan, 2011; Leonard, 2008). Finally, this focus of interest in whiteness has been explored further in the reflexive account of my own practice in this chapter. Therefore, this example provides an illustration of the transparent and detailed account of the research data gathering and interpretation process, which together with my reflexive style of presentation contributes to the 'audit trail' of this study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:319).

#### **8.2.4 Ethics**

My commitment to ethical research practice in the context of this investigation was outlined in my original proposal documentation. At the time when data collection began there was no formal process of ethical approval within the business school and informal approval was secured from my supervision team at every stage in the data collection process.

To ensure transparency and safety for the research participants, clear consideration was given to the ethical implications of the study with individual consent forms developed outlining the research requirements, which were discussed and signed by

participants and myself before each interview, and a copy of which was provided to the participants, as discussed in the methodology chapter. Furthermore, provision was made to withdraw from the study and two chose to do so, and have not been included in this thesis.

I sought to provide safety through anonymity of any personal data not necessary for the investigation in the presentation of the report. Therefore, while I draw selected excerpts from participants' accounts to illuminate their experiences in Chapters Six and Seven, I do so with care, only using as much of the text as is necessary to clarify the point being made. I chose not to present full chronological and biographical details of the participants as individual case studies, only extracting information necessary for the focus of the study.

I was cognisant that my ethnic and gender matching with the participants was advantageous, augmented by my expatriate experiences living in the UAE. Therefore, in order to develop the research relationship with participants, all of whom were unknown to me at the beginning of the research process, I made a personal and professional decision to share my personal views and experiences when asked or where I felt appropriate (Oakley, 1981, 1993). To remain detached, creating psychological and emotional distance from the participants, would be to 'objectify' their subjectivities and assume a degree of privileged positionality as an academic inquirer into their social lives, and was consistent with the feminist perspective in this study (Hesse-Biber and Piatelli, 2007). My positionality in the research context is discussed in more detail in the reflexivity section of this chapter. Overall, I ensured an ethical approach to my research practice by meeting relevant University ethical standards, particularly presentation of confidentiality and anonymity of personal data in the thesis and the caring and open interview style adopted in the co-construction of knowledge (Oakley, 1981, 1998; De Vault and Gross, 2007)

The chapter will now consider issues relevant to the reflexive review of limitations to this thesis beyond the limitations upon the theoretical scope of the thesis outlined in Chapter One.

### **8.3. Reflexivity**

Research may be described as a linear, step-by-step kind of process, but it can also be understood as a practice that is lived, since the researcher brings her whole self into it, encountering a multitude of other experiences, which include emotions and feeling. As we will argue, adopting this process ontology allows

these experiences to be acknowledged and thus offers not only a richer image of what research is about, but an image that is also closer to the experience of doing it. (Sergi and Hallin, 2011:192)

### **8.3.1 Understandings of reflexivity**

Reflexivity is fundamental to my epistemological, ontological and methodological perspective which highlights the intersubjective, dialogical, and dialectical nature of experience which consequently has implications for the type of knowledge that we seek (Cunliffe, 2003, 2008). It emphasises an embedded form of knowing, which is often intuitive, but can be explored through reflexive engagement with ourselves and our surroundings (Hesse-Biber, 2007).

My relational social constructionist, process and feminist research perspective emphasizes the constantly shifting socially constructed plural nature of social reality (Cunliffe, 2003, 2008); the intimate relationship between the researcher and the researched (Hesse-Biber, 2007) and the situational constraints that shape the research process (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). The epistemological assumption for this research is that the relationship between the knower and what can be known is dynamically interactive and that the values of the knower influence the co-construction and interpretation of the findings (Hawkesworth, 2007). Therefore the methodological position is one of dialogue and co-construction between the knower and the participants in the inquiry that is dialectical in nature (Guba & Lincoln, 1994:110).

