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# **Two Wheels to View**

**Framing servicescape and consumer value of cycle  
tourism with grounded theory approach**

**(Case study: Sweden)**

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## **Abstract**

**Background:** Nowadays, cycle tourism as a traditional tourism attracts more attention due to the COVID-19. For many reasons, it becomes one of most popular options for tourists to explore both urban and rural areas. Many governments at the same time are devote to development of cycle tourism, so that recovering from economic crisis. Besides, Sweden is considered as one of cycling friendly countries all over the world. More and more people choose to go cycling for leisure in Sweden, because of reputation for infrastructures and natural environment.

**Aim and research questions:** The aim of the study is to frame a leisure servicescape of cycle tourism in Sweden and explore the typology of consumer value derived from the servicescape. The first research question: *What is the framework of servicescape for cycle tourism in Sweden?* The second research question: *What types of value can be generated from servicescape in the experience of cycle tourism for tourists in Sweden?*

**Methodology:** The study is done as a case study and based on grounded theory.

**Results:** The research comes up with a conceptual framework of leisure servicescape of cycle tourism in Sweden with four dimensions: artificial dimension, natural dimension, social dimension, and virtual dimension. Eight types of value derived from the servicescape: therapy in the wild, Swedish aesthetics, safe adventure, cheap enjoyment, regular freedom, memorable relationship, transformative achievement, and ecological consideration.

**Key words:** cycle tourism, servicescape, consumer value

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## Table of contents

1. Introduction.....	6
1.1.1 History of cycle tourism.....	6
1.1.2 Boom of cycle tourism.....	6
1.1.3 Cycle tourism in Sweden .....	8
1.1.4 The Right of Public Access & Vision zero .....	9
1.1.5 Development of cycle tourism in Sweden .....	9
1.1.6 Issues of cycling tourism in Sweden.....	11
1.2 Aim and Research question.....	11
1.3 Disposition .....	12
2. Literature review .....	14
2.1 Servicescape.....	16
2.1.1 Definition of Servicescape .....	16
2.1.2 Dimensions of Servicescape .....	18
2.1.3 Elements of Servicescape .....	19
2.1.4 Typology of Servicescape .....	20
2.1.5 Servicescape & Consumer .....	21
2.1.6 E-servicescape.....	22
2.1.7 Discussion of Servicescape.....	22
2.1.8 Servicescape & Tourism .....	23
2.1.9 Natural dimension of servicescape in tourism .....	24
2.1.10 Artificial dimension of servicescape in tourism.....	25
2.1.11 Conclusion .....	26
2.2 Value & Consumer Value.....	27
2.2.1 Value & Service-dominant logic (S-D Logic) .....	27
2.2.2 Value & Consumer.....	28
2.2.3 Consumer value .....	29
2.2.4 Consumer Value & tourism.....	30
2.2.5 Consumer value & Nature .....	32
2.2.6 Consumer value & Artificial settings.....	33
2.2.7 Consumer value & Other actors.....	33
2.3 Summary of theoretical approach .....	34
3. Methodology .....	36
3.1 Research philosophy .....	36
3.2 Research strategy .....	38
3.3 Research design: a grounded theory .....	39
3.4 Data collection .....	40
3.5 Data analysis .....	42
3.6 Evaluation .....	44
3.7 Ethical considerations .....	45
4. Empirical description and analysis .....	47
4.1 Framework of Servicescape.....	47

4.1.1 Artificial dimension .....	48
4.1.2 Natural dimension.....	51
4.1.3 Social dimension.....	54
4.1.4 Virtual dimension.....	56
4.2 Cyclist value.....	57
4.2.1 Therapy in the wild .....	58
4.2.2 Swedish aesthetics .....	59
4.2.3 Cheap enjoyment .....	60
4.2.4 Safe adventure.....	60
4.2.5 Regular freedom.....	61
4.2.6 Memorable relationship .....	62
4.2.7 Transformative achievement.....	63
4.2.8 Ecological consideration.....	64
4.3 Summary of analysis.....	65
5. Discussion .....	67
5.1 A leisure servicescape for cycle tourism.....	67
5.2 Value dimensions for cycle tourism .....	70
6. Conclusion .....	73
6.1 Academic considerations .....	73
6.2 Practical implications.....	73
6.3 Limitations .....	75
6.4 Further research .....	75
7. References.....	76
8. Appendix 1. Interview guide.....	100
9. Appendix 2. Post .....	102
10. Appendix 3. Table of interviewees and labels.....	103

# **1. Introduction**

## **1.1 Background**

### ***1.1.1 History of cycle tourism***

More than two hundred years have passed since Karl von Drais invented the first bicycle in 1817 (Hiles, 2021). At the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the improvement of bicycle design promoted the beginning of recreational cycling in Europe and all over the world (Alff, 2012), while the emerging youth movement is considered as another reason ("The historical development of cycle tourism," 2017). Though most participants of cycle touring were occupied by young people in the 1950s and 1960s, middle-aged and older people nowadays have begun to include cycling as one of approach to visiting nature ("The historical development of cycle tourism," 2017). Neither the age nor destinations is limited, which means the possibility of destination for cycle touring is infinite, so no matter rural areas and urban downtown can be approached by bike (Adventure Cycling Association, 2021). Beyond a method of commuting and health keeping, it is identified not only as practical and healthy, but recreational and natural (Reid, 2020). Therefore, the potential of cycle tourism has been realized by many tourism organizations and recognized as a high value industry ("Cycling and Tourism: a win-win combination," 2018).

### ***1.1.2 Boom of cycle tourism***

Even though tourism industries have become one of important sectors in the economy, the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the framework of the global tourism system change from overtourism (J. Nilsson, 2020) to non-tourism (Gössling, Scott, & Hall, 2021). Due to the restrictions and uncertainties related to movement across borders, domestic tourists and locals have become the main force to prompt the recovery of

tourism (Gunnella, Krustev, & Schuler, 2020). At the same time, it is worth mentioning that some surprising records about the benefit of local and national economies have been set by cycle tourism in Europe (Sutton, 2020). As cycle tourism becomes more important, experts are aware that sustainable tourism should be prioritized to rebuild tourism (Shrivastava, 2021). However, Finnsson (2021) points out that whether tourism can grow in a sustainable manner after the COVID-19 pandemic is doubtful, as no one can make sure the way people travel has changed permanently.

Regardless, the global bike boom has occurred during lockdown, this trend that is illustrated by the rapid expansion of cycle makers (D. Thomas, 2021). Bike touring is regarded as the safest option to take a vacation because of coronavirus (Clark, 2020). Considering the potential health hazard, cycling has alternated public transport and become popular in the cities of Middle East (Tolley, 2021). In Paris, the bicycle as a traditional transport, provides a new lifestyle for citizens to feel free and healing and build the relationship with the city they live in (Tramuta, 2021). Similarly, cycling has become an all-India phenomenon in a post-lockdown world, not only an option of community or fitness, but a way for adventure while keeping social distance (Mathew, 2020). At the same time, the coronavirus has made people rediscover the meanings of cycling in Europe and the United Kingdom, which has driven a revolution in travel (Rowlatt, 2020; Vandy, 2020). In the future, Tourwriter (2020) predicts that cycle tourism will keep popular, since it is suitable to the demand of health, adventure and nature raised by pandemic and lockdown.

Aim at recovering from the current health and economic crisis, governments around the world nowadays devote themselves to promote cycle touring, as it can contribute to retail, manufacturing, tourism, and services (Bechauf, 2020). So far, a €3 Billion fund has been planned to spend in establishing and updating cycle routes, optimizing cycle-friendly services, creating bicycle hotels, promoting cycle tourism holidays around Europe (Sutton, 2020). The tourism funds are going to ride into Okanagan and the largest share will be spent on bike tourism development, full-length signature downhill,

and bike trails across the country (Smith, 2021). What is more, in order to make cycling journey easy, comfortable and more accessible, the first online platform has been launched in Australia, which connects cyclists with bike-friendly accommodation, offering related facilities and services (Medianet, 2021).

However, other countries, that cannot embrace cycling culture, keep building around automobiles instead of cycling lanes, which resulted in losing out on considerable financial benefits (Davies, 2013). Especially in North America, bike culture, representing a healthier and more sustainable lifestyle, is considered a subculture; while it's more pervasive and daily in Europe (Reliance Foundry, 2021). Worse, cyclists need to face hostility in many cities all over the world, for example: cycling is for poor from a deep-seat belief from local drivers perspectives in Gaborone (Tshipa, 2020), and the damage to London by cycling lanes is more than almost anything since Blitz from the perspective of former chancellor of the exchequer (Wilson, 2018).

Accordingly, when cycling as a daily activity is unwelcome, not to mention the development of cycling tourism and its commercialization. In addition, the number of cycling deaths shows little change due to traffic restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in Australia, showing how to build a safe environment for cyclists can be a long-term issue (Australian Associated Press, 2021). People are worried about their personal safety and property safety, while getting hurt and bike theft are difficult to avoid (Tramuta, 2021). Furthermore, though the number of cyclists has increased, the cycle touring company that offers rentals and self-guided has suffered (Grossman, 2021). How to develop cycle tourism and what requirements should be complied with by cycle tourism is worth exploring. Meanwhile, with high tolerance and neighborly cycling culture, it is not surprising that Sweden has always been rated as one of the most satisfied destinations for cycling in recent years. Therefore, the thesis here is going to shed light on the cycle tourism in Sweden as a case.

### ***1.1.3 Cycle tourism in Sweden***



Since the end of last century, the number of cyclists, the consumption of cycles and the awareness of health have apparently increased (Transport analysis, 2015). Nowadays, Sweden is considered as a paradise for cyclists and cycling in Sweden is an activity open for everyone (Day, 2017). It is beneficial from a national cycling strategy adopted by the Swedish government that devotes to contributing to a sustainable society and a high quality of life with long-term sustainable transport solutions (Johansson, 2017). The Swedish government especially emphasizes the importance of safety and infrastructure and ambitiously proposes to involve multiple types of cyclists as three fields of action (Johansson, 2017). Thus, it is not surprising that Kattegattleden as Swedish first national cycle route can be awarded as the best European bicycle path in 2018.

