

Linking servicescape and experiencescape: creating a collective focus for the service industry

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to review what one knows – and does not know about servicescape and experiencescape. The paper provides a comprehensive conceptualization, discussion of the servicescape and experiencescape and calls for the need for a collective focus of servicescape and experiencescape for the service industry.

Design/methodology/approach – This conceptual paper analyzes multiple literature studies related to servicescape, experiencescape and other related concepts such as service quality and customer experience for building a comprehensive framework that draws knowledge from both servicescape and experiencescape in an effort to create a collective focus.

Findings – Prior research on the components of servicescape and experiencescape raises more questions than answers. The findings of this study highlight the importance of technology as one of the key components of experiencescape to motivate customers to engage in the consumption environment. Furthermore, the proposed conceptual framework provides a detailed discussion and highlights the importance of using servicescape and experiencescape concepts together as a collective framework to bring about greater benefits to the service industry. The proposed framework suggests that these concepts are not only collective but also interrelated.

Research limitations/implications – Technology is not a tool but an important partner for the firm to create the experience. It can bring together marketing, management and operations within the organization to collectively focus on the customer. Collectively designed servicescape and experiencescape will create lasting memories and emotional connections with customers.

Practical implications – Service organizations can develop smart experiencescapes that positively influence customer value cocreation and heighten customer experience by utilizing technology. Managers are advised to understand consumers' emphasis on technological personalization, aesthetics, functionality, interactivity and social presence while participating in cocreation. Technologies may improve the experience by incorporating real-time and less-restrained interactions between consumers and the service organization.

Originality/value – This paper synthesizes insights from the extant literature related to servicescape, service quality, customer experience and experiencescape. Further, it helps to extend the current understanding of experiencescape and calls for the need to incorporate technology as one of the key experience components in the experiencescape concept. Furthermore, this study highlights the importance and the need to bring these two concepts together with a collective focus to enhance value for the customer. Thus, it is argued here that the collective focus of servicescape and experiencescape in the service industry will create new opportunities for further research and practical applications.

Keywords Experiencescape, Physical servicescape, Social servicescape, Natural servicescape, Cultural servicescape, Technological servicescape

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Service is at the core of all economic activities in both developing and developed economies of the world. Thus, the service industry has direct interaction and influence on almost every



individual on this planet. Availability and the provision of different services are critical to improve the capabilities of people, organizations and society. Customers' service experience is considered one of the most vital factors that helps a firm establish its superiority in the market. Therefore, the ability to provide customers with a positive experience is critical in today's competitive global market.

The concept of experience has become the fourth economic offerings, after commodities, goods and services (Pine and Gilmore, 1998). Many firms consider customer experience (CE) as a means to gain competitive differentiation (McLellan, 2014). *Harvard Business Review Analytic Services* (2017) found that 93% of business leaders report CE as critical to their overall performance. All firms, therefore, have to focus on how to provide their customers with memorable and meaningful experiences rather than offering mere services (Jani and Han, 2015; Kandampully *et al.*, 2018). Providing a compelling positive experience is the key to winning consumers' hearts and minds (Pine and Gilmore, 1998). There is growing support in the service marketing literature that indicates consumers appreciate the experience more than the tangible value (Bilgihan *et al.*, 2014). Providing a compelling positive CE leads to superior financial performance, positive brand image, customer loyalty and satisfaction and positive word-of-mouth (WOM). However, services as performances are often complex as they often have human involvement, hence unable to predict the outcome. As a result, it is difficult to conceptualize and analyze the experience before service delivery. Against this backdrop, this research aims to offer a discussion, definition and comprehensive conceptualization of the various elements that provide the impression of experience in the service industry.

Consequently, it is important to gain a broader understanding of the nature of a service experience in a holistic manner. Gaining a broader understanding is critical to help design experience foster meaningful and memorable experiences (Mody *et al.*, 2017). Expanding our understanding by synthesizing insights from the extant literature helps to create a comprehensive mechanism to create a knowledge base with the collective know-how from both the servicescape and experiencescape framework. The framework proposed by this study is critical to create memorable experiences for customers. The purpose of this paper is to review what we know – and do not know about servicescape and experiencescape. This study also provides a comprehensive conceptualization drawing insights from the extant literature related to servicescape, service quality, CE and experiencescape. It also builds on the conceptualization of servicescape by Rosenbaum and Massiah (2011) and experiencescape by Pizam and Tasci (2019).

Furthermore, this study highlights the importance and the need to draw knowledge from these two well-recognized concepts together to a collective focus to enhance value for the customer. Service and experience are not separable, and they are inextricably linked together from a customer's point of view. More importantly, they are interdependent – one has limited value without the other. Therefore, we consider it imperative to establish a much broader and holistic perspective of how we view and understand "service" and "experience" for the effective use in service industry.

To accomplish the research goals, we followed the following research process. Three steps were adopted to collect our data. First, to avoid selection bias in considering only top-ranked journals (Terjesen *et al.*, 2016), Google Scholar, Science Direct and EBSCOhost were selected to cover a comprehensive range of relevant papers for this study. Second, research keywords were identified to initiate a search in the title, abstract and keywords of all publications. Search queries such as servicescape, experiencescape, guest experience, CE, service technology and so on were used. Finally, identified papers were recorded in an Excel spreadsheet, and replicated papers are removed. These papers were then reviewed by appraising the title, abstract, introduction and conclusion to ascertain the paper's relevance to the topic.

The rest of this paper is organized as follows: In the first section, we discuss the research design. Next, we illustrate the concepts of CE, servicescape and experiencescape. Following this, we discuss the potential confusion of servicescape and experiencescape with other concepts such as service quality, CE. Following this, we explain the components of servicescape: readjusting for experiencescape and the importance of the technological component to experiencescape. Further, we explore the significance of servicescape. Lastly, we propose some future research directions and conclusions.

Research design and methodology

Given the exploratory nature of this study with the aim to understand a phenomenon, a “grounded theory” approach was adopted as advocated by (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). They proposed the use of grounded theory to gain clearer understanding of a phenomenon. Grounded theory approach allows the researcher to collect, analyze and understand facts that provide explanations of the phenomena. Therefore, this research design involved four stages of thematic research analysis to understand the evolution of knowledge in this context. The first stage focused on identifying publications that explicitly discussed various elements relating to “servicescape.” This stage allowed the researchers to gain a clearer understanding of the fundamentals around the establishment of “servicescape” as an important element that has an impact on service as to how service is perceived by consumers. This stage also helped the researchers to examine and discuss concepts that are related to servicescape. The second stage provided researchers to review and synthesize the evolving importance of “experience” in the delivery of service as perceived by consumers. The third stage examined literature that outlined and discussed various elements that are pertinent to both “servicescape” and “experiencescape.” This stage although most extensive allowed the researchers to integrate related knowledge that pertains to two separate streams of research. Using the knowledge gained from the above three stages guided the researchers to formulate and create and synthesize current knowledge and to understand further the role and significance of the two concepts, namely “servicescape” and “experiencescape” and the importance of a unified approach to advance present knowledge and practice in service.