From a broad interpretivist and qualitative research perspective reflexivity is framed as a technique or practice which underpins the demonstration of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability, which ultimately affirms the 'trustworthiness' criteria of the research project (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Furthermore, it is understood as a methodological or epistemic process (Johnson & Duberley, 2003) to illuminate and implicate the social location of the researcher in the research process (Hawkesworth, 2007). From a different perspective, Sergi and Hallin (2011:192) argue that it can also be understood as an integral feature of a process ontology, which explicates the 'messiness' of the research process. Finally, Hesse-Biber and Brooks (2007) acknowledge its centrality as a core feminist insight and integral feature of feminist research and praxis as a methodological tool for deconstructing power throughout the entire research process (Hesse-Biber and Piatelli, 2007). All of these understandings have influenced my appreciation and operationalisation of reflexivity in this research project.

### 8.3.2 Reflexive praxis

Dhamoon (2011:239) asserts that intersectional research challenges established conventions, and that:

This disruption entails a self-reflexive critique of the analyst and her or his own implication in the matrix of meaning-making, specifically her or his relationship to knowledge production and research subjects. This can make intersectional-type research challenging, for it demands a willingness to address sometimes uncomfortable relations of implication in the production and organization of unequal power relations

Feminist scholars have particularly influenced my understanding and reflexive research praxis embedded in personal lived experience and a partial, local, situated perspective. Charmaz (2007) and Roof (2007) equate personal experience with authenticity. Charmaz (2007) says all researchers are intertwined with the research process, influencing her choice of topics, questions, and the kind of data she gathers and how she collects, analyses and interprets it. Charmaz (2007), and Hawkesworth (2007) see researcher reflexivity as an asset, and argue that authors may improve the credibility of their research by explicating their personal experiences and situated perspectives. Where outlining a personal stake is understood as signifying authorial credibility rather than bias. So therefore, the reflexive process in this research seeks to explicate my concerns and commitments and how these have been influential and instrumental in the research process. In doing so, this “empowers the reader to ‘place the narrative into perspective and delineate the boundaries’ – to understand what the author hopes to accomplish and to evaluate it accordingly.

Cassell (2009) identified in their study of key stakeholders in the field of qualitative management research that in order to become an accomplished qualitative researcher, in addition to the foundational knowledge and skills, three additional forms of research practice are important: reflection, reflexivity and phronesis. Reflection draws upon the work of Schon (1983) in encouraging researchers to explore the impact of their contribution to the research process in order to inform their future practice; Gray (2007) outlines a number of tools that can be used to facilitate the process. Reflexivity has been defined in a number of ways (Anderson, 2008), but at the core it is seen as the critical appraisal of the researcher’s assumptions implicit in their research practice throughout the research process. Importantly for Cassell et al. (2009:525) there was a balance between reflexive disclosure and self-indulgence on the part of the researcher, something I take note of in telling my part within this inquiry. Finally, phronesis or what Zackariasson, Styhre & Wilson, (2006:421) refer to as “street smart” and Cassell et al.

(2009:526) as “context wise”, requires the ability to respond flexibly and appropriately to the immediate and perhaps unanticipated challenges within the context of the research inquiry (Sergi and Hallin, 2011). This was evidenced by responding flexibly to requests and opportunities to meet up with participants ensuring that I gathered all of the necessary primary and secondary context specific data before our family’s unscheduled repatriation back to the UK and by taking the opportunity to attend relevant events including the government initiated Human Resources and Development in the Gulf Conference (February, 2009) at the Emirates Centre for Strategic Studies and Research (ECSSR) in Abu Dhabi.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest researchers maintain a reflexive journal to record thoughts and feelings relating to personal and research experiences. I maintained a journal, mainly in paper form, culminating in five hardback notebooks, to record what Johnson and Duberley (2003) refer to as ‘methodological’ and ‘epistemic’ reflexivity. Methodological reflexivity, as the name suggests, focuses on how researchers can monitor and reflect upon their research protocols and interaction in the field of study in order to improve upon their research practice to facilitate more accurate representations within their inquiry. Epistemic reflexivity involves researchers thinking about their own assumptions and recognising and examining how they are part of their own data. The reflexive journal process requires researchers to interrogate explicate and potentially re-evaluate their own underpinning epistemological and theoretical perspectives in understanding and interpreting what is researched (Hesse-Biber and Piatelli, 2007).