#### ***1.1.4 The Right of Public Access & Vision zero***

What is more, when discussing cycling tourism, Allemansrätt cannot be ignored. Allemansrätt means ‘the Right of Public Access’ or ‘freedom to roam’, which allows everyone to enter Swedish nature freely, while requiring everyone to prevent environmental damage (Frédérique Von, 2005). It means everyone can camp wild during their cycling trip. Overall, these conditions provide enough opportunity for not only cycling enthusiasts but starters to explore Sweden by bike. Accordingly, cyclists don’t need to keep perfect body shape, maintain great endurance, or purchase top-notch gear, but enjoy cycling conveniently, safely and happily (Day, 2017). In addition, in 1997, there’s a long-term goal and strategy adopted by the Swedish Parliament named Vision zero, which aimed to reduce the number of victims killed or seriously injured through a traffic accident ("Vision Zero - no fatalities or serious injuries through road accidents," 2019).

#### ***1.1.5 Development of cycle tourism in Sweden***

Sweden nowadays owns 5 long cycle routes as national tourists bicycle routes, they are

Kattegattleden (390 Km), Sydostleden (270 Km), Gotlandsleden (500 Km), Mälardalsleden (440 Km) and Dalslandsleden (360 Km) (Visit Sweden, 2020). Besides, it owns a vast, greatly developed and marked network of cycling paths that cover from modern urban to remote rural areas (Visit Sweden, 2021). Therefore, everyone can find a suitable cycling trip in Sweden. What is more, thanks to cycling culture, and well-arranged cycle lanes, Bossen (2020) argues that Malmö has a great opportunity to become a Mecca for cyclists. Being ranked as one of five biggest cycling cities in the world, 30% of journeys are expected to be finished by bicycle in nine years (Soxbo, 2021). To achieve this aim, a tunnel between Västrahamnen and Mellersta hamnen to provide lanes for walkers and cyclists are investigated and planned in Malmö (Górecka, 2020).

On the other hand, there are abundant natural resources in Sweden, including archipelagos, biosphere reserves, nature reserves, rivers, lakes and national parks (M. Li, 2021; Stanley, 2019), which is one of the most important reasons to cycle. Particularly, bike stops and routes are well developed in Sweden: there is Kattegatt trail along the coast line from Skåne to Göteborg; old railway track from Halmstad to Karlshamn, from coast to coast; available bikes in the Hökensås National Park; cycling race around the lake Vättern; camping sites close to the Isaberg resort with cycling trails; bicycle-friendly villages and sites in the Kingdom on Crystal; even North Sea Cycle Route combine three countries (Sweden, Norway and Denmark) (M. Li, 2021).

Regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, through comparing the travel data collected from TravelVu app in 2020 and the same periods in 2018 and 2019, Trivector (2020) prints out that the COVID-19 pandemic directly influences the increase in cycling in Sweden. Therefore, as the adequate supply of natural resources and relative equipment, and the increasing number of cycling tourists during the pandemic, cycling on roads as natural-based tourism and outdoor recreation becomes increasingly commercialized (Margaryan & Fredman, 2017). However, Sutton (2021) points out that cycling policy is ignored by most EU states in the pandemic recovery plans, and only ambiguous

references are connected cycling with sustainability in transport and tourism. In Sweden, Bossen (2020) also argues that the funds invested in cycling is limited and the promotion is disappointing, the development of cycling requires more attention.

### ***1.1.6 Issues of cycle tourism in Sweden***

However, cycle tourism in Sweden encounters some problems at the same time. There is a trend of decreasing numbers of cycling, while less than 10% residents choose to have a trip by bike in Sweden (Balkmar, 2020). A motorhome is considered as the best way to experience Swedish nature in a relaxed manner by M. Li (2021), which is named the most relaxing and eco-friendly way since it can be both transportation and hotel. In addition, in Swedish mountain region (one-third of the country), skiing and snowmobiling are still the most popular recreational activities in winter, while hiking is an attractive activity for most tourists in summer since the Right of Public Access (Heberlein, Fredman, & Vuorlo, 2002). Regard to the Right of Public Access, cycling benefits less than hiking in summer (Heberlein et al., 2002), as it primarily depends on man-made spaces (Sandell & Fredman, 2010). Further, it is worth mentioning that both Denmark and Sweden commit to the development of cycling, while Denmark performs better than Sweden from the security perspective (Haustein, Koglin, Nielsen, & Svensson, 2020).

## **1.2 Aim and Research question**

In the COVID-19 pandemic, cycle tourism has been regarded as a useful approach to conduct economic and environmental issues. On the other hand, cycle touring as a recreation and adventure in nature, fulfills the demand of people who want to travel and keep social distance either. The background shows there is a connection between cycle tourism and both infrastructure and nature, while most of the actions are about investment in infrastructure but little attention on nature. At the same time, it illustrates

that cycle tourism is not a simple tourism but involves many dimensions and elements. The further understanding and research can help to develop cycle tourism, so that contribute to recovery in a post-pandemic future. In addition, Sweden, as a cycling friendly state, is a good example to learn for other destinations. Combining the term in service management, the first research question is here:

***What is the framework of servicescape for cycle tourism in Sweden?***

What is more, the background also implies cyclists would value cycle tourism from different perspectives, while it is indirect, ambiguous, and complicated. Only the booming of cycling as a phenomenon is introduced, but there is a lack of discussion regarding the experience. In this way, on one hand, identifying how cyclists value cycle touring based on the environment helps to understand the first research question better, so that promotes the development of cycle tourism. Furthermore, exploring consumer value provides practical directions of development for the government, service providers, and destination management organizations (DMO). Therefore, the following question is here:

***What types of value can be generated from servicescape in the experience of cycle tourism for tourists in Sweden?***

### **1.3 Disposition**

According to the research gap and research question, the structure of the paper is as follows. According to research aim and research question, the second chapter as literature review includes the concept of servicescape, value, and the relationship between them and cycle tourism. In the chapter of methodology, why and how to collect and analyze data based on grounded theory are introduced. In chapter 4, the findings regarding two research questions are integrated separately with the help of comparative

methods mainly. The final framework of servicescape and further discussion are in Chapter 5. Finally, academic contributions, practical implications, limitations, and further research are included in the final chapter.

## 2. Literature review

Currently, cycle tourism with its own advantage has become more and more popular all over the world, thanks to its high value on physical and mental health, social connections, entertainment and sustainability (Han, Lho, Al-Ansi, & Yu, 2020). User-generated content online also illustrates that cycle tourism can provide a positive experience to tourists from a broad range of sensory, affective, cognitive, relationships, behavioral components (W. Chiu & Leng, 2017). Cycle touring plays a more important role in destinations, from urban to rural areas, from a specific island to the whole country. It is an innovative solution for urban tourism development in Warsaw and Qingdao (Roman & Roman, 2014; Xue, Deng, Zhang, Pandiyan, & Manickam, 2020), and achieves successful combination of sport, nature, travel and culture for Covasna County (Fosztó, 2014). It functions on cycling undeveloped destinations like the Balearic Islands (Rejon-Guardia, Antonia Garcia-Sastre, & Alemany-Hormaeche, 2018), and promotes economic development for countries like Turkey based on the form of cycling festival (Kaya & Erdoğan, 2020). Regardless, Bakogiannis et al. (2020) examine motivators of cycling tourists then point out that both landscape and cycling infrastructure are significant.

From the perspective of landscape, as one of most popular outdoor recreation, cycling is considered as natural-based tourism (Margaryan & Fredman, 2017), which has strong connection with the surrounding landscape (Adam et al., 2020). At the same time, involving the natural environment is considered as a fundamental standard of ecotourism (Iuliana, Cornelia, Ioan, & Anda, 2017). In this way, cycling as a form of alternative tourism like other outdoor activities is categorized as ecotourism, because it can minimize any adverse effects on biodiversity and avoid violating the principle of sustainable use of natural resources (Plăstoi & Popa, 2011). Regarding the advantage of cycling, Börjesson and Eliasson (2012) argue that the bicycle should be recognized as an efficient means of transport, instead of connecting to sustainability (Lorincz,

Banász, & Csapó, 2020) or fitness. However, Powell, Kellert, and Ham (2009) argue that nature-based tourism experiences can be provided to educate tourists thus building support for conservation and improving the sustainability of protected areas. Therefore, cycle tourism can make tourists experience adventure and bring opportunities to attach to nature but also prevent damage to the environment (Iuliana et al., 2017).

From the perspective of infrastructure, since it is considered as a common means to minimize the harm of human error (Värnild, Johansson, & Tillgren, 2020), many arguments argue that the efficiency, convenience and security of cycling is highly regarded. One especially analyzes the impact of each element including traffic light, roundabout, stop sign and right-of-way (Kircher, Ihlström, Nygårdhs, & Ahlstrom, 2018). One further argues that the function of infrastructure is not only limited in the physical form, but changing awareness and attitudes of drivers, thus promotes the security (Cushing, Hooshmand, Pomares, & Hotz, 2016). Besides, research refers to not only the security of child safety based on bicycle helmet use in Sweden (Nolén, Ekman, & Lindqvist, 2005), but also the reason of bicycle injury accidents among older adults and following burden on the medical sector (Scheiman, Moghaddas, Björnstig, Bylund, & Saveman, 2010).

Mobility spaces and journey experiences are considered as two key issues in cycle tourism research (Scuttari & SpringerLink, 2019), so it is important to explore the whole servicescape of cycle tourism and consumer value from cycling experience. Adam et al. (2020) specifically argue that the setting of cycle routes can function on servicescape, further attributed to the relationship between cyclists and the physical environment. At the same time, cyclists highly value the cycling process in the trip and gain self-fulfillment after finishing a challenging route (Xu, Yuan, & Li, 2019). Arnould, Price, and Tierney (1998) argue that servicescape is a commercial place and commercial exchanges site, which can explain the nature and scope of personal experience and social interactions. Besides, Namasivayam and Lin (2004) believe conceptualizing the experience can assist to figure out the motive of utilization of servicescape, so that they

can manage customer/service establishment interaction. Accordingly, it is necessary to clarify the elements of servicescape in cycle tourism and its function on value creation.