Moving the literature further

Contemporary service firms have to find ways to provide customers with a unique and memorable experience. For example, Ritz Carlton Hotel communicates the uniqueness of their brand in the market, not just as a luxury hotel but also as an “experience and memory creator” (Nixon and Rieple, 2010). The highly experiential nature of service in various contexts involves elements that contribute to the memory of service. In this regard, the so-called service atmosphere plays a significant role in creating the appropriate experience for the customer (Brodie *et al.*, 2011). Service atmosphere has been described as various elements of service that have been designed to provoke customers’ emotional reactions to enhance the positive behavioral outcome for the service (Kotler, 1973). Thus, various stimuli as the service environment referred to as “servicescape” help customers to evaluate the service and experience it (Bitner, 1992).

A review of the prior literature shows that one of the earliest models of servicescape was developed by Bitner (1992), which was based on the effect of the physical environment on consumer behavior. The proposal for the examination of the experiencescape model, on the other hand, is intended for a comprehensive understanding of the consumption environment, involving not only the physical dimension but also other dimensions (e.g. social, natural and cultural dimensions) (Rosenbaum and Massiah, 2011; Pizam and Tasci, 2019). To be successful in the competitive service landscape, organizations should pay strong attention to detail when designing servicescapes (Park *et al.*, 2019; Choi and Kandampully, 2019). Yet,

despite the significance of servicescape design, the lack of research regarding a comprehensive framework remains a concern (Mari and Poggesi, 2013; Park *et al.*, 2019). The initial servicescape model developed by Bitner (1992) serves as a starting point for much of the existing literature and provides valuable information regarding the impact of the physical environment on consumers' responses. However, this model falls short of considering some other important elements in service environments (Line *et al.*, 2018). Consequently, more research is needed to better understand the elements that constitute the new servicescape (Park *et al.*, 2019). Pizam and Tasci (2019) proposed that CE can be enhanced by creating an environment, which offers customers with experiences that will match their expectations, which can be achieved via experiencescape.

Understanding customer experience concepts

Pine and Gilmore (1998) acknowledged that companies that aim to achieve competitive advantage should differentiate their offerings by designing and providing a memorable and meaningful experience. Schmitt (1999) argued that organizations have shifted from traditional marketing to create experiences for their customers. Hwang and Seo (2016) addressed the transition from an economy that sells service to that of selling memorable experiences. Customers consume experiences offered as an inherent part of products, places, service and/or events (Jain *et al.*, 2017). The series of interactions that happens between customers and an organization at different touch points can be considered within the context of prepurchase, during consumption and postconsumption (Kandampully and Solnet, 2018). According to Berry *et al.* (2006), customers' experiences can be grouped into three types of clue categories; functional clues, mechanical clues and humanistic clues, of which some are rational and some emotional. Customers are emotionally and rationally driven (Schmitt, 1999). Consumption experiences are directed toward feelings, pleasure and fun; therefore, it is important for firms to identify and apply new strategies, processes and structures to becoming experience-oriented organizations (Schmitt, 1999). There is a growing shift from commoditization to personalized and cocreated consumption experiences. Thus, to enhance customer perceived value during the consumption process, it is important for organizations to act as resource integrators and create a positive experience environment (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004). This concept of value cocreation involves active customer participation in the experience environment that results in higher perceived value. Firms that promote value cocreation tend to outperform competitors (Roy *et al.*, 2020).

Experience can be managed effectively when firms recognize service as the stage and goods as props for engaging customers in a memorable experience (Gilmore, 2002). Therefore, CE in all service contexts is an important criterion for the customer to select one service firm over the other, as CE does not depend only on the service outcome but also on a variety of other features, such as facility design, the interactions with service providers and other customers, ambiance, signs, online/offline communication, websites and so forth (Kandampully *et al.*, 2018). Service firms should, therefore, shift their focus away from "delivery" that primarily aims only in achieving the end result of product and/or service quality. Instead, they should focus on creating a well-designed experience that will help to improve customer's memory of the whole experience with the firm.

Klaus and Maklan (2013) argued that defining and improving CE have become a priority for the marketing of any organization. According to them, quality need has been replaced with the need for experience as the competitive battleground for marketing. They defined customer experience as "[. . .] the customer's cognitive and affective assessment of all direct and indirect encounters with the firm relating to their purchasing behavior" (p. 228). Customer experience occurs because of the interaction between the customer and the product/service or the physical environment or when the customer goes through the consumption experience (Bustamante and Rubio, 2017).

Bustamante and Rubio (2017) highlighted that for the experience to be memorable, the interaction between the customer and the experience should be a novelty, relates to learning something new, personal relevance or surprise. Pine and Gilmore (1998) argued that a memorable experience occurs when the experience provider can connect with the customer to make him/her feel immersed or actively participate in the environment. Table 1 shows a summary of CE literature. The following section discusses the importance of servicescapes.

Why servicescape is important

Services cannot be easily evaluated by customers as they are intangible and are usually produced after purchasing (Remier and Kuehn, 2005). So, the consumption of service creates a challenge for the service provider as customers are unable to assess what they will receive at the end of a service experience. Therefore, customers look for physical evidence available to them. When a customer enters a service environment, his/her satisfaction is not based on any single physical stimulus, but rather on a variety of stimuli through which she/he derives a holistic image of the service (Bitner, 1992; Lin and Mattila, 2010). The service environment can assist service providers in influencing customers' perception of the service and, subsequently, can be used as an important tool to affect customer behavior (Dedeoglu *et al.*, 2018). Servicescape literature originated when Kotler (1973) introduced the atmospherics term. He proposed designing a buying environment to enhance customer's emotional reactions. According to him, atmospherics involves four dimensions, namely *Visual* (e.g. color, brightness, size and shapes), *Aural* (e.g. volume and pitch), *Olfactory* (e.g. scent and freshness), *Tactile* (softness, smoothness and temperature). Baker's (1986) model of the atmosphere considered three major factors – *social*, *ambiance* and *design* aspects. The contemporary understanding of the role of the physical environment in consumption behaviors is attributable to Bitner's (1992) servicescape. She defined servicescape as a function of the physical environment such as ambient conditions, spatial layout/functionality, signs, symbols and artifacts. Her framework is a building block of the physical environment as an important antecedent to consumption behaviors. The framework has also been criticized as it neglected the effect of the social stimuli, which is a necessary part of the consumption environment (Line *et al.*, 2018). Many researchers (e.g. Tombs and McColl-Kennedy, 2003; Hanks *et al.*, 2017; Hanks and Line, 2018; Line and Hanks, 2019) have studied the important role of social servicescape in the context of hospitality services consumption. Prior studies showed that social servicescape could affect a variety of consumer behaviors including increasing the perception of service quality level (Hanks *et al.*, 2017), increasing customer's attachment to service organization (Line *et al.*, 2018), a key driver to enhance attitude, satisfaction and postconsumption behavioral intentions, for example, return intention, WOM intention, e-WOM intention (Hanks and Line, 2018).