My reflexive journal covered both of these aspects. I found it easier to record my research experiences ranging from feelings of anxiety, frustration and discomfort at different times during the research process in hard copy. The paper rather than electronic format allowed me to explore, interrogate and shape the meandering iterations of my theoretical and methodological issues, prompted by my own research, and feedback I received from the supervision process, peers and established researchers when presenting or discussing my study. Certain extracts were transcribed into electronic format as accounts to be integrated more explicitly into the research process. The journal helped me to understand the ‘slipperiness’ of the plural self, by connecting my subjectivity to the research process (Richardson, 2007: 459) argues that a qualitative researcher

“can make visible her own slippery subjectivity, power interests and limitations- the recognition that her knowledge production is partial, contextual, and inevitably flawed”.

An illustration of how I integrated my personal experience into the methodological practice of the research process was discussed in a Doctoral symposium paper I submitted and discussed with academic peers at the UFHRD Conference in 2009. The paper outlined my epistemological and methodological approach and included an extract from my diary to demonstrate how I had integrated the reflective learning from a critical incident from my own personal experience into the theoretical and methodological direction of the research inquiry.

The incident involved me accompanying my Filipino live-in housekeeper to the recruitment agency to resolve an issue over her salary, which was paid by me to her through the agency. The interaction with the senior male Arab manager at the agency illuminated so many issues about our individual access as intersectional subjectivities to privileging and marginalising subject positions and their generative effects in this situation. Importantly, what this also demonstrated was the diverse influences from macro and meso arenas that infused our distinctive access to different forms of economic, social and cultural capital, marked by our individual categorical intersections of gender, ethnicity and class. Epistemically, it illuminated the contribution of discourses within macro and meso arenas implicated in the intimate social relations situated in a single interactional event. Furthermore, it explicated the contingent nature of these discourses and their generative effects within spatial, temporal translocations. Methodologically, I took this insight forward by actively asking for specific incidents from the research participants during the interview process to move beyond generalities and explore these epistemic concerns (van den Brink & Benschop, 2012).

### **8.3.3 Reflexive choices**

I have accounted in Chapter One for how my personal context contributed to the rationale for this study. However, as Dhamoon (2011:239) comments, the challenges to established orthodoxies embedded in intersectional studies means that, “we all occupy differing degrees and forms of privilege and penalty, we are always and already implicated in the conditions that structure a matrix”. Exploring whiteness had not been an explicit goal in this investigation, and certainly my own ‘white’ positionality had an emotional impact on my epistemic and ontological reflections.

I was unsettled by an epistemological project in some areas of feminist and critical race literature that explicitly cast my white subjectivity as fixed, immutable and incommensurate with marginalisation, and yet this had been my own experienced reality in some interactions within the research context as reflected in Gunew's (2007) comment:

Bonnet (1996:196) has argued being white has been regarded as 'an immutable condition with clear and distinct moral attributes. These attributes often include being racist; not experiencing racism; being an oppressor; not experiencing oppression; silencing; not being silenced'.

However, critiques of whiteness studies have usually challenged the ahistorical and aspatial representations of white discourses (as discussed in the ethnicity section of Chapter Three). Therefore, I approached this investigation from the perspective of rejecting the premise that all existing categories and social grouping are natural. As Dhamoon (2011:239) asserts, intersectional research is predicated on critique, commenting "By critique I am referring to that praxis that refuses and thus disrupts a calcified and definitive way of understanding difference, subjects, and subjectivity".

Therefore, in contradistinction, the intersectional lens facilitated nuanced, partial understandings of whiteness as it intersected with gender, which served not only to describe and explicate complex dynamics in specific contexts and in different arenas of social life, but also to articulate dimensions of otherness within it (Jones, 2008). Thereby, intersectionality provided an opportunity to critique and disrupt the monolithic constructions of whiteness, to offer alternative understandings of contextual and constructed paradoxical positioning situated in complex ethnic dynamics contingent to particular historical-spatial-temporal translocations (Metcalf and Woodhams, 2012).

