

Dear reviewer,

Thank you for your invaluable critique and thoughtful questions. Your insights are not only instrumental but also pivotal in shaping the direction of this research. Here are my responses to the points raised:

1. **Number of Empirical Studies in Hospitality Experience:** I mentioned that there are only seven empirical studies on experience in hospitality, but a Scopus search suggests more. It's crucial to ensure comprehensive literature reviews to accurately capture the scope of existing research. I had assumed that EBSCO Host and Google Scholar would have led to this comprehensive literature review which might not have been the case. However, broadening the search parameters and databases can provide a more holistic view of the current academic landscape. Actually, when searching for the term "experience of hospitality" in Scopus, a total of 30.468 articles can be found. Out of these articles, 22.633 have been peer-reviewed, and 15.438 pertain to a subject area that is relevant. In the end, 8.675 articles were included in a journal related to hospitality, establishing a strong basis for this study. However, searching for titles did not result in finding any new articles on empirical research regarding the experience of hospitality.
2. **Pine and Gilmore's concept of the "transformation economy":** This represents a significant advancement beyond experiences. This perspective has the potential to deeply influence how experiences are planned and perceived, particularly in hospitality, where personalized and transformative experiences can lead to higher customer satisfaction and loyalty. Incorporating this into the research could offer new insights into experience design. Framing the research within Pine and Gilmore's four realms of experience—escapism, entertainment, aesthetic, and educational—can offer a more comprehensive understanding of how individuals process experiences. Recognizing the diversity in human perceptions can lead to more inclusive and effective experience design. Using search terms Pine, Gilmore, and/or realm, realms, and escapist in the abstract leads in EBSCO Host to 14 articles in Journals. They generate new insights into the issue of experience. These articles have been included in the revised literature review leading to the conclusion that there are not only seven but twenty articles with empiric research about experiences. However, it seems that only a small portion of these articles actually discuss an experience that truly invokes an emotional response being a feeling.
3. **Choice of 'Colour,' 'Animal,' and 'Season of the Year':** The rationale behind selecting these specific elements should be clearly articulated. If not well-justified, these choices might limit or bias the responses. Personal associations and experiences with these elements can vary widely, potentially skewing the data. Clear explanations and justifications can help mitigate these biases and provide a more robust framework for interpretation. It's important to consider these subjective factors in the interpretation of results. Careful analysis of transcripts can provide greater insight into these individual differences and deepen understanding of how these factors impact the overall experience. The transcripts were revisited to analyse all mentions of colour, animal, and season in relation to the context in which they were stated. In the amended paper, the analysis incorporated pertinent context factors.
4. **Research Stage and Conclusions:** It is crucial to acknowledge that the research is in its early stages. Preliminary findings should be viewed as a foundation for further exploration rather than definitive conclusions. Considering the reliability of the outcome, the conclusions have been made less explicit.

5. **Home Environment and Older Persons:** Exploring the home environment's role, especially for older persons, can reveal whether it represents safety, shared experiences, and/or loneliness. Understanding these nuances can inform how hospitality experiences are designed to cater to these varied needs, balancing comfort and escapism. Further qualitative research into what it means to "feel at home" could enrich the study, particularly when considering diverse experiences of home environments among different demographics. This study lacked further investigation into what it means to feel at home. No new insights are gained by looking into where the feeling of being at home was referred to in the transcripts.
6. **Practical Implications for Practitioners:** Research findings need to be clearly linked to practical applications to provide actionable insights for practitioners. This involves not only presenting results but also explaining their significance and offering guidelines on how they can be implemented in real-world scenarios. The amended paper includes additional practical implications.

To conclude, exploring these areas can enhance the research and lead to a deeper comprehension of the hospitality experience, benefiting both academia and practical use. Your valuable insights have greatly contributed to the credibility and relevance of the study, and for that, I express my gratitude.

Kind regards,

Edgar Keehnen