Other researchers proposed that servicescape consisted of two dimensions, namely physical and social components (e.g. Meng and Choi, 2017; Dedeoglu *et al.*, 2018; Liu *et al.*, 2018). On the other hand, Rosenbaum and Massiah (2011) put forward a framework of servicescape and proposed that servicescape as “[...] the physical, social, socially symbolic, and natural stimuli.” According to them, these may enhance or constrain employee and customer approach/avoidance decisions and social interaction behaviors. Rosenbaum and Massiah (2011) are of the view that servicescape includes not only objective, measurable and controllable physical stimuli, but also subjective, immeasurable and uncontrollable (e.g. social, symbolic and natural) stimuli. Managers usually face challenges to manipulate servicescape stimuli and to match them with the expectations of their target customers. Table 2 shows a summary of servicescape literature. To summarize, the earlier research focused on the atmospherics (e.g. Kotler, 1973) by discussing the major steps in the planning of atmospherics and the role of atmospherics in achieving companies' competitive

Authors name	Variables	Category	Findings
Klaus and Maklan (2012)	Service experience	A sample of repeat mortgage purchases of a UK bank	The study develops a multidimensional scale of service experience
Bagdare and Jain (2013)	Retail customer experience	Shoppers who shop at a shopping mall	This study develops a valid and reliable multi-dimensional scale that explained retail customer experience
Klaus and Maklan (2013)	Customer experience, behavioral loyalty, customer satisfaction and word of mouth	Mortgages, fuel and service station, retail banking, lifestyle luxury goods retail	This paper validates a customer experience quality scale for different service providers
Ali <i>et al.</i> (2014)	Customer experience, customer memories and customer satisfaction	Tourist spots	This study introduces an experience concept in the tourism sector and provides managerial implications for hotel managers
Hwang and Seo (2016)	Customer experience	Hospitality and tourism industry	This research identifies the customer experience concept and its dimensions in the hospitality and tourism industry. Customer experience dimensions involve four dimensions, namely transcendent, transformational, authentic and the cocreation of experience
Lemon and Verhoef (2016)	Customer experience, customer journey and customer experience management	Conceptual paper	This research develops a stronger understanding of customer and customer journey and customer experience management. They identify new ideas for future studies about customer experience
Jain <i>et al.</i> (2017)	Customer experience, cocreation, service experience and customer value	Literature review	This paper provides a deeper understanding of the customer experience concept, differentiating between customer experience and service experience. The review of customer experience literature showed that positive customer experience is an antecedent for customer value creation
Keiningham <i>et al.</i> (2017)	Customer experience, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty and customer commitment	Conceptual paper	This research contributed to the customer experience concept and its measurement by integrating the literature on customer satisfaction, customer loyalty and customer commitment

Table 1. Summary of customer experience literature

advantage. Bitner (1992)'s seminal work conceptualizes a framework to understand how physical servicescape affects employee's and customer's internal responses.

Discussion of servicescape and its links with other related concepts

Servicescape conceptualization resembles other concepts primarily within the context of service quality and customer experience. Therefore, we discuss these conceptual

Authors name	Variables	Category	Findings
Kotler (1973)	Atmospherics	Conceptual – service in general	This research shows the major steps in the planning of atmospherics, and the role of atmospherics in achieving companies' competitive advantage
Binter (1992)	Physical servicescape, employee and customer responses	Conceptual – service in general	This paper designs a conceptual framework for understanding how the physical servicescape dimension affects both employee's and customer's internal responses
Tombs and McColl-Kennedy (2003)	Social servicescape	Conceptual – service in general	This research designs a new conceptual model "social servicescape". It addresses that the social environment encourages customers' affective and cognitive responses. It argues that customers play an important role in affecting others' emotions
Rosenbaum (2005)	Symbolic servicescape and physical servicescape	Lesbian	This research expands the servicescape framework of Bitner's (1992) by adding symbolic servicescape
		Gay Jewish	It explores how service organization uses socially symbolic to influence the behavior of ethnic customers who maintain distinct symbolic universes
Rosenbaum (2009)	Natural servicescape	Teenage customers of a mall-based-video arcade	This research highlights the importance of natural servicescape for treating customers from stress, depression, fatigue and other mental problems
Rosenbaum and Massiah (2011)	Physical, social, socially symbolic, natural	Conceptual – service in general	This study designs an expanded servicescape framework. It stated that servicescape involves not only objective, measurable, controllable but also subjective, nonimmeasurable and uncontrollable social, symbolic and natural stimuli
Hanks and Line (2018)	Social servicescape, attitude to restaurant, experience satisfaction and loyalty	Restaurant	This study indicates that the social servicescape acts as a predictor of attitude to the restaurant, experience satisfaction, behavioral intentions

Table 2.
Summary of
servicescape literature

(continued)

Authors name	Variables	Category	Findings
Choi and Kandampully (2019)	The atmosphere, customer satisfaction and customer engagement	Luxury hotel	This research suggests that the atmosphere plays an important role in creating an emotional connection between the customer and the hotel, which leads to improving customer satisfaction and customer engagement
Taheri et al. (2020)	Physical servicescape, social servicescape, customer dissatisfaction, misbehavior	Airport servicescape	Social and physical servicescape configurations can affect dissatisfaction and misbehavior
Park et al. (2019)	Substantive servicescape, communicative servicescape, positive affect, satisfaction, architecture familiarity, brand familiarity, behavioral intentions	Architecturally significant hotel context	Substantive and communicative servicescape positively influence positive affect, which in turn impacts satisfaction, and satisfaction increases behavioral intentions. Brand familiarity moderates the relationship between substantive servicescape and positive affect
Oviedo-García et al. (2019)	Food, facilities, informational service, satisfaction, behavioral intentions	Tourism, natural monument	Facilities increase the value and in turn value positively impact satisfaction and behavioral intentions. Information service and food are essential services and their absence result in dissatisfaction

Table 2.

relationships below within four main subsections, namely: (1) relationship between service quality and customer experience; (2) relationship between service quality and servicescape; (3) relationship between servicescape and experiencescape; and (4) relationship between CE and experiencescape.

Service quality and customer experience (CE)

CE is considered as the customer's subjective response to the holistic direct and indirect encounter with the service organization ([Lemke et al., 2011](#)). Previous research reveals the positive relationship between service quality and CE ([Kim and Choi, 2013](#)). [Garg et al. \(2014\)](#) expressed the view that the service quality scale is not suitable for measuring CE at every stage with the organization. They point out that service quality does not take into consideration customers' active interaction with the organization. Furthermore, [Maklan and Klaus \(2011\)](#) and [Klaus and Maklan \(2013\)](#) highlighted that there are six main differences between service quality and customer experience:

- (1) Service quality conceptualizes as a gap between the customer's expectation and the customer's overall assessment of the service, and CE is assessed as customers' overall perception of service.
- (2) Service quality is considered as a summation of performance during service encounters, and CE is assessed based on customers' overall value in use.