When selecting an environment to study, Abubakar (2002) further argues that “intermediary level” is necessary, so understanding the multi-dimension of cycle tourism is crucial. Firstly, cycle tourism is connected to nature, while Valentine (1992) identifies natural-based tourism as tourism with the aim of enjoying the undisturbed phenomenon of nature. Roxana (2012) believes that nature-based tourism involves adventure tourism that refer to natural settings, and ecotourism that refer to conserving or protecting natural areas. Second, historically, in Sweden, the enthusiasm for cycling has come from the thirst and experience of adventure (Emanuel, 2017). Adventure tourism represents visiting less accessible areas, almost leaving away from human impact, requiring vast physical effort and risk, producing adrenaline within nature (Andreiana, Stefan, & Panagoret, 2017). Third, ecotourism contributes to the conservation of natural and cultural heritage and it is a subset of sustainable tourism, which is related to nature tourism and adventure tourism (Cater, 2004). Overall, this chapter presents a review of servicescape, value creation and their connection to cycle tourism from three perspectives: natural-based tourism, adventure tourism, and ecotourism.

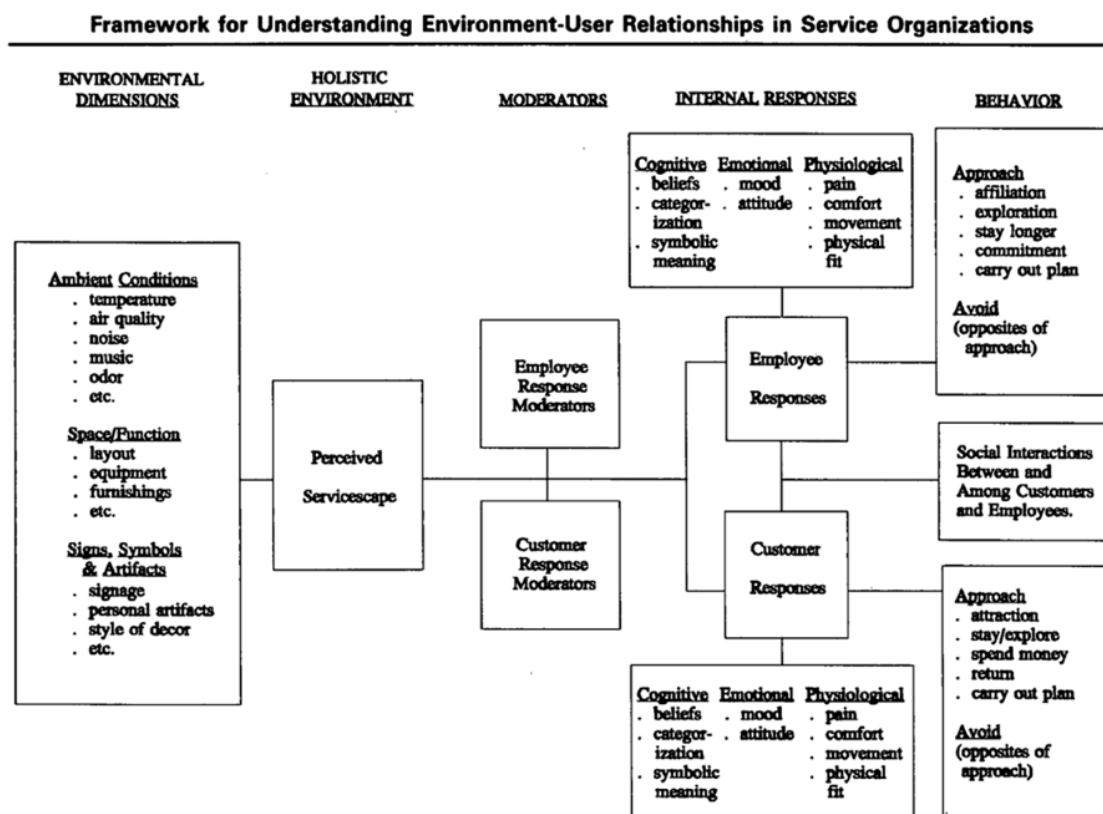
## **2.1 Servicescape**

### ***2.1.1 Definition of Servicescape***

Marketed entities include tangible and intangible nuclei (Shostack, 1977), since no matter goods or services have elements of tangibility and intangibility (Levitt, 1981). At the same time, the complexity of marketed entities affects the “reality” of the service from the perspective of consumers, so building a “molecular” model or a visual system of reality can be considered as new approaches to interpret service (Shostack, 1977,



1982). Compared to product marketers that focus on abstract associations, service marketing tends to promote “realities” through manipulating tangible clues (Levitt, 1981; Shostack, 1977). More specifically, the environment should be one of priorities for service marketers, since it as “evidence” can enormously influence the “reality” of a service in the consumer mind (Shostack, 1977). Baker (1986) further argues that the physical environment is crucial in the services marketing mix, since it can influence customer satisfaction (Bitner, 1990), while it is not clearly established until 1986. Therefore, Baker (1986) lists components of the physical environment from three aspects in detail to develop an argument about consumer relationship with the service environment, further discussing the managerial implication. Further, Bitner (1992) argues that consumers generally experience service “in the factory”, which has a strong impact on their mind (Aubert-Gamet, 1997; Baker, 1986). In this way, Bitner (1992) builds a framework to explain a service environment that is limited in manmade and physical surroundings but opposed to the natural and social environment (See Figure 1.)



*Figure 1. Framework for understanding environment-user relationship in service organization (Bitner, 1992, p. 60)*

### **2.1.2 Dimensions of Servicescape**

Atmosphere, is the packaging of goods and service primarily engaged by customer, is neglected as a marketing tool (Kotler, 1973). In order to apply practically and functionally and interpret the ‘silent language’ of atmosphere (Kotler, 1973), Baker (1986) introduces the components of the physical environment, including ambient factors, design factors and social factors. It is worth mentioning that other customers and service providers are involved in this framework, because the size and characteristics of other customers can impact on service experience, and personnel of service providers can function in the atmosphere (Baker, 1986). However, ambient conditions, spatial layout and functionality and signs, symbols and artifacts, as three major dimensions of servicescape come up with by Bitner (1992), that are considered as keys to establish a successful servicescape (Bhardwaj, Palaparthi, & Agrawal, 2008). However, Clarke and Schmidt (1995) argue that the key dimension of servicescape is the natural and artificial environment. Accordingly, Rosenbaum and Massiah (2011) come up with a framework of a perceived servicescape, comprising four dimensions: physical, social, socially symbolic, and natural environmental dimensions (see Figure 2.). What is more, Siguaw, Mai, and Wagner (2019) empathize that evaluation of potential key dimensions of environmental services-security is necessary on a regular basis in servicescape study. Besides, ethnic as an important part of the socially symbolic dimension of perceived servicescape defined by Rosenbaum and Massiah (2011), which can be functioned by cultural metaphors (Elliot, Cherian, & Casakin, 2011).

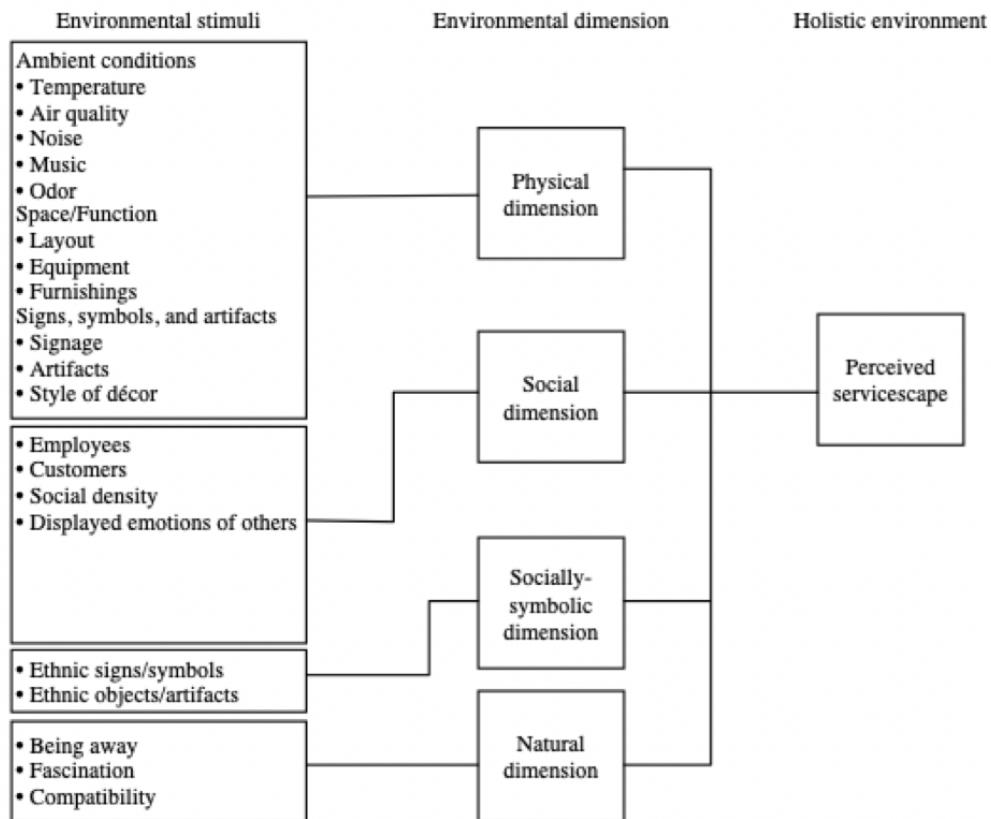


Figure 2. A framework for understanding four environmental dimensions of the servicescape (Rosenbaum & Massiah, 2011, p. 473)