Similar to Johansson and Sliwa (2014:25) my own expatriate experiences and contemporaneous living in the research context can be said to have produced a research position of 'engaged subjectivity' (Dhamoon, 2011: 239) which has been understood in this investigation as not claiming a duplicate positionality or privileged insight to the participants' experiences in interactional arenas. Rather, it is framed as an appreciation of partial shared understandings of contingent subjectivities, which often enabled dialogue and exploration of sensitive topics, where accounts of interactions were reciprocally shared. Therefore, I was sensitive to assumptions of white cultural similarity and cognisant of attending to and including differing views so as not to present the participants as a homogeneous group of white western women. Sin (2007:482) argues that "The thought that white people can possess ethnicity is not

taken seriously. The ethnicisation of whiteness still remains largely under-investigated, particularly in relation to its impact on research practice”.

This is not to deny the challenges in ethnic-matching in research interviews, attending to the diversity and distinctiveness in conversations between a white researcher and white participant in this context (Sin, 2007) which were understood as “necessarily situated and contingent, creative multiple mappings of a complex and multifaceted reality or realities” (Rhodes, 1994:548). This thesis has sought to challenge the assumption of an inclusive identification of collective whiteness. Indeed a variety of boundary markers emerged during the interactions to delineate sameness and difference e.g. nationality, age, professional backgrounds, marital status and family all contributed to different and complex subjectivities and different cultural references and idiosyncratic understandings of what it was to be western and white and a woman in this investigation. A Canadian respondent drew attention to her own ‘cultural shock’ at working with British colleagues for the first time, and particularly their idiosyncratic sense of ironic humour. The respondents’ understandings and positioning within colonial discourses were very different, for example an Irish construction of the British Empire was a discourse in which the Irish identified with being the oppressed and not the oppressor (Sin, 2007). Some of the participants evidenced degrees of self-censorship or silencing when the conversation turned into a ‘sensitive’ topic’ especially on ‘white privilege’ or reflecting on their own levels of increased racism to particular other groups e.g. South Asian male construction workers within the ethnic dynamics of the UAE. It is also important to note that ethnicity is not always the most dominant dimension of differentiation in all situations as evidenced in this study (Rhodes, 1994).

Overall, the rationale and mode of my own reflexive practice in the intersectional research process could be described as one of “engaged subjectivity” (Dhamoon, 2011:239), which acknowledged the limitations of an insider’s perspective, for example, not problematising the familiar and everyday conditions of interactional relations and assuming sameness and not attentive to dissimilar dimensions of difference.

#### **8.4. Implications for future research**

This study suggests areas for future research in four academic fields including expatriation, female expatriation and self-initiated expatriation and intersectionality.

All fields of expatriation studies, including female and self-initiated, should consider the richer understandings which can be gained from “re-contextualising” (Boje et al., 2004)

the content of research findings in more detailed analysis of the research contexts in which they are produced (Ozbilgin, 2011). Expatriation literature generally has often focused on meso and micro interactions, and paid limited attention to global-local relations which are a strength within migration literatures on global mobility (Malecki & Ewers, 2007). The contextual analysis in expatriation studies could consider the benefits of exploring the research context from the perspective of a multi-arena relational framework (Anthias, 2013, a; Syed & Ozbilgin, 2009) and the framework developed in this thesis. This will illuminate how influences within macro, meso and micro arenas simultaneously reinforce and challenge dominant structural conditions and social relations. The emergent SIE research has some good examples of how this can be achieved including Al Ariss and Syed (2011) and Rodriguez and Scurry (2014), and the framework developed in this thesis provides an illustration of how this could be taken forward in future studies. Furthermore the contextual analysis should consider the implications in terms of the intersection of ethnic, gender and class dynamics and any other salient categories including religion, nationality, sect which may be relevant for the research context and scope and focus of the study.