- (3) Service quality dimensions are too limited to make a good assessment of CE, and CE is a comprehensive framework as it includes emotions and feelings.
- (4) Service quality focused on transaction-specific assessment, and CE begins before service-encounter and pass-through service delivery and extends after service delivery.
- (5) SERVQUAL is the measure that evaluates functional delivery of service during a single process episode, and CE is assessed across all channels of service delivery.
- (6) Service quality focuses on service delivery, while CE is directly linked to consumer behavior and its subsequent relationship with business performance.

Service quality and servicescape

Servicescape conceptualization resembles with service quality concept. [Remier and Kuehn \(2005\)](#) highlighted that there is a similarity between the tangibles in SERVQUAL and physical servicescape. The tangibles dimension of SERVQUAL includes facilities, material for communication and equipment without the ambiance dimensions of servicescape. Additionally, servicescape elements represent search qualities, while the other SERVQUAL dimensions act as credence qualities. So, a comprehensive understanding of the servicescape is important, as the physical servicescape dimension exceeds the tangible dimension of the physical environment on the SERVEQUAL scale.

Servicescape and experiencescape

The experiencescape concept parallels with the servicescape concept and takes into consideration how experiences are staged and consumed ([Mody et al., 2019](#)). The servicescape concept developed by [Bitner's \(1992\)](#) focused on the physical environment and the ambient conditions. On the other hand, [Remier and Kuhen \(2005\)](#) explain the importance of servicescape in the hospitality sector as it helps to facilitate the interaction between the visitor, service provider, physical environment and the personal interaction, as tourists are driven by hedonic arousal. [Mossberg \(2007\)](#) defined experiencescape as the interaction between customers and the environment to create their own experiences. According to [Mossberg \(2007\)](#), experiencescape provides a holistic approach to the consumption environment, which does not only include physical environment but also various elements of personal interaction. [Pizam and Tasci \(2019\)](#) showed that experience consists of everything that consumer feels and experiences within the service environment. Within experiential consumption, servicescape provides both tangible and intangible resources for their customers, which is capable of developing memorable and meaningful experiences.

Prior research focused on understanding servicescape from the customer's perspective (e.g. [Hanks et al., 2017](#); [Dedeoglu et al., 2018](#); [Hanks and Line, 2018](#); [Line et al., 2018](#); [Choi and Kandampully, 2019](#); [Line and Hanks, 2019](#)). However, there are only a few studies that focused on employees' perspectives (e.g. [Parish et al., 2008](#)). Moreover, few studies have focused on both customers and employees ([Kaminakis et al., 2019](#)). Additionally, previous research has not addressed the effect of experiencescape on other stakeholders, for example, employees, suppliers, vendors, subcontractors and so on. We consider experiencescape as a global concept that has the capacity to connect with and draw its strength from the firms' ecosystem. Thus, experiencescape has the ability to unify the firms' resources to focus on creating a positive customer experience. Based on our understanding, we see experiencescape as a unique concept – a mechanism that can unify the firms' expertise and resources to create a memorable customer experience.

[Blumenthal and Jeness \(2019\)](#) identified three characteristics of experiencescape that facilitates the immersive experience. According to them, the experience should be themed,

clearly limited in time and space and should be perceived as safe. A themed experiencescape can facilitate immersion by adding meaning to the experience, which encourages emotional involvement with the experience by enticing customers to feel interested and willing to increase the level of their aspirations (Blumenthal and Jenesn, 2019). Creating an experiencescape in a place with clear boundaries improves the perception of the immersion and the experience.

Bitner (1992) observed that to enjoy the theme, customer should spend a certain period of time to enjoy the décor, atmospheres and the interaction with the service provider. Remier and Kuehn (2005) suggest that customers spend more time in the experiential environment when the service delivery process is very necessary for customers. For example, customers' interaction with the experiential environment is important for the effective cue of service for hedonic reasons (e.g. restaurant, hotels, theaters and other leisure services). They indicate that servicescape therefore is very necessary in the hedonic service context. Prior studies also showed that servicescape fosters customers' emotions. According to Binter (1992), physical servicescape has a positive effect on emotional, cognitive and physiological responses for both customers and employees. Similarly, Reimer and Kuehn (2005) pointed out that servicescape fosters cognitive and affective responses of customers. Kim and Moon (2009) highlighted that physical servicescape has a positive effect on customers' emotions, since emotions are generated by a specific stimulus. Furthermore, Dedeoglu *et al.* (2018) showed that hotel's servicescape (substantive and communicative) has a positive effect on hedonic value (novelty and emotional value). Thus, customers are likely to interact with the environment that creates a sense of safety in a space with clear spatial and temporal limits (Blumenthal and Jenesn, 2019).

Blumenthal and Jenesn (2019) proposed the development of customer immersion in the experiencescape by determining nine categories in shaping customer immersion:

- (1) The physical challenge: customers' interaction and active participation with the physical environment.
- (2) Group assimilation: customers may participate with other customers in a team and thus feel a sense of common goal.
- (3) Intellectual challenge: gradual understanding and enhanced relationships with other customers' employees, objects and the surrounded physical environment.
- (4) Personal resource utilization: customers' prior skills and experience and the opportunity to use these resources.
- (5) Memories: customers' emotional involvement with the experience-triggered memories and a sense of nostalgia.
- (6) Imagination: customers' imagination to connect the present experience to the prior experiences and imagine themselves in another context.
- (7) Involvement with the present: customers' attention is directed toward the present moment.
- (8) Involvement: customers' deeper level of involvement through personal life narrative through internal reflections with the present experience that is significant to them.
- (9) Immersion: at this stage there is no distance between the customer and the experience – the experience becomes all-consuming.

The above nine categories provide a detailed illustration of how customers in a service context immerse into the experiencescape.

Components of servicescape: readjusting for experiencescape

Most of the marketing literature has examined the role of the physical component in the service delivery process and the effect of these elements on the consumption environment. The social component has gained acceptance and agreement about its significance to the service environment. The role of natural and cultural elements within the context of experiencescape has been identified as important but has not been well discussed in the literature. Similarly, although technology has been widely used in almost all service sectors and customers, technology has not been considered to influence experiencescape. This research crafts a comprehensive framework for experiencescape in the service industry by examining the effect of a multidimensional concept of experiencescape (physical, social, natural, cultural and technological), see [Figure 1](#).

How impactful is “physical component” in service experience?