### 2.1.3 Elements of Servicescape

The process of deconstruction, which means focusing on each element to discuss, can simplify complicated servicescapes. Clarke and Schmidt (1995) further point out that the servicescape is aimed at building a long-term relationship that can be supported by careful design and management of physical elements of the service. Compared to Figure 1. and Figure 2., Rosenbaum and Massiah (2011) involve employees and customers as stimuli into the social dimension, while Bitner (1992) regards them as moderators. Furthermore, researchers start to evaluate each element of servicescape, including scent (Girard, Lichters, Sarstedt, & Biswas, 2019), noisy (Plessis, Saayman, & Potgieter, 2014), music (Hynes & Manson, 2016; Jeon, Park, & Yi, 2016), layout (Ang, Leong, & Lim, 1997), lighting (Wu, He, King, & Mattila, 2021), aesthetics (Alfakhri, Harness, Nicholson, & Harness, 2018; Kumar, Purani, & Sahadev, 2017), social interaction (Tran,

Dang, & Tournois, 2020) and so on. The servicescape surveillance as an element is involved in the safety dimension of servicescape (Bonfanti, 2016; Hilliard & Baloglu, 2008). Besides, Wei, Ang, and Anaza (2019) support that crowds should be treated as a “fixture” in servicescape instead of “active participants”. Accordingly, elements that can be controlled by humans are explored more than those uncontrollable. However, Rosenbaum and Wong (2007) argue that attention should not only focus on the controllability and artificiality of servicescape but consider the potential negative impact of the manipulation of servicescape.

#### ***2.1.4 Typology of Servicescape***

Clarke and Schmidt (1995) argue that the experience is generated through the uncertainty and instability with place over time. Namasivayam and Lin (2004) believe the dynamic temporal continuum refers to experience, while the servicescape effect is a static continuum. Although the servicescape usually operates in the background, it can strongly impact on the service experience of consumers at a functional level and symbolic ways (E. Nilsson & Ballantyne, 2014). More specifically, Rosenbaum and Massiah (2011) find out that servicescape is not only objective, measurable, and managerially controllable, but also can comprise subjective, immeasurable, and often managerially uncontrollable social, symbolic, and natural stimuli. Considering the physical complexity of servicescape, Bitner (1992) argues that simple servicescapes with few elements, spaces and forms are termed “lean” environments, while complicated servicescapes with many elements and many forms are termed “elaborate” environments. The degree of complexity does not depend on the actors, which means no matter the service is self-service, remote service, or both customer and employee, the servicescape can be “lean” or “elaborate” (Bitner, 1992). Furthermore, Wakefield and Blodgett (1994) come up with service typology (see Figure 3), which shows that the degree of the importance of servicescape is related to type of service and time spent.

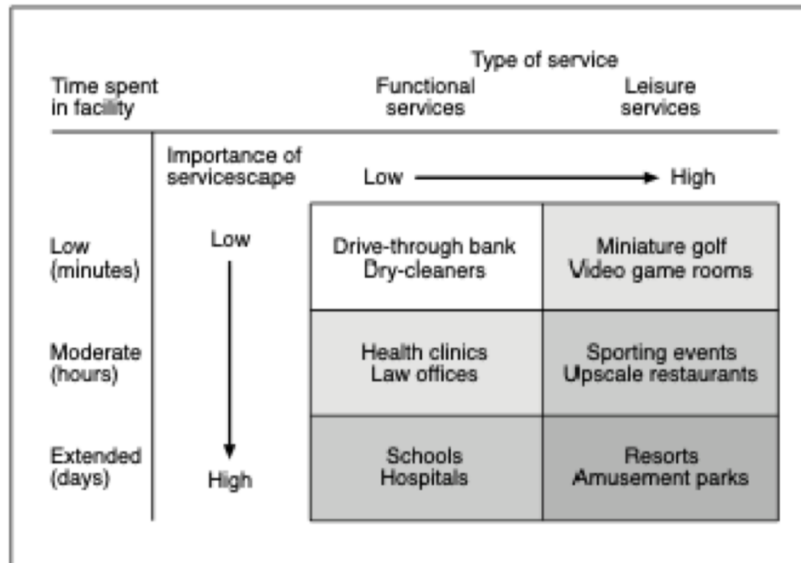


Figure 3. Servicescape typology (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1994, p. 64)

### 2.1.5 Servicescape & Consumer

Bitner (1992) argues that the servicescape is controlled by firms, while the postmodernist criticisms doubt the concept of independence and the requirements of temporal priority about physical environment (Aubert-Gamet, 1997). However, no matter if servicescape is controllable or uncontrollable, customers always own authority to differentiate service themselves (Clarke & Schmidt, 1995), which illustrates that service providers and consumers are embodied no longer as a component element of the environment but co-builders (Aubert-Gamet, 1997). Specifically, Aubert-Gamet (1997) argues that it is necessary to consider the physical environment in services from a “given” to a “construct”, and further the relationship between physical environment and customers should be discussed on the basis of a co-construction. For example, when users reject to follow the plan functions but approach in a different way or add new meaning, it can achieve escaping dominant meanings and create a subjective function of the servicescape (Aubert-Gamet, 1997). Pham et al. (2019) also mention that servicescapes are co-created between consumers and organizations. In this way, the role of customers in servicescape should not be limited to participants, elements, but also

creators.

### ***2.1.6 E-servicescape***

Later, E. Nilsson and Ballantyne (2014) from a perspective of service-dominant logic, point out that servicescape includes physical place and virtual space. As follows, the e-servicescape as an online environment is designed to create a good impression when consumers experience the service (Hakim & Deswindi, 2015). Because nowadays, customers usually experience physical settings of the e-servicescape first then purchase the services, the role of e-servicescape in service marketing cannot be ignored (Hakim & Deswindi, 2015). Ballantyne and Nilsson (2017) also believe the internet becomes a new market beyond existing servicescape models and frameworks. In this way, a multiplicity of servicescape is introduced by Ballantyne and Nilsson (2017, p. 228): “on the one hand, there are the symbolic, interpreted meanings of physical place, and, on the other, servicescape formats still evolving in the changing and sometimes imagined realities of digital space.” Further, Huang, Li, Mou, and Liu (2017) summarize three dimensions of e-servicescape including aesthetic appeal, layout and functionality, and financial security, which can function on consumer behavioral intention. More specifically, websites, social media, email and SNS, mobile application are main approaches discussed in e-servicescape (Ballantyne & Nilsson, 2017; Huang et al., 2017; KUO, Huang, & Nguyen, 2019; S. A. Lee, 2018; Sreejesh & Abhilash, 2017). Besides, regarding sensory marketing, Eklund and Helmfalk (2018) come up with a conceptual framework with visual-tactile interplay, discussing how visual cues and tactile cues can influence both servicescape and e-servicescape.

### ***2.1.7 Discussion of Servicescape***

What is more, findings show that servicescape can actually impact on perception of service quality (Brady & Cronin, 2001; Reimer & Kuehn, 2005), loyalty intention (Harris & Ezech, 2008), customers repatronage intentions and the length of time to stay

(Heerden, 2017), customers satisfaction (Abubakar & Mavondo, 2014; Park, Back, Bufquin, & Shapoval, 2019), customer emotion (Brunner-Sperdin, Peters, & Strobl, 2012; Kucukergin & Meydan Uygur, 2019), customer engagement (S. Li, 2021) and so on. However, there is little research shed light on how servicescape impacts on service providers. Parish, Berry, and Lam (2008) contribute to the relationship between servicescape and job stress and satisfaction from environmental perceptions including convenience, safety, and pleasantness. Further, in the case of the nested servicescape, the effects of one servicescape can influence perceptions of other servicescapes (Siguaw et al., 2019). Overall, servicescape as one of six strategies of competing can influence service outcomes (Bolton, Grewal, & Levy, 2007). R. Williams and Dargel (2004) come up with “cyberscape”, arguing that the importance of controlling a virtual service environment is the same as the physical environment. From the practical perspective, however, findings illustrate the requirement of a shared language of servicescape so that it can be available in any case (Kauppinen-Räsänen & Grönroos, 2015). In this way, it is necessary to consider how to deal with the barriers to utilize the knowledge. In the future research, Gäthke (2020) introduce artificial intelligence (AI), augmented reality (AR) for example, to contribute to the under-examined field of elaborate servicescape and to develop the function of servicescape to improve service satisfaction.

### ***2.1.8 Servicescape & Tourism***

Plenty of researchers tend to explore the construction scape as servicescape, which is normally closed, arranged, and managed. No matter big or small, the scope of the servicescape discussed is usually limited, for example, casino(Ho, Lam, & Lam, 2019), museum (T. H. Lee & Chen, 2014), hospital(Amin, Wahid, & Ismail, 2016), and library (Mei, Aas, & Eide, 2020). Except those industries mentioned previously, though the tourism service sector becomes an increasingly significant part of the world economy, the servicescape framework of tourism was not noticed until 2002 (Abubakar, 2002). It is worth noticing that closed environment attracts more attention in study of

servicescape, such as hotel (Dedeoğlu, Küçükergin, & Balıkcıoğlu, 2015; Mishra & Gupta, 2019), restaurant (Rai & Anirvinna, 2019), theme park (Zheng, Wei, Line, & Zhang, 2021), and cruise ship (Lyu, Hu, Hung, & Mao, 2017). However, some researchers examine open-air servicescapes at the same time. As wilderness (Arnould et al., 1998) and nature (Margaryan, 2018) enter the field, the issue of biodiversity and wildlife-related ecosystems comes behind (R. May, Jackson, Bevanger, & Røskoft, 2019). It illustrates the servicescape of tourism as a ‘third space’ or a ‘system’ that is unstable, inflexible, changing and volatile so that it can respond to various component factors (Fagence, 2014).