This research study offers the discourse of risk to expatriation studies and specifically to the emerging field of self-initiated expatriation studies to explore the constraints and enablers in the production of SIE subjectivities within multi-arena relational frameworks of research contexts (Richardson & Zikic, 2007). This will facilitate identifying the contribution of generative discursive forces (Demir & Lychnell, 2014) which frame SIE subject positions and the discursive resources they draw upon in enacting more advantageous positioning. This will identify the contextually contingent continuities and discontinuities with other forms of expatriation subject positions (Mayerhofer et al., 2007) as articulated in the expatriation-migration continuum (see Chapter Three) and salient in specific research contexts.

This research study offers the intersecting discourses of respect and complex ethnicity to female expatriation studies to explore a discursive construction of the Third Gender (Adler, 1987) concept in future studies. Intersectional theorising, particularly drawing from feminist theorising (Dhamoon, 2011), can provide an important critical understanding of the complexities in the discursive construction of woman in expatriation studies. Significantly, this would enable unmasking the contribution of discursive forces which frame woman expatriates' subject positions and the discursive resources they draw upon in enacting more advantageous positioning in specific research contexts (Janssens et al., 2006). Furthermore, the complexity of intra and

inter and gender relations (Napier & Taylor, 2002) between expatriate women and other subjectivities in the research context is underexplored generally (Varma et al., 2011, is an exception) and is an area that could be developed further (Mavin & Grandy, 2014).

Furthermore, this research offers discourses of complex ethnicity to intersectional and feminist theorising to explore the situated production of ethnic subjectivities (Leonard, 2008, 2010). In particular it suggests that more attention could be given to the particularities of western and white subjectivities enacted within specific research contexts in their intersection with other categorical characteristics. This will make visible the discursive construction of distinct and overlapping ethnic subject positions within global-local geographies of dominant discourses for example colonialism and hegemonic masculinity (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Fechter & Walsh, 2010; Metcalfe & Woodhams, 2012). Importantly, future studies could explore when intersecting outsider Other subject positions are privileged or “inferiorised” (Jones, 2008:763) through contingent processes of othering (Berry & Bell, 2012).

Finally, this research offers a discourse of respect to contribute to the extension of feminist theorising about the contingent discursive production of woman subjectivities in specific temporal, spatial and translocational contexts (Metcalfe & Woodhams, 2012; Metcalfe & Rees, 2012). The diversity of woman performances of respectable femininity (Radhakrishnan, 2009) could be further explored from the perspective of intra- and inter-gender relations (Mavin & Grandy, 2014) within specific translocational contexts. This would illuminate the multi arena discursive forces and access to discursive resources which frame woman enactments of respect and their repositioning strategies within specific research contexts (Fernando & Cohen, 2013).

## **8.5. Summary**

This chapter has concluded this account of the research process and evaluated achievement of the research aims and objectives. The chapter has drawn together the threads of the central argument of this thesis and has asserted and outlined the distinctive theoretical and methodological contributions offered to expatriation, female and self-initiated expatriation; and to intersectional and feminist research. This chapter has acknowledged that these insights are situated and partial and subject to the limitations outlined in the introduction and throughout the research process (see, for example, the methodology chapter). I have reflexively discussed my personal and professional positioning in the introduction, methodology and conclusion chapters, and

their implications on the research process and on my own development as a researcher in this chapter. Finally, this chapter outlined suggestions for taking this research forward in future studies.