[Rosenbaum and Massiah \(2011\)](#) showed that managers can easily understand the physical dimension as it involves observable and measurable stimuli that are controllable by the company to improve employees’ and customers’ actions. [Kotler \(1973\)](#) defined the atmosphere as the design of the buying environment to enhance customer’s emotional reactions. [Bitner \(1992\)](#) proposed that servicescape is the physical element in which the service takes place. Therefore, according to [Bitner \(1992\)](#), servicescape contains three elements:

- (1) Ambient conditions
- (2) Spatial layout and signs
- (3) Symbols and artifacts

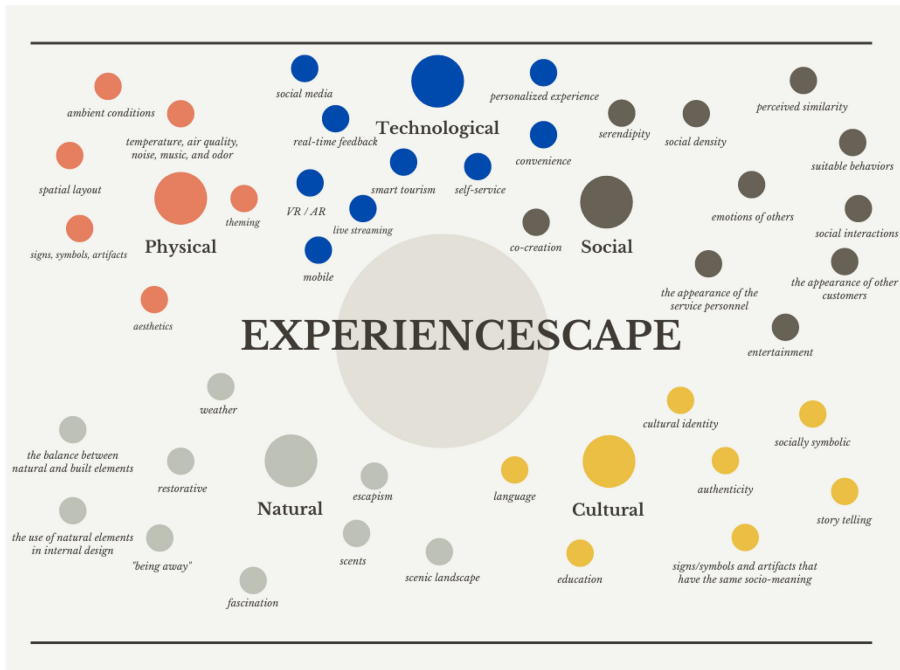


Figure 1.
Experiencescape a
thematic visual
representation

Ambient conditions include air quality, temperature, noise, music, lighting and scent. Spatial layout refers to the arrangement of the furniture and equipment, easy-to-move furniture and furniture location. Signs, symbols and artifacts refer to the décor style, personal artifacts and signs to help customers. [Rosenbaum and Massiah \(2011\)](#) called for the need to conceptualize an array of servicescape stimuli drawn from a verity of disciplines to include dimensions that are less palpable such as social, social/group influenced symbiotic and natural. Thus, they proposed an expanded framework to includes four dimensions:

- (1) Physical
- (2) Social
- (3) Socially symbolic
- (4) Natural

[Pizam and Tasci \(2019\)](#) proposed that the physical component of experiencescape contains two main parts: sensory and functional components. The sensory component includes those components that affect the five human senses, such as noise, temperature, lighting, music and air quality. These are considered ambient dimensions according to [Bitner's \(1992\)](#) servicescape model. Similarly, the functional components refer to the size, shape and arrangement of the furniture, layout, space and signage, which are spatial layout and functionality dimensions according to [Bitner's \(1992\)](#). [Pizam and Tasci's \(2019\)](#) experiencescape model also consists of signs, symbols and artifacts, but they serve as the functional or cultural role in the servicescape environment. We agree with [Pizam and Tasci's \(2019\)](#) proposal that the dimensions of signs, symbols and artifacts are related to the cultural component of the servicescape.

The role of "social component" that influences the experience

[Tombs and McColl-Kennedy \(2003\)](#) view the customer as an important component of servicescape. Therefore, in addition to the physical environment, the social component may play an equally important role in enhancing the customer's perception of servicescape. According to [Zajonc's \(1965\)](#) social affiliation theory (SAT), the presence of the customer is an important component of the service environment, and hence, other customers can and will affect customers' behavior. [Tombs and McColl-Kennedy \(2003\)](#) describe the social servicescape as it consists of two components: social density (physical elements) and displayed emotions of others (social elements). [Verhoef et al. \(2009\)](#) indicated that social component involves the influence of employees, other customers and the appearance of service personnel. Furthermore, they focused on the important role of customers as partial employees who are helping in producing product or service experience and in disseminating useful customer knowledge, which influences the customer's experience. [Edvardsson et al. \(2005\)](#) were of the view that social servicescape involves three elements: customer involvement, customer placement and interaction with employees in the context of using technology equipment either passively or actively.

[Rosenbaum and Massiah \(2011\)](#) showed that social servicescape consists of interaction between customers and employees in the consumption environment, social density and that which displays the emotions of others. [McLeay et al. \(2019\)](#) proposed that the tourist experience is cocreated among other community members and service providers. Thus, they highlighted the importance of social encounters. Therefore, in many service contexts, the social component is a key element in the formation of experiencescape before, during and after the service. [Hanks and Line \(2018\)](#) proposed that the social servicescape consists of three dimensions:

- (1) Perceived similarity

- (2) Physical appearance
- (3) Suitable behavior

According to [Hanks and Line \(2018\)](#), these three dimensions have a positive effect on consumer behavior. Following are further discussions of the three dimensions proposed by [Hanks and Line \(2018\)](#).

Perceived similarity. Perceived similarity between customers is the degree to which customers feel that they are similar to other customers in the service environment ([Brocato et al., 2012](#)). Perceived similarity to the employees is the customer's feeling that the employees are similar to themselves, which leads to positive outcomes for both the customers and employees ([Tsui et al., 1992](#)).

Physical appearance. Customer's physical appearance relates to the physical characteristics of customers in a service environment. Customers prefer to be in an environment in which other customers have an attractive appearance and have physical attractiveness ([Brocato et al., 2012](#)). Employees' physical appearance refers to customers' perception of how the employees are dressed and including employees' physical appearance. When customers find employees to have an attractive physical appearance, this leads to customers' positive feelings toward employees and may lead to an increase in salesperson performance ([Ahearne et al., 1999](#)).

Suitable behavior. Suitable behavior of other customers refers to customers' perception of how other customers' behavior is congruent with their roles in the consumption environment ([Brocato et al., 2012](#)). Similarly, suitable behavior of employees refers to when employees act suitably, this leads to enhancing customer's perception of the quality, increasing customer's perception of the service experience and improving customer's attitudes toward the employees and the company ([Hanks and Line, 2018](#)). [Pizam and Tasci \(2019\)](#) are of the view that the social component proposed by [Hanks and Line \(2018\)](#) may be related more to the cultural component. These studies claim that social component consists of three dimensions, namely:

- (1) Perceived similarity: when customers feel that they are similar to other customers,
- (2) Physical appearance: when customers feel that they wear the same styles of clothes,
- (3) Appropriate behaviors of others represent the way customers deal with each other in a friendly way.