Abubakar (2002) classifies tourism service environments and activities based on service typology by Bitner (1992) and points out that further research can develop servicescape framework of a specific context and uniqueness of each tourism environment, so the study of servicescape in tourism has applied variously, including cruise (Kwortnik, 2008; Lyu et al., 2017), theme park (Başarangil, 2018; Dong & Siu, 2013; Zheng et al., 2021), transport (Jalón, Ortega, & Curiel, 2019), wine tourism (Bruwer, Pratt, Saliba, & Hirche, 2017; Leri & Theodoridis, 2019; B. Thomas, Quintal, & Phau, 2018) and so on, that emphasize how servicescape controlled by firms function on customer perception in different types of tourism. In terms of e-servicescape, aesthetic appeal, layout and functionality, and financial security of websites and Online Travel Agencies (OTAs) also play crucial roles in consumer evaluation in tourism industries (Huang et al., 2017; Sreejesh & Abhilash, 2017). However, cycle tourism is ignored in the discussion of servicescape.

### ***2.1.9 Natural dimension of servicescape in tourism***

When the servicescape is mainly natural, instead of constructed, the management of servicescape is limited and service providers visit the servicescape just like customers (Arnould et al., 1998; Margaryan & Wall-Reinius, 2017). In terms of ecotourism, R. May et al. (2019) highlight the function of core protected areas, which decides the



biodiversity and safari tourism provision. Considering challenger perception among adventure tourism, Tsaur, Lin, and Yen (2020) prove that place-related factors as one of crucial antecedents is more influential than activity-related, which indirectly illustrates that servicescape is a determinant factor of adventure tourism. Research especially illustrates that higher challenge perception relies on higher site wildness and site difficulty (Tsaur et al., 2020). More specifically, through investigating the diversity of edible flora, Tanam, Ramadani, Santaso, and Yamini (2020) estimate the potential of botany adventure ecotourism. Similarly, experienced servicescape is a specific and crucial area as additional research for servicescape (Arnould et al., 1998), so environmental elements can influence customer experience much more than artificial elements (Fredman, Wall-Reinius, & Grundén, 2012). Even though there are unpredictable elements, Margaryan and Wall-Reinius (2017) argue that it is necessary to keep continuous negotiation of uncertainties with operational settings, further advance authenticity through utilization of the uncertainty.

### ***2.1.10 Artificial dimension of servicescape in tourism***

To meet the fast-pace lifestyle, it is worth noticing that an artificially created recreation environment close to home is becoming more important nowadays, which can address “nature-deficit disorder” (Moorman, Schlatter, & Hurd, 2007). When visitors require high interaction and relevance between themselves and servicescape, Wakefield and Blogdett (1996) and Jobst and Boerner (2015) argue that artificial leisure settings can be the determinant factor impact on customer satisfaction. When nature is seen as a commercial setting, except the natural experiences, Margaryan (2018) also argues that man-made or built environments should not be ignored, since it can provide desired environment and relative support. What is more, the management of servicescape to some extent can function on other elements in servicescape. For example, the promotion of enclosure design and husbandry management is beneficial to African elephants, so that optimizes the Blair Drummond Safari and Adventure Park (Lucas & Stanyon, 2017). However, the conflict occurs when the electric transmission lines on

tourism in Iceland that impact perceived aesthetic naturalness from perspectives of tourists (Ingólfssdóttir & Gunnarsdóttir, 2020).

### ***2.1.11 Conclusion***

In addition to socioeconomic factors, climate change, and epidemic diseases (Mudzengi, Gandiwa, Muboko, & Mutanga, 2020), the artificial dimension and natural dimension implicate potential conflict and trade-off. Based on two dimensions of natural vs. constructed environmental and access vs. exclusive rights, Fredman et al. (2012) come up with four combinations to represent the possible type of servicescape among natural-based tourism (see Figure 4.). Besides, servicescape of ecotourism requests for sufficient informational service, food, and facilities, so that protect natural resource and provide tourism opportunities at the same time (Oviedo-García, Vega-Vázquez, Castellanos-Verdugo, & Orgaz-Agüera, 2019). It requires the balance between natural dimension and artificial dimension, and involvement of these three types of tourism. Specifically, Oviedo-García et al. (2019) point out that the cleanliness, rest areas, and other elements of protected areas should be managed more carefully, since tourists can only perceive these services. Further, Ibrahim, Zukhri, and Rendy (2019) argue that tourists should not be limited in enjoying, but engaged in the process of environmental preservation and promotion of environmental awareness. More complicatedly, Margaryan and Wall-Reinius (2017) point out that tourism companies highly depend on infrastructure installed by local authorities, landowners, forest companies and so on, which means they have no power to control or maintain, which provide more uncertainty and unpredictability.

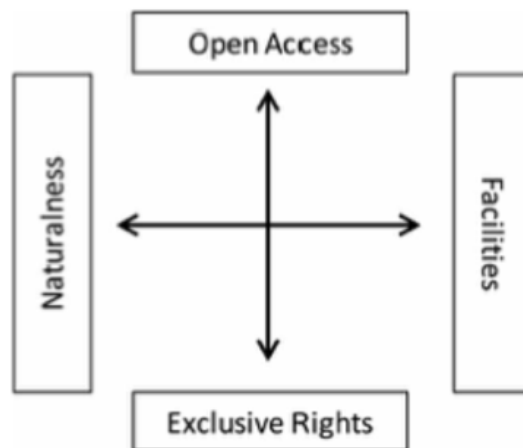


Figure 4. The two-dimensional nature-based servicescape (Fredman et al., 2012, p. 295)

## 2.2 Value & Consumer Value

### 2.2.1 Value & Service-dominant logic (S-D Logic)

The concept of Four Ps of marketing – product, price, place and promotion – became an indisputable paradigm around 1960 (Grönroos, 1997). However, in view of the traditional Four P model, which limits marketing thinking and restricts the development of multi-faceted marketing, Grönroos (1997) strongly criticizes the marketing mix paradigm and emphasizes the necessity of a new marketing paradigm. In order to develop services marketing and its core paradigm, Lovelock and Gummesson (2004) come up with four specific characteristics of services – intangibility, heterogeneity, inseparability, and perishability, which provide an opportunity for a general view of entire service sector but still ignore the importance of the consumer and the process of value creation. However, as more and more attention is focused on intangible outputs rather than tangibility, there is an evolution of marketing thinking - a shift from the goods-dominant view to a S-D Logic (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). Accordingly, services are defined as “*the application of specialized competences (knowledge and skills) through deeds, processes, and performances for the benefit of another entity or the entity itself*” (Vargo & Lusch, 2004, p. 2). More specifically, it represents a shift from embedded

value to cocreation of value, which means value is no longer determined by producer but perceived and determined by the consumer (Vargo & Lusch, 2004).

So far, value is recognized as a key concept for both the academic study and the managerial practice in marketing (Zeithaml, 1988). Reviewing the process of the paradigm shift, Grönroos (1997) mentions that the new marketing paradigm can ‘add value’ more than the product itself provided. By the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, even though economists admit the contribution of services could be sold, which can provide consumer value but goods cannot, while few believe the difference can be considered as of great economic significance (Lovelock & Gummesson, 2004). To support this argument, Lovelock and Gummesson (2004) specifically discuss the importance of time value, which can be applied in the rental/access paradigm. On the other hand, Vargo and Lusch (2004) redefine the determination and meaning of value and emphasize the importance of value in S-D Logic. Accordingly, value is defined as “value in use”, which results from the beneficial application of matters (operant resources) sometimes transmitted through using skills (operant resources) by consumers themselves (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). Moreover, in order to figure out the phenomenological/experiential nature of value, Vargo and Lusch (2008) introduce the extremely close relationship between value and the term of “experience” and argue that the customer always decides the value of service in the special experience.

### ***2.2.2 Value & Consumer***

Referring to experience, consumers here can define and co-creating value, instead of being embedded in the output process (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). J. Williams (2012) points out that S-D Logic forces consumers to become the centre of value creation. However, Grönroos and Voima (2013) argue that not only consumers but service providers and other factors are active in value creation and all of these actors are involved in co-creating value. However, back to value and consumer, which own diversity meanings since it is held by customers, showing the importance of expressions (Zeithaml, 1988).

What is more, S-D Logic emphasizes the “value-in-use” rather than considering the exchange aspect in traditional marketing management (J. Williams, 2012). In this way, the role of consumers in the continuous processes of value creation is crucial, which is always a significant factor in the value creation (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). Accordingly, the consumer must be the determinant and participator in value creation, while function of the enterprise is limited and it can only make value propositions (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). Furthermore, Fernandes and Neves (2014) argue that customers prefer to create value in servicescape through interaction among customers themselves instead of customers and service providers. More specifically, Sotiriadis (2017) points out that tourism is a service-intensive industry and it depends on the quality of experience, so it is important to understand and analyze tourism experience.

### ***2.2.3 Consumer value***

In addition, in value creation spheres (joint sphere and customer sphere), Grönroos and Voima (2013) point out that the value creation process by the customer is not linear, which does not automatically follow the activities of providers. Meanwhile, the value-in-use does not present as a singular entity, which means it requires a dynamic vision and holistic view (Grönroos & Voima, 2013). Accordingly, it is reasonable that consumer value attracts considerable attention in marketing research (Holbrook, 1999). Consumer value is defined as “*a cognitive-affective evaluation of an exchange relationship carried out by a person at any stage of the process of purchase decision, characterized by a string of tangible and/or intangible elements*” (Sánchez-Fernandez & Ángeles Iniesta-Bonillo, 2006, p. 53). Even though Grönroos and Voima (2013) and Karababa and Kjeldgaard (2014) argue that there is an ill-defined and poorly understood concept, it is still worth mentioning a framework offering a holistic overview of various types of consumer value by Holbrook (1999). The framework introduces three key dimensions: extrinsic versus intrinsic value, self-oriented versus other-oriented value and active versus reactive value, and eight types of consumer value:

efficiency, excellence, status, esteem, play, aesthetics, ethics, spirituality (Holbrook, 1999).