## Appendix 1: Participant Informed Consent Form



### Newcastle Business School Informed Consent Form for research participants

Title of Study	The Third Gender: Exploring foreign professional women' experiences in the United Arab Emirates
Person(s) conducting the research	Brenda Stalker, MA, FCIPD
Programme of study	Doctorate in Business Administration
Address of the researcher for correspondence	Information removed
Telephone	Information removed
E-mail	Information removed
Description of the broad nature of the research	This is a qualitative study, which will use semi-structured interviews. The study will focus on exploring experiences of foreign professional women working in the UAE. The aim is to explore how they understand their host country culture and the specific contexts in which they work, and how this may impact upon they interact with others in the course of their professional lives.
Description of the involvement expected of participants including the broad nature of questions to be answered or events to be observed or activities to be undertaken, and the expected time commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In individual key informant interviews the respondents will be asked to talk about their general and specific experiences of working in the UAE.</li> <li>• The respondents will not be named personally within the thesis or any resulting documentation.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The researcher will anonymise any references to any individual or organisations. Furthermore, the researcher will take all appropriate steps to ensure that individual identities are protected so that it may not be possible to establish the identity of the respondent indirectly.</li> <li>• Interviews would normally take between 1-2 hours, at a place convenient and comfortable for the respondent.</li> <li>• Participants will be asked permission for the interview to be digitally voice recorded to facilitate the accuracy of the transcript.</li> <li>• It is not a condition of participation that it must be recorded, and the final decision will be with the respondent.</li> <li>• Participation is entirely voluntary and participants can refuse to answer any questions or terminate the interview at any time.</li> <li>• Respondents can withdraw from the research process at any time.</li> <li>• In addition to publication within the doctoral thesis, excerpts from the interview may be used to support other academic publications including, conference papers, journal articles and presentations.</li> </ul>
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Information obtained in this study, including this consent form, will be kept strictly confidential (i.e. will not be passed to others) and anonymous (i.e. individuals and organisations will not be identified *unless this is expressly excluded in the details given above*).

Data obtained through this research may be reproduced and published in a variety of forms and for a variety of audiences related to the broad nature of the research detailed above. It will not be used for purposes other than those outlined above without your permission.

Participation is entirely voluntary and participants may withdraw at any time.

By signing this consent form, you are indicating that you fully understand the above information and agree to participate in this study on the basis of the above information.

**Participant's signature**

**Date**

**Student's signature**

**Date**

Please keep one copy of this form for your own records

## Appendix 2: Interview Conversation Guide

### Biography

Can you give me a brief life /career history?

Can I ask some demographic details about your nationality? Age broadly, marital status? children?

### Expatriation history

When did you first leave your home country? And why?

If so, can you tell me briefly about the other places where you have lived?

Why did you come to the UAE?

### Broader cultural Impression of UAE?

What did you anticipate about what it would be like living here before you arrived?

How does it compare to your home culture or any other places where you have lived?

What is the most significant surprise? Difference? You have felt since you arrived here in the UAE?

How have you found general living here in UAE? What is positive? negative?

Do you think you have adjusted to living here?

What are your impressions of Emiratis outside of work?

Who do you tend to mix with socially here?

### Work Organisation

Can you tell me about where you work? What type of organisation is it?

How would you describe the culture of the organisation?

What exactly do you do there?

What are the highlights? And disappointments working here?

### Relationships in the workplace?

Who do you work with and what is your work relationship with them?

Do you meet or work with Emiratis in your work role? How? What? where?

How would you describe your professional relationships or working here in the UAE?

How does that compare to other places/organisations?

### Perceptions of Women

What do you think are the perceptions of women generally here in the UAE?

What about the stories and media representations about women?

Do you think it's harder or easier for woman living here?

### Foreign

Do you feel foreign in the UAE? Why? When? Where?

How does that make you feel?

Any advantages? Disadvantages?

How do you think other people perceive you as a foreigner here?

What is your impression of the diverse ethnic community here – general pattern of social relations

### Foreign woman

Does it make a difference being a foreign woman here?

When do you notice being a foreign woman here?

What are the perceptions of foreign western women here?

Do you think it influences your relationships professionally and socially?

Where possible respondents were asked for specific examples to illustrate their opinions, impressions, understandings.