The social component of [Pizam and Tasci's \(2019\)](#) experiencescape model relied primarily on [Tombs and McColl-Kennedy's \(2003\)](#) model, which highlighted that customer is an important component of servicescape. [Pizam and Tasci's \(2019\)](#) experiencescape model examined the social component by studying how both customers and employees interact together in the consumption environment. Another implication of the social component is related to the family members and friends. For example, in many service contexts, it is important to consider the satisfaction experienced by other family members.

How does "natural component" influence experience?

[Rosenbaum \(2009\)](#) used attention restoration theory (ART) to explain the natural or restorative component of servicescape and its stimuli. ART argues that the attention of the person directed toward challenging or unpleasant events leads them to feel fatigued, the elimination occurs when a person spends time in a natural environment (e.g. sea, mountains, parks, lakes and gardens) ([Kaplan, 1995](#)).

[Rosenbaum and Massiah \(2011\)](#) discussed the importance of the restorative component by providing physical, mental health and well-being for treating customers from stress,

depression, fatigue and other mental problems. Also, they point out that those customers will benefit from natural or restorative servicescape who have physical or psychological problems (Rosenbaum and Massiah, 2011). They suggested that restorative servicescape has three stimuli:

- (1) Being away, the natural setting is often the preferred place for customers to take a break away from their daily commitments to feel relaxed. The places that provide “being away” may have the surroundings of lakes, mountains and forests. However, the sense of being away does not require distance, but it requires customers to feel that they are in another world (Kaplan, 1995).
- (2) Fascination is the ability to get the customer’s attention more smoothly and is an engaging servicescape where people can join others when they want to do so (Rosenbaum and Massiah, 2011).
- (3) A compatible environment is one in which customers can apply their activities easily without any difficulty (Kaplan, 1995).

Rosenbaum and Massiah (2011) suggested that commercial servicescape provides customers with these three types of restorative stimuli, which may help them to eliminate their mental fatigue. They focused on public health by showing how the restorative servicescape helps customers to eliminate the negative effects of fatigue, stress and depression. According to them, “government institutions (e.g. schools, hospitals) can improve people’s lives by creating natural servicescape that has restorative potential.”

Pizam and Tasci (2019) are of the view that Rosenbaum and Massiah’s (2011) definitions did not reflect the natural component, which affects customer or employee behavior in the experiential environment. Pizam and Tasci (2019) proposed that the natural component is how the outside landscape looks like, the functionality and the attractiveness of natural elements, the balance between natural and built elements and the use of natural elements in internal design. Despite the existence of nature in many experience environments, its significance and involvement in servicescape need further understanding. This paper deals with the natural component as it contributes to the consumption environment. Scenic landscapes and weather may also form essential components of the experience. Different from the servicescape, experiencescape thus includes the natural elements that encompass the environment yet plays a key role in the formation of the experience and memories.

The influence of “cultural component”

While culture is an important part of service experience, prior studies dealt with a cultural component from different perspectives (e.g. Rosenbaum, 2005; Rosenbaum and Massiah, 2011; Hanks and Line, 2018; Pizam and Tasci, 2019). Rosenbaum (2005) viewed socially symbolic clues (signs/symbols and objects/artifacts), which are used by service organizations to influence the behavior of ethnic customers who maintain distinct symbolic values. Rosenbaum and Massiah (2011) consider signs/symbols and objects/artifacts in their multidimensional framework and named them as socially symbolic. They showed that managers may use sign, symbols, objects and artifacts, which have sociomeaning to encourage positive behavior among groups of customers with a similar culture, ethnic group. Furthermore, Rosenbaum and Massiah (2011) proposed that service organizations that target ethnic customers should develop a socially symbolic servicescape that can help to communicate a welcoming message to the ethnic customers via design.

Hwang and Seo (2016) showed that there is limited number of studies that examined the role of culture in shaping the customer experience. Touchstone *et al.* (2017) suggested that the use of language has a very close connection with culture and hence, can communicate a

positive message to customers. According to them, linguistic as a cultural component of the servicescape plays an integral role in enhancing the sense of belonging. When the service provider uses customer's language, it will help to enhance their attitude toward the service provider and to improve the perception of customer experience.

Pizam and Tasci (2019) relied on the social identity theory (Hogg *et al.*, 1995) for explaining the sociocultural component of the servicescape. According to the social identity theory, customers may have a positive attitude toward places with signs, symbols, objectives and artifacts that are similar to their sociocultural identity. Pizam and Tasci (2019) viewed that the sociocultural context of the servicescape is very important for customers, employees and other stakeholders. Therefore, they focused on how different stakeholders evaluate the similarity of signs and artifacts to their sociocultural identity. These researchers found that the culture with reference to servicescape includes both sociocultural aspects and the culture of hospitality. According to them, hospitality culture refers to stable beliefs, attitudes and values that exist within a hospitality organization.

What is the role of "technology component" to enhance customer experience?

The role of digital technology in almost all service contexts has evolved rapidly (Larivière *et al.*, 2017). Service encounters used to be a "game of people" between customers and front-line employees (Bowen, 2016), this is not the case anymore. Front-line service technology is used in almost all industry sectors (De Keyser *et al.*, 2019) and hence, altering the basics of service organizations – where service was primarily offered by "people for people". Parasuraman (1996), Parasuraman (2000) was among the first to highlight technology's growing role in service delivery and introduced the "Technology Readiness Index (TRI)." He introduced technology as one of the key new dimensions of the service pyramid model. These developments in the market through digital, visual and information technology have transformed all service experiences (Bogicevic *et al.*, 2019). Technological advancement has led to the emergence of innovative smart solutions (Kabadayi *et al.*, 2019) providing service firms to enhance customers' experience. Technologies such as the Internet of things (IoT), near-field communication (NFC) and artificial intelligence (AI) are helping the service sector to build unique and memorable digital encounters. Many service firms have started operating within digital platforms to help more efficient networking with customers and other stakeholders (Hillebrand *et al.*, 2015; Malthouse *et al.*, 2019). We argue that technology is an important partner in creating customer experience, but more importantly, it has the unique ability to bring together marketing, management and operations within the organization to collectively focus on the customer. Technology as a unique partner is capable of traversing across organizational boundaries and departmental silos to focus on the customer's positive experience. Based on the above discussions with reference to the use of various types of technology and its effective use by both customers and service providers, we propose that it is important to include technology as one of the key components of experiencescape. Figure 1 clearly portrays the thematic visualization outlining the composition of experiencescape. This comprehensive visual framework delineates five key components (physical, social, natural, cultural and technology) of the experiencescape and exhibits factors that build each component that is critical to create a compelling customer experience. It can be argued that all these components are the building blocks of the experiencescape and based on a synthesis of previous research, we argue that they are critical factors to create a compelling customer experience in service.