However, unlike the dichotomous and stereotypical typology of framework by Holbrook (1999), Zeithaml (1988) comes up with a means-end model relating price, quality and value, especially discusses the relationship between perceived quality and perceived value. Vespestad, Lindberg, and Mossberg (2019) also point out that framework by Holbrook (1999) may appear simultaneously to varying degrees in any consumption experience and argue that the significant dimensions of value are intrinsic, self-oriented and active in extraordinary contexts. Moreover, Sánchez-Fernandez and Ángeles Iniesta-Bonillo (2006) introduce a conceptual framework of consumer value with six features: interactive, relative, preferential, perceptual, higher-level abstraction, and cognitive-affective. Besides, from consumer culture theory, S-D Logic and branding research, Karababa and Kjeldgaard (2014) explain and conceptualize these different conceptions of value and come up with three types of abstract value: economic value, semiotic value and social values. All of these illustrate that there is no strict definition and typology of consumer value, as it is multidimensional, comparative, and dynamic, which require delving into specific industries and circumstances (Sánchez-Fernandez & Ángeles Iniesta-Bonillo, 2006).

#### ***2.2.4 Consumer Value & tourism***

The consumer value is an appreciative judgement determined by consumers themselves (E. Nilsson & Ballantyne, 2014). In tourism, Vargo and Lusch (2004) argue that the customer is a co-producer in S-D Logic, instead of the recipient in traditional goods-centered dominant logic, which means the role of tourists are important. With regard to value and tourism, raising the level of value, value-creation and value co-creation can maximize economic benefits of tourism sectors, while values of destination stakeholders and expectations of tourists are the foundation of value creation and value co-creation (Tajzadeh-Namin, 2012). Meanwhile, Gallarza and Saura (2020) argue that

consumer value can be identified as the foundation of tourism research, since it is the footstone of marketing (Holbrook, 1999). Furthermore, Chan (2009) argues that exploring the feeling and perception of tourists is vital, because tourism industries, museums for example, are becoming more and more visitor-oriented and aim at providing more and more convenient and satisfied consumer experience. Experience is also considered as the significant contributor to the success of tourism combining the emotional and cognitive reaction (Zakrisson & Zillinger, 2012). What is more, value originates from personal experiences that are different (Tajzadeh-Namin, 2012), which results in the consumer value of tourism being subtle and abstract in tourism (Andersson Cederholm & Hultman, 2010).

Before clarifying the meaning of perceived value, Zeithaml (1988) has already emphasized the need to figure ways to add value. In marketing, it is well known that consumer value is crucial (Holbrook, 1999). Ren, Petersen, and Dredge (2015) clarify two regular approaches to value tourism: the managerial and the critical, that both prefer to consider the values of tourism as entities and reasons rather than effects or achievements. Managerial approaches shed light on the economic value of tourism, while Karababa and Kjeldgaard (2014) argue that it is limited but meaningful as identity value at the same time. From a Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) perspective, Karababa and Kjeldgaard (2014) especially agree with Holbrook (1999) that experience is an important aspect of consumption, thus coming up with three types of abstract value: economic value, semiotic value and social value. However, Ren et al. (2015) point out that it is necessary to go beyond the two approaches, even though it would be agnostic and entangled. In this way, it is important to situate between “the economic” and ‘the culture’, ‘the technical’ and ‘the social’, ‘hard number’ and ‘soft values’ (Ren et al., 2015). In addition, Jamrozny and Lawonk (2017) identify that emotional value, functional value, boredom alleviation value, and epistemic value are significant factors that influence economic purchase intention, while the relationship between ecotourism and emotional value is the strongest and most important.

As for experience of adventure tourism, tourists can perceive more overcoming challenges, so that pushing their personal boundaries (Gross & Sand, 2019). It is strongly related to risk, which is subjective and determined by previous experiences that are not only based on the situation, but personality, lifestyle, and level of skill and experience (Gross & Sand, 2019). What is more, as emotional reaction is crucial of experience (Zakrisson & Zillinger, 2012), Schlegelmilch and Ollenburg (2013) shed light on emotional appeals as the motivation of adventure tourism, listing not only risk but thrill and fear, that especially attract the youth travelers. Therefore, it is worth mentioning that the prediction can result in personal development (Schlegelmilch & Ollenburg, 2013), meanwhile implicit in the potential safety concerns. Bowles and Ruhanen (2018) further explore how ecotourism business owners and their employees influence tourists by sharing environmental ethics and values. However, Beall, Boley, Landon, and Woosnam (2020) argue that ecotourism can be ideal to fulfill status-enhancement goals and add sustainable labels, which means symbolic conspicuous consumption can drive ecotourism.

### ***2.2.5 Consumer value & Nature***

Nature is experienced as an animated being, the atmosphere of vibrant surroundings defines how natural landscapes are experienced by visitors (Lund, 2013). Sotiriadis (2017) proposes two experiential dimensions: escapism and esthetics, so that they identify the consumer experience in natural-based attractions and its function on post consumption behavior. From the natural perspective, concealment, circulation and destruction are defined as three magic values related to Antarctica (Picard, 2015). What is more, Zakrisson and Zillinger (2012) argue that subjective experience can be affected by factors like nature and weather. Meanwhile, Schlegelmilch and Ollenburg (2013) argues that tourists experiencing adventure activities who are mainly looking for fun in nature, which means 'softer' adventure and less physically demanding are becoming mainstream (P. Williams, Souter, Ashill, & Naumann, 2017). Therefore, how can providers of adventure activities guarantee security but offer 'dangerous' experience at



the same time become an issue. Regarding to ecotourism, increasing perceived value of protected areas is considered as a key element to achieve long term success of ecotourism, while both knowledge and attitudes are antecedents of perceived value from tourists perspectives (Castellanos-Verdugo, Vega-Vázquez, Oviedo-García, & Orgaz-Agüera, 2016).

### ***2.2.6 Consumer value & Artificial settings***

On the other hand, there is a lack of attention on value and artificial settings. Layout accessibility, facility aesthetics, seating comfort, electronic equipment and facility cleanliness are defined as consumer value through experiencing the Dragon Football Stadium (Fernandes & Neves, 2014). However, we should admit that the discussion combining consumer value and servicescape is limited, not to mention value among servicescape of cycle tourism. Though sustainability is a significant trait of ecotourism for tourists, their awareness is still lagging (Y.-T. H. Chiu, Lee, & Chen, 2014). Therefore, Walker and Moscardo (2014) highlight the important role of the interpretation offered in tourist settings, which has the responsibility to activate or change tourist values to pay attention to sustainability. Castellanos-Verdugo et al. (2016) point out that further research around ecotourism should consider external elements, infrastructure, and the context for example.

### ***2.2.7 Consumer value & Other actors***

Sánchez-Fernandez and Ángeles Iniesta-Bonillo (2006) further find out that most of them reflect the interactivity between subjective and objective and bidirectionality between receiving and giving. In addition, Tourism is required to be involved in complex linkage, as it is reproduced and institutionalized in mundane or strategic activities (Ren et al., 2015). For instance, to explore the value in lifestyle entrepreneurship, the relationship between hosts and guests is identified as intimacy (Andersson Cederholm & Hultman, 2010). The interaction between practice service

providers and customers also contributes to value co-creation but functions on value co-destruction (Echeverri & Skålén, 2011). Furthermore, Anker, Sparks, Moutinho, and Grönroos (2015) through exploring consumer value in product-dominant logic and S-D Logic, come up with consumer-dominant logic that believe the ontological processes of value no longer depend on provider facilitated but subjective or consumer facilitated.

### **2.3 Summary of theoretical approach**

Service providers should make sure to build an achieving harmony between servicescape and customers, as it can function on customer expectation (E. Nilsson & Ballantyne, 2014). Accordingly, E. Nilsson and Ballantyne (2014) argue that, in the S-D Logic, the servicescape and its physical functionality, its constructed ambience, and symbolic projections can impact on the meanings that customers associate with any value proposition, while it lacks discussion. Regarding medical services, Dobre, Dragomir, and Milovan-Ciuta (2013) investigate that the servicescape of a clinic can influence medical services' value perception, while the better settings are, the higher the value perception is. In the Dragon Football Stadium case, Fernandes and Neves (2014) also explore consumer value from the physical environment as a whole instead of one environmental element specifically, which contributes to understanding of customer value creation. In terms of e-servicescape, dimensions such as layout, functionality, and financial security strongly affect perceived e-shopping value. However, the servicescape is not everything. Zhou, Gou, Ji, Li, and You (2020) prove that increasing shopping experience to enhance approach intentions through improving servicescape does not work in an airport context, though it can to some extent impact on the approach intention.

Nowadays, the value-added benefit is considered as the core service in the increasingly competitive hedonic service sector (Hightower, Brady, & Baker, 2002). Hightower et al. (2002) come up with one of the initial studies to involve a model to test how

servicescape impacts on other service marketing constructs, proving that servicescape can positively impact perception of service quality, thus influencing value perceptions. To some extent, it presents a multi-dimensional construct of hedonic value in nature (Dedeoglu, Bilgihan, Ye, Buonincontri, & Okumus, 2018). At the same time, Shashikala and Suresh (2018) agree that studies exploring how servicescape impact on perceived value is very scarce. Furthermore, research illustrates five crucial factors to fine dinner restaurant servicescape: Ambient, Hygiene, Aesthetic, Exterior, and Tangible factors, which shows its significant and positive impact on customer perceived value (Shashikala & Suresh, 2018). Based on the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) paradigm (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974), Dedeoglu et al. (2018) explore the multi-dimensional structure of servicescape and its impact on value perception, emphasizing the important role of novelty value. Furthermore, there is a trend to explain a given natural environment as a tourism space, which is worth mentioning because the concept of servicescape might not meet the contemporary service environment (E. Nilsson & Ballantyne, 2014). More specifically, Apaolaza, Hartmann, Fernández-Robin, and Yáñez (2020) focus on natural plant as one of elements in servicescape, it can significantly impact on experiential value from the aesthetics dimension.