## Appendix 3: Relational Framework Coding Template

Relational Framework Coding Template				
First Level Codes	Second Level codes	Third Level Codes	Discourses	
			SIE	Gender with Ethnicity
			Discourse of Risk	Discourse of Respect <i>Discourse of Complex Ethnicity</i>
<b>Biography</b>				
	Demographic data	Age, marital status, children, tenure in UAE, nationality, ethnicity	Age, Marital Status, children	<u>Respect</u> – Marital status, Age, Job level, <u>Ethnicity</u> - nationality, ethnicity, western, white, complex heritage, younger white
	Expatriation History	Motivation to expatriate	Push and pull factors	<u>Ethnicity</u> -motivations, expatriation histories, white privilege
		Previous Expatriation History	Tenure, temporariness,	
	Route to Entry and Employment	Education/Occupation	Sectors, sponsorship, Networking	<u>Respect</u> -Sectors, jobs, Ethnicity-sponsorship, networking, sector, jobs
		Sponsorship		
		Networking		
	Career	Career Type	Personal vs organisational, chance, flexibility, Underemployment,	<u>Ethnicity</u> – career options, Passport flexibility, organisational role status
		Personal vs Organisational		
		Career Logic		
<b>Macro Themes</b>				
Emirati culture	Expatriate Perspectives	Emirati Culture	Emirati Culture, Postmodern Clash, Parallel living Bedouin Heritage' (Wasta/hospitality)	<u>Respect</u> - Postmodern culture clash, Bedouin hospitality,
		Postmodern Clash		
		Parallel living		
	Emirati Perspectives			
		Nation Building Project		
		Bedouin Heritage		

			Guest status	<u>Ethnicity</u> - National Building Project, ethnic stratification
Islam	Centrality of Islam	All embracing Islam in all arenas'		<u>Respect</u> - Centrality of family, gendered roles and codes of conduct
	Islam and gender	Gendered roles		
		Gendered codes of conduct		
		Centrality of family		
Institutions and Governance		Sharia Law	Sharia law, Lack of robust, legal frameworks, business friendly labour laws, impact of contract termination	<u>Respect</u> - Sharia Law <u>Ethnicity</u> – Nationality legal status impact on access to services, work visa, jobs, treatment by institutions and their agents
		Regulatory frameworks		
		Labour Laws		
<b>Meso Themes</b>				
Organisational Cultures	Emirati Influences	Emiratisation	Impact of Emiratisation, western influences on culture and gender organising	<u>Respect</u> - Organisation norms, practices, lack of respect from male expatriates <u>Ethnicity</u> – multi-ethnic workplaces, ethnic balance, ethnic inter- group relations,
	Western Influences	Organising Norms		
	Organisation Ethnic dynamics	Gendered Norms		
		Multi-ethnic workplaces		
Organisational Policies	Organisational procedures and practices	Diversity	Impact of policy and practices of diversity, resourcing, development,	<u>Respect</u> – differential policy/practices to support woman' cultural gender roles based on non- Emirati citizenship status
		Resourcing		
		Development		
<b>Micro Themes</b>				
Social relations with Others	Relations with Emiratis	Communication Practices		<u>Respect</u> - Communication Practices, Male Emiratis – Theme of chivalry
		Male Emiratis – Theme of chivalry		
		Female Emiratis-		

		Theme of complex influence		Female Emiratis- Theme of intra gender conflict
Relations with western expatriates	Female Expatriates - Networking Support	Male Expatriates – Themes of Disgust	Some limited positive examples with males, but mainly negative, Theme of Disgust. Good networking support from Females	<u>Respect</u> – Males reinforce negative gendered norms Females - Intra gender relations on respectable dress and codes of conduct
Relations with Third country nationals (TCNs')	Male TCNs' – Themes of Guardianship, Hostility,			<u>Respect-</u> Male TCNs' – Themes of Hostility <u>Ethnicity</u> - Guardianship, Hostility,
	Female TCNs' - Themes of Guardianship			<u>Ethnicity-</u> Female TCNs' - Themes of Guardianship, Inferior Outsiders
	Relations between Emiratis and TCNs' – Theme of Disdain, and Non-Intervention			<u>Ethnicity-</u> Relations between Emiratis and TCNs' – Theme of Disdain, and Non-Intervention

**Appendix 4: Stalker, B & Mavin, S (2011) Learning and development experiences of self-initiated expatriate women in the United Arab Emirates, *Human Resource Development, International*, 14 (3), 273-290**

## **Glossary of Terms**

AE	Assigned Expatriate
GCC	Gulf Cooperative Council
HCN	Host Country National
SIE	Self-Initiated expatriate
SM	Skilled Migrant
UAE	United Arab Emirates
TCN	Third Country National

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