Unifying servicescape and experiencescape

Prior research highlighted the important role of the servicescape concept in an effort to understand service cues or pieces of evidence that play a critical role in customer perceptions.

This understanding of the service environment is an important tool to affect customer behavior (Dedeoglu *et al.*, 2018). Rosenbaum and Massiah's (2011) research proposed that servicescape is the physical, social, socially symbolic and natural stimulus. According to them, these may enhance or constrain employee and customer approach/avoidance decisions and social interaction behavior. Within the context of experiential consumption, understanding both service and experience environment from the perspective of the customer is critical to create memorable and meaningful experiences (Pizam and Tasci, 2019). Managing experiencescape plays a strategic role in effecting customers' memory of their experience through multiple service and experience environment. Furthermore, Pizam and Tasci (2019) proposed a framework that can be effectively used to manage hotel's experiencescape (sensory, functional, social, natural and cultural) and discussed how experiencescape affects both positive/negative cognitive and emotional responses.

This paper synthesizes prior research and recognizes the importance of understanding key research findings from both within the frameworks of servicescape and experiencescape. An extensive review of the current literature and synthesis has guided us to take a broader and holistic perspective of current knowledge. There is a need for the understanding of "servicescape" concept to effectively provide "service" that will meet customer needs. Similarly, the idea around the need to gain a better understanding of "experiencescape" concept is critical because there is a growing recognition and importance placed by all firms on "experience" as it is one of the key yardsticks customers use to assess one firm over the other. It is considered that a positive influence on customers' experience will contribute to the success of organizations. It is however important to point out that all firms provide service and experience as the value perceived by customers (Sandstrom *et al.*, 2008). This also implies that service and experience are not separable, they are inextricably linked together from a customer's point of view. More importantly, we argue that they are in fact interdependent – one has limited value without the other. A service that is unable to provide memorable experience has limited value and advantage to the customer and to the firm. Therefore, we consider it imperative to establish a much broader and holistic perspective of how we view and understand "service" and "experience" in the service industry.

The importance of interdependent focus of servicescape and experiencescape

The inextricably linked concepts and knowledge on servicescape and experiencescape are critical for the success of all service firms. This collective focus of service and experience is key to the success of service firms. Therefore, servicescape and experiencescape are intertwined and interdepend on each other. The idea of the interdependent nature of "service" and "experience" is critical in this context. We propose the view that collective focus is critical to effectively manage a complex phenomenon that surrounds many service organizations. The inextricably linked concepts of servicescape and experiencescape are critical mindsets for bringing two sets of knowledge within the service discipline together to effectively manage and provide memorable service. This thought process is key to the success of service organizations where many key elements have to collectively focus on the outcome expected. Given the importance of this interdependent nature of servicescape and experiencescape, we would like to use an analogy to highlight this interdependence in a social context. We can draw some parallels from the ancient Indian Vedic science about the twin star Mizar and Alcor (Vashistha and Arundhati – Vedic names of these two stars), these stars are in the Ursa Major constellation. According to the Indian tradition, as part of the wedding ceremony, the bridegroom leads the bride by hand around the fire three times. Following this, the bride then leads the bridegroom by hand around the fire three times. This communicates the idea of equal responsibility for both partners for the upbringing of their new family in union. Based on the same principle, there is a tradition in South India for the newlyweds to spot the twin stars on their first night. Thousands of years ago Vedic gurus understood the unique nature

of these twin stars and their interdependency on each other's existence. Both these stars are in motion circling around each other. This is a unique feature as they are inextricably linked to each other and are interdependent for their existence. Similarly, we point out that service and experience are interdependent factors, and hence, one cannot exist without the other. Therefore, it is imperative to bring the two concepts together into a collective focus rather than addressing them as separate. We are of the view that a unified orientation is critical to effectively manage a complex phenomenon that surrounds most service organizations. A collective focus of service and experience aims for a more holistic perspective, which has the ability to draw in support and resources from various entities within the entire ecosystem of stakeholders that are involved in the cocreation of value in service.

This collective focus also spans three separate touch points. The concepts of servicescape and experiencescape are offered as an inherent part of products, places, service and/or events. The series of interactions that happens between customers and an organization at different touch points can be considered within the context of preconsumption, during consumption and postconsumption. For example, prior to consumption, the consumer may interact with the app of the service company and that could be classified as the preconsumption experience. The design and the user experience of the app may evoke certain feelings and the consumer may start experiencing the company before he/she purchases or uses the service of the company. When a customer enters a service environment, his/her satisfaction is not based on any single physical stimulus, but rather on a variety of stimuli through which she/he derives a holistic image of the service that is experienced both individually and collectively (along with other customers) during consumption. After consumption experiences may include memories through physical elements such photos, videos and thank-you notes from the firm. Customer's memories of the service experience are considered to one of the most valuable and influential factors to promote word of mouth from customers, which are valued highly by service companies.

Furthermore, it is critical to collectively engage various components of servicescape and experiencescape to design and offer positive memorable experiences by service firms. Additionally, the inseparability of experience is also an important consideration in this context. In most service contexts, service providers personally experience and share the experience during its production and consumption stages with their customers. Therefore, we observe that all experiences are shared experiences. It is proposed here that sharing of experience is inevitable within all three stages of consumption although during consumption stage provides the greatest opportunity to cocreate and sharing of experience that are powerful moments that serve as memories of experiences, which has the potential to create a unique bond and relationship between the service provider and the customer. Furthermore, experience and the sharing of experience happen at multiple levels. We identify three primary levels through which sharing of experience happens, which are influenced by the service provider, namely: people, organization and networks (see [Figure 2](#)).

- (1) *People* – People would include customer-to-customer and/or customer-to-service provider experience, both physical and/or online. (Here technology such as computers, apps, robots, machines and other gadgets that may replace or support human interaction).
- (2) *Organization* – At the organizational level, the experience is predesigned by the organization's business model. For example, Amazon offers no face-to-face experience. A healthcare organization, for example, may provide some experiences that are face to face and some others supported by technology. Similarly, systems such as organizational structures and procedures may regulate or support the interaction and the subsequent experience.

- (3) *Networks* – At the network level, experiences may involve both face to face and/or via technology. For example, if we order a car ride via Uber, the initial experience is technology-mediated experience. Once the driver arrives, the experience is transferred to the human experience. Once the ride is completed, it is transferred back to technology-mediated experience.

Therefore, it is imperative to understand servicescape and experiencescape as something that has to be managed collectively. It is this collective and inseparable nature of the experience that truly contributes value to the customer and to the firm.

Implications

This study contributes to service research by highlighting the need to incorporate technology as a key variable within the concept of experiencescape. Technology not only brings a new and important perspective into this context but will also help to unify the organizational effort. Technology is argued here has the ability to bring together marketing, management and operations within the organization to collectively focus on the customer. Further, the insights from this study highlight the importance of the collective understanding of servicescape and experiencescape to facilitate and manage positive customer experience. This study offers insights on why research and practice should consider the interrelationship between these two concepts as they are inextricably linked together from a customer’s and firms’ point of view. This study also provides guidelines to practicing managers to understand and manage CE at different stages, levels and within multiple contexts.