Considering cycle tourism, motivation is a popular topic (Folmer, Tengxiage, Kadijk, & Wright, 2019), while the consumer value of it is lack of discussion. Back to servicescape, it is worth mentioning that Dedeoğlu et al. (2015) emphasize the important of servicescape for business organization, especially point out the time customers spend with is customer value creation, Williams-Burnett and Kearns (2018) also suggest that servicescape can be the key dimension of consumer value.

### **3. Methodology**

In order to explore the impact of physical surroundings, a conceptual framework is introduced by Bitner (1992). Further, Abubakar (2002) agrees with Bitner (1992) that it is reasonable to generate classification systems across industries, especially when researchers choose to explore a specific environment. Therefore, the research is aimed at building a framework of servicescape referring to cycle tourism in Sweden. In addition, even though consumer value is considered as a core in marketing (Holbrook, 1999), seldom related to servicescape, cycle tourism in particular. In this way, it is necessary to complement the understanding of servicescape through the exploration of consumer value. In this chapter, research philosophy as the fundament of this study will be introduced first, and then come up with a research approach and description, and research design. Secondly, this chapter is going to explain the process and details of data collection and data analysis based on grounded theory. Lastly, there would be a research evaluation and ethical considerations.

#### **3.1 Research philosophy**

Philosophy and social theory are considered as sets of tools for engaging in research, while philosophy forms the focus of our research as reflection instead of resolution (Pryke, Rose, & Whatmore, 2003). Bitner (1992) argues that servicescape shapes the consumer and strongly impacts on experience of consumers, while Aubert-Gamet (1997) argues that the consumer frames the servicescape. Zeithaml (1988) also emphasizes that consumer hold diversity meaning of value, showing the important of expressions. Previous studies illustrate that the servicescape is constructed by several dimensions and many elements (Bitner, 1992; Rosenbaum & Massiah, 2011), showing the complexity of servicescape. Since servicescape is the result of multiple factors that come together and interact in complicated and unanticipated ways, it requires to collect as much of this complexity in the research as possible (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). In this

way, it is reasonable to generate theory as the outcome from social life and the resultant data from cyclists when studying cycle tourism (T. May, 2011).

Accordingly, the research would generate theory by looking for as many cyclists as possible to collect their experience. The grounded theory has been utilized in the discussion of servicescape for several years (Matteucci & Gnoth, 2017). Sthapit (2017) identifies ambience and the plate and cup that are two key parts of servicescape to provide memorable food experience through customer experience based on ground theory. Lyu et al. (2017) assess the servicescape of cruise tourism through the perception of Chinese tourists based on ground theory. Previous studies prove that it is feasible to use grounded theory to frame servicescape from the consumer perspective, as it is an approach to theory building (Matteucci & Gnoth, 2017). What is more, it is reasonable to focus on consumers, who are regarded as crucial role in the continuous processes of value creation (Vargo & Lusch, 2004).

Corbin and Strauss (2008) define the grounded theory can denote theoretical constructs according to qualitative analysis of data. To make sure theory generated from data, Christiansen (2011) supports empirical data work before literature research in related fields when using grounded theory. However, Bryman (2012) argues that a degree of deduction is involved in the inductive process, especially applying the ground theory. The research is started with the literature review, so the findings might be influenced by previous studies unintentionally. Accordingly, the research can only be defined as mainly an inductive study. In terms of epistemological considerations, the research is referred to interpretivism, phenomenology in particular, while it requires to approach 'common-sense thinking' and explain their actions and their social world from their point of view (Bryman, 2012). In terms of ontological considerations, the research is referred to constructionism rather than objectivism, which emphasizes that the social phenomena are accomplished by social actors and are mutable (Bryman, 2012). As the research is around consumer value, cyclists as social actors play a key role in exploring the social phenomena, which cannot be separated like objectivism.

### **3.2 Research strategy**

Considering the social context, qualitative research strategy is applied to reach research questions. Firstly, the cycle tourism is different from other destinations, the construction and experience of Swedish cyclists are different too. It is about new social contexts and perspectives, while previous studies are too limited to explain the diversification of life worlds (Flick, 2009). Second, research question as a starting point when considering the research strategy (Flick, 2009). The study pursues building a framework of cycling servicescape in Sweden, plus identifying cyclists value perception based on the servicescape. However, the first question should be built through cyclist experience and the knowledge about their life world (value) is not enough to come up with a hypothesis to test. In contrast, it is necessary to utilize sensitizing concepts to interpret the life world and individual biographical processes that result from this situation of participants (Flick, 2009). In this way, the research would focus on words instead of data (Bryman, 2012).

The semi-structured interview as one of qualitative methods is utilized, which is considered as a suitable method to answer research questions. Regarding the first research question, consumers as participants and creators of the servicescape play an important role to share their experience to assist understanding and framing a servicescape (Aubert-Gamet, 1997; Clarke & Schmidt, 1995; Pham et al., 2019). It is supported by the statement that researchers can gain insights into biographies, experiences, and values through the semi-structured interview mentioned by T. May (2011). To answer the second question, it requires analyzing the data and going beyond the experience and stories shared by interviewees. T. May (2011) points out that clarification and elaboration can be collected through the semi-structured interview, which provides the interviewer more potential and latitude to probe beyond their narrative. At the same time, it is worth mentioning that the conceptualizations of value vary with experience (Vespestad et al., 2019), which means the demand of lots of participants to achieve simple saturation.

### **3.3 Research design: a grounded theory**

It is a case study focused on Sweden, detailed description and evaluations of current situations is going to be introduced (Flick, 2009). Outdoor activities are encouraged by planners, politicians and nature conservationists in Sweden (Emanuel, 2017). There is not a national fascination with competitive cycling like France or Italy in Sweden, only the call of fresh air, the love of nature, the desire of escaping from the city motivates cyclists (Emanuel, 2017). No matter the national strategy, Swedish Cycling advocacy or online blogs, all these strategies and visions form part of the political and cultural landscape of cycling politics, so that cycling thus promotes transitions to more sustainable and cycling friendly mobility (Balkmar & Summerton, 2017). What is more, the success of Vision Zero policies makes an inspiration for US road safety initiatives (Cushing et al., 2016). Following the trend of commercialization of outdoor activities globally, the promotion of outdoor activities becomes the key issue of welfare society in Sweden (Margaryan & Fredman, 2017). Overall, the cycling culture and policy create a distinctive servicescape, so the research can contribute to development of relative theory and guide other destinations.

Regarding the interview, the research period started from February to May in 2020, and research participants are required to have cycling journey experience in Sweden within recent years. There is no limitation of the length of the journey, while it asks interviewees to go cycling for tourism, instead of commuting or training. It also requires participants to speak English or Chinese to make sure the data can be analyzed. Because how much details interviewees can provide are dependent on their language ability (Mann & SpringerLink, 2016). On the other hand, it is worth mentioning that the target group is difficult to contact. First, the language can be an issue, because the cycling groups on Facebook are basically named in Swedish. Second, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and seasonality of cycle tourism, there is few cycling activities during the research period. The sample size is 18, which should be determined by saturation (Lyu et al., 2017). However, Low (2019) argues that there are new theoretic insights as long

as data is collected continually. In this way, the researchers can choose to stop when they see similar instances over and over again, as they feel confident to achieve saturation (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

### **3.4 Data collection**

After confirming the research objectives and research participants, the data collection is mainly following the process of doing semi-structured interviews from March to May in 2021. Firstly, regarding the design of the interview, Bryman (2012) argues that questions should be considered carefully and comes up with interview guides (See Appendix 1.). It is worth noticing that pilot interviews are applied in English and Chinese both, which is helpful to phrase the questions better. Accordingly, it was started with questions about demographics (e.g., gender, age, occupation, and nationality), as Corbin and Strauss (2008) emphasize experience must be located within and cannot be separated from this information. The second section investigated experience before, during and after the cycling journey. The final section mainly focused on their linkage with servicescape and details of experience. The following questions can be adjusted according to content mentioned by interviewees and the demand of research. Considering the language issue, the questions are bilingual to make sure of accurate expression. Besides, suggestions would be asked after each interview, which helps to promote question and adjust the wording of the questions.

How to find qualified interviewees can be another issue. To attract participants, the post was designed and uploaded on social platforms (see Appendix 2.). As a lack of interviewees, it was uploaded to a cycling group called “Cyklistbubblan - för oss som cyklar” (“The cyclist bubble – for us who cycle”) on Facebook. Since there was a lack of active responses, the post was uploaded to “Adventure Group Malmö”, which is an active group based in Malmö with 2,100 members from all over the world. As research participants are difficult to approach, 100 Kr as incentives is considered as an effective and cost-efficient strategy to increase short-term participants (Fomby, Sastry, &



McGonagle, 2017). However, Khoo-Lattimore (2018) argues that caution in rewarding interview participants is required, as it can be too lucrative. Accordingly, interviewees were selected with conversation on the Internet, to make sure they have cycling journey experience. Fomby et al. (2017) also prove that incentive has no negative impact on final response. Besides, purposive sampling and convenience sampling were conducted, 18 participants are interviewed in total (see Table 1.). It is worth mentioning that some of the participants were introduced by their friend who was interviewed before, so snowball technique is included.