We are of the view that collectively designed servicescape and experiencescape will create lasting memories and emotional connections with customers (Dedeoglu *et al.*, 2018). We also claim that experiencescape is a complex system that incorporates various tangible and intangible elements as consumers navigate through at different touch points with the firm. The physical component, that is, customers’ interaction and active participation with the physical environment, consists of various dimensions that add to the customer experience. These dimensions include ambient conditions, temperature, air quality, music, odors, spatial layout, themes, signs, symbols, artifacts and aesthetics. Cultural components include dimensions such as language and authenticity. They may evoke feelings such as compassion and wonder and may intellectually challenge the consumer. A gradual understanding and enhanced relationships with other customers, employees, objects and the surrounded physical environment are related to the cultural components of the experiencescape.

Natural components encompass feelings of being away, escapism and the balance between natural and built environments. These components may evoke feelings such as awe. Social components include concepts such as cocreation and group assimilation. In a socially immersed experiencescape, customers participate with other customers in a team and feel a sense of common goal. Technological components may assist in making service processes more efficient and engaging. They may enhance the experience by offering personalized experiences. They may also offer completely new experiences in a metaverse using VR



Figure 2.
Proposed
conceptual model

headsets. They may bring convenience to the consumer as they can, for example, use self-check-in prior to their flights and generate boarding passes in their digital wallets. One of the ultimate goals of the experiencescape is to create memories. These are the customers' emotional involvement with the experience triggered memories and a sense of nostalgia. Successfully staged experiencescapes can increase customers' involvement with the present as their attention would be directed toward the present moment. These consumers are immersed as the experience becomes all-consuming.

We propose that technology is not a tool but an important partner for the firm to create the experience as it will enable customers to customize and cocreate their experiences and make the experience their own. Service firms may also use technologies to facilitate human-computer interactions to enhance customer at the preconsumption or postconsumption stages of the experience. Establishing technology-mediated customer experiences may increase customers' value perceptions, improving the competitive position of the service firm.

Service managers can develop smart servicescapes that positively influence customer value cocreation and heighten customer experience by utilizing technology. Managers are advised to understand consumers' emphasis on technological personalization, aesthetics, functionality, interactivity and social presence while participating in cocreation (Roy *et al.*, 2019). Technologies may improve the experience by incorporating real-time and less-restrained interactions between consumers and the service organization.

Using cultural cues in various service sectors may prove useful for establishing emotional connections with customers. The authenticity level plays an important role in shaping the experience in some service context such as Yoga centers, martial arts centers, restaurants and so on. Nostalgia-evoking experiencescapes may also trigger emotional responses and distinguish the service provider; therefore, we recommend nostalgia marketing as a viable differentiator.

Conclusions

Many previous scholars have independently examined servicescape and experiencescape in the past. We argue that even though these two are separate constructs, they are interrelated. If a study uses only the servicescape as a theoretical backbone, it will miss out very important concepts that are critical to experiencescape. Similarly, if studies focus too much on the technological aspect of the services, it impacts greatly some of the foundational components of service as perceived by customers. We, therefore, borrow constructs and concepts from relevant domains to offer a unified model to blend the two important concepts of servicescape and experiencescape. This study analyzed multiple literature streams related to servicescape, experiencescape and other related concepts, such as service quality and customer experience, to build a collective framework. Both physical and social components received great attention in prior research. However, natural and cultural components have been overlooked. Additionally, very few previous studies on servicescape and/or experiencescape considered the technological component, despite its growing importance in the service industry. This study articulates the importance and provides a clear multifunctional approach to unify firms' competencies in marketing, operations and human resources through technology. Therefore, this study provides a unified framework that is essential to enhance the experience of customers. This total organizational approach can help to bring together servicescape and experiencescape frameworks and to advance the theory and practice of experience management. We outlined what we know – and do not know about servicescape and experiencescape. This analysis calls for the need for a collective focus of servicescape and experiencescape for the service industry. We argue about the importance of using servicescape and experiencescape concepts together as a collective framework. Collectively designed servicescape and experiencescape will create lasting memories and will help service firms to create emotional connections with their customers.

The framework also discusses the intertwined nature of servicescape and experiencescape and offers insight into how service firms could design more consumer-oriented servicescapes and experiencescapes. It is also essential to consider that the effects of experiencescape components are expected to be valued differently in different places. For example, the significance of physical and natural components will be high in a service context where the customer spends a significant amount of time (trip in a cruise ship) compared to a visit to the grocery store. However, regardless of the time being spend in places, service managers should ensure that they make customers at ease, secure and inspired. These environments will help customers to create a memorable experience by considering the elements discussed in this study.

Experiencescapes can act as image differentiation among service organizations. The interaction between consumer and the experiencescape nurtures the right climate for value creation. Consumer service experience can be substantially influenced by the servicescape. Value is ultimately cocreated through collaboration between multiple actors in the service provision process, who combine to create and enhance the service experience. The proposed elements of the experiencescape (i.e. physical, natural, technological, social and cultural) are attributes that result in value propositions.

Research priorities for the collective focus of servicescape and experiencescape

Future research could examine the applicability of this proposed framework to understand the collective effect of servicescape and experiencescape in service. In this connected and experience-focused marketplace, future research will help to explain the nature of the service and its unique ability to create experience environment in different service sectors. Research on the collective focus on service and experience would provide important insights for academics to help service organizations to design and create an environment that matches customer expectations. Moreover, future studies should examine how smart services interact with the built environment for influencing customer's perceptions of the technological component of service and experience. Future research may also investigate the impact of service and experience-related environmental factors at the three stages of consumption. We also anticipate that transmodernity will help create transformational experiences in various service sectors. The idea of creating a transformational experience will give rise to innovative service business concepts. Various factors may lead to transformative experiences that bring positive and inspiring changes. We recommend that future research should investigate transformative experiences. We also recommend empirical investigations on the collective impact of servicescape and experiencescape components on customer perception and firms' performance. Finally, we invite researchers to investigate collective service-experience scape from different perspectives. Accordingly, below are a set of research priorities that will have implications for theory and practice:

- (1) What are some of the prerequisites for unifying service and experience focus?
- (2) What is the impact of cocreation in a collective model of service and experience?
- (3) How will sharing of experience influence employees' input and contribution to value?
- (4) Will service and experience impact all three stages of consumption in all contexts?
- (5) What factors within service and experience may influence or prohibit the role of people in a technology-driven service environment?

Research could also aim to focus on technologies such as self-check-in kiosks at airports and banks and how they may offer customer value in a post-COVID 19 world. We advise future research to investigate the use of authenticity and nostalgia for creating compelling services and experiences.

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