<b>No.</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Occupation</b>
#01	China	24	Male	Student
#02	China	24	Male	Student
#03	China	24	Male	Student
#04	Sweden	24	Male	Student
#05	Russia	28	Male	Student
#06	China	25	Female	Student
#07	Brazil	38	Male	Student
#08	Bulgaria	25	Male	Student
#09	Sweden	23	Female	Student
#10	Sweden	30	Female	Student
#11	Sweden	28	Female	Employment
#12	Sweden	28	Male	Student
#13	UK	37	Male	Employment
#14	India	29	Male	Employment
#15	Lithuania	27	Female	Student
#16	Sweden	31	Male	Employment
#17	Sweden	31	Male	Employment
#18	Sweden	36	Male	Employment

*Table 1. Sampling*

Each interview was around 30 to 50 minutes. The varying time and place of interviews are considered, as they are significant factors that influence interviews (Mann &

SpringerLink, 2016). Interviews were usually in daytime, while several were in the evening (#6, #10, #17) since they are more active at that time. The physical environment of the interview is important, while background noise and distractions should be avoided especially (Mann & SpringerLink, 2016). Accordingly, five are face-to-face interviews on the first floor of the Astronomy Library at Lund, with comfortable chairs and a quiet but open-air environment, which are recorded by an application named Voice Memos on iPad. On the other hand, some participants are interviewed and recorded through Zoom due to the Covid-19 and long-distance issue. In this way, these interviewees generally stay at home during the interview, which is comfortable and familiar for them. Before the interview, the research topic and research aimed at participants in general language were introduced, informing each participant that the interview will be anonymous, and asking their permission to record the interview. During the interview, memos were taken when there was something interesting, and the short reflections were written quickly after the interview, which was prepared for data analysis.

### **3.5 Data analysis**

Firstly, transcription is considered as an important analytic stage (Mann & SpringerLink, 2016). Records were transcribed after the interview as soon as possible, as it allows to reflect stance, positioning, and identities of interviewer and interviewee (Mann & SpringerLink, 2016). There is an ‘editing’ process during transcription to make the statement clear (Flick, 2009), while a ‘reflective step’ is applied to interviewees so as to avoid misunderstanding (Mann & SpringerLink, 2016). However, transcription is a time-consuming activity (Bryman, 2012), while it should not cost too much time according to the transcription rules (Flick, 2009). In this way, applications named Otter and Xunfeitingjian were utilized to transcript the interview first and then checked in person, that avoids consuming too much time and increasing distance between the researcher and recorded data (Mann & SpringerLink, 2016). However, Mann and

SpringerLink (2016) argue that familiarization with the data should be the first phase of thematic analysis, while transcription can be an approach to help researchers get close to data. What is more, interviews in Chinese were transcribed in Chinese and translated to English when data is required to be analyzed.

Secondly, coding as a process to conceptualize raw data, is involved in analysis, which is considered as a method to discover treasures (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Based on transcriptions, Bryman (2012) identifies coding is the most central process. The coding was just following each transcription, especially at the beginning of data collection. It is because the 'close encounter' makes analysis easier with strong foundation (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). During the process of coding, there was a lot of brainstorming, comparing, and reflective thought regarding analytic tools mentioned before (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). In this way, labelling the transcription might be part of theoretical significance after each interview, as it can sharpen the understanding of data and it is helpful for theoretical sampling (Bryman, 2012). Then, transcriptions were reviewed without coding to discover something that was ignored before. What is more, coding and transcription further were checked together, which can make sure the coding is suitable to the content. Until interview #9, a primary framework was framed, and it was efficient to avoid collecting repetitive data but discover fresh data. Each interviewee who mentioned a relative topic would be numbered in the framework, so that provides a clear and direct view. Later, theoretical sampling is applied to select interviewees, which helps to identify the useful data and adjust questions of interview to select more relative data. Finally, when interview #18, saturation sampling was achieved.

Thirdly, the core activity of data analysis here is hermeneutics, which is considered as the decisive factor that can determine the statements and conclusions (Flick, 2009). To come up with findings, the grounded theory is applied, which is considered as the most widely used frameworks for analyzing qualitative data (Bryman, 2012). Findings are generally derived from four stages of the comparative method argued by Glaser and Strauss (1967, p. 105): “1) *comparing incidents applicable to each category*; 2)

*integrating categories and their properties; 3) delimiting the theory; and 4) writing the theory.*” Constant comparisons and theoretical comparisons to answer two of the research questions separately. Through comparing incidents (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) to come up with similarity and difference, a higher-level descriptive concept is proposed: a leisure servicescape of cycle tourism in Sweden (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). To explore consumer value, it is easy to ignore the significance and meaning, whilst further explanation is applied to evaluate the metaphors and similes when they share their feeling. To make it clearer to analyze, there is a table regarding interviewees and labels about their narrative before applying comparative methods, see Appendix 3. For more details, the analytic tools involve the use of questioning, making comparisons, looking at emotions that are expressed and the situation that aroused them, looking for the negative case, and looking at the structure of the narrative and how it is organized in terms of time or some other variable (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

Finally, after generating memos and categories regarding collected data, integration is the last step and the most difficult part (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). It finished through review memos, looking for cues and doing diagrams (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The transcriptions were reread combining the memos and dimensions generated. To make the conceptual theory clear, a framework of servicescape and a figure showing the relationship are built (see Figure 5. & Figure 6. in Chapter 5). It is worth mentioning that two figures are not generated directly, while two of them have several versions during the analysis, as the finding is increasing and integrating too. After the final rereading, theories are done as all the analytic story in the right place (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

### **3.6 Evaluation**

Reliability as a criterion for assessing qualitative research can be increased by several ways, including training the interviewers, checking the interview guides, adjusting questions in rehearsal (Flick, 2009). Though building relationships with interviewees

like friends as soon as possible, interviewees were comfortable and willing to share their experience. At the same time, adjusting the question and giving proper reflection after the answer also encouraged interviewees back to the topic or go deeper. On the other hand, in terms of the validity, repeating or paraphrasing statements during the interview and sending the transcription to each interviewee after the interview can avoid misunderstanding and mis-transcribing. What is more, regard to objectivity, the study focuses on making epistemological position clear (Flick, 2009). However, it is worth mentioning that reliability, validity, and objectivity are classical criteria; whether these criteria are suitable for qualitative research should be considered further (Flick, 2009).

Regarding limitations, due to the time limitation, the research method is only one qualitative method: the semi-structured interview, which means the findings can be limited. It can be better if the research can combine the qualitative method and quantitative method together or add one more qualitative method like netnography or observation. What is more, considering the critiques of qualitative research, first, qualitative research is considered too subjective, the theory grounded generally from consumer experience (Bryman, 2012). Second, it is difficult to replicate, as the author here is the main instrument to interview and analyze data, which means a complete replication is impossible (Bryman, 2012). Regarding grounded theory, it will be better to apply computer-assisted-qualitative data analysis as an assistant.

### **3.7 Ethical considerations**

Bryman (2012) and Flick (2009) mention that ethical issues should be considered in research. To prevent harm to the interviewee, it requires that interviewees are willing to be interviewed and want to share their experience. Online interviews were conducted as much as possible to maintain social distance and avoid the risk of infection. At the same time, the tone of the question during the interview was paid attention to prevent inappropriate language from causing discomfort to the interviewee. Second, the lack of informed consent is avoided. Before the interview, participants were informed that the

interview is for research, after making sure participants understand and accept this aim, the interview would be started. After the interview, the details about interviews were checked and transcription results were sent to interviewees. What is more, the research requires participants to share their cycling experience, which can be privacy. In this case, all interviewees are anonymized, Further, questions about income, religious beliefs, or sexual activities were avoided (Bryman, 2012). Last, there is no deception during the research. To attract participants, there is 100 Kr as the incentive for each participant. However, only eight interviewees received the incentives, while other interviewees refused it. How to deal with this situation and take care of the feelings of each interviewee should be considered.

## **4. Empirical description and analysis**

Firstly, through semi-structured interviews, the grounded theory and coding are applied in data analysis. Following the four stages of comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), experiences during the cycling journey are compared to check applicable to each dimensions of servicescape and types of value firstly. Labels are categorized into four dimensions of servicescape: artificial dimension, natural dimension, social dimension, and virtual dimension and eight types of value from servicescape: therapy in the wild, Swedish aesthetics, safe adventure, cheap enjoyment, regular freedom, memorable relationship, transformative achievement, and ecological consideration. Second step is integrating dimensions and types. Thirdly, the process of delimiting the theory with analytic tools like questioning, looking at emotions, looking for negative cases, and so on (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Finally, the theory can be grounded.

### **4.1 Framework of Servicescape**

To ground a theory of servicescape in cycle tourism, the analysis shed light on the experience of cyclists, especially what and how they describe the scene when they review their story of cycle journey. It is worth mentioning that looking at emotions that are expressed and the situation that aroused them and looking for negative case are two analytic tools of grounded theory especially applied during analysis (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Several elements are labelled, while interviewees and their labels are showing in Appendix 3, which would be mentioned during analysis. According to the comparative method, all the labels are categorized as four dimensions. Analysis is based on constant comparisons, the conceptual theory integrated through analysis is shown in Chapter 5. What is more, collected data illustrates that the servicescape not only includes man-made facilities, but nature, other people and even virtual environments like websites, which is going to introduce the following.

#### ***4.1.1 Artificial dimension***

When it comes to cycling in Sweden, all interviewees are amazed by the infrastructure. By comparing with the cycling environment of other countries, participants express their recognition of the cycling environment more deeply and identify Sweden as a bicycle-friendly country.

#### **Bicycle store & Bicycle Kitchen**

The bicycle store and the bicycle kitchen are important, especially at the beginning of the preparation for a cycling trip and when the bicycle is broken down. Quotation of #14 emphasizes a lack of bike kitchens, it is a negative case which shows the importance of them as an alternative option of the bike store.

#14: *“If we had more bike kitchens around Sweden. I think that would be useful because if you are going on a weekend, your bike breaks down or you have a problem in the bike, you cannot fix it because most of the stores are closed.”*

Due to consideration of cost and time, compared to the traditional bicycle store (#08), participants (#01, #02, #03, #06, #08, #09, #14) shows their preference of the bicycle kitchen. They were excited when mentioned the bicycle kitchen and the experience of how they assemble their bikes there (#02), #14 further shows his pride in assembly.

#### **Infrastructure**

Cycle routes in Sweden are nationwide that almost cover all the landscapes and cross major cities with lots of alternative routes, cyclists thereby are possible and free to ride their bikes to where they want to go and to select the route they prefer (see #04, #08). #04 presents the convenience of cycling through comparing to vehicles, while #08 just describes directly.



#04: *“You can go where you want to go by bike, you do not have to take the car outside the city or to go somewhere. [...] But for this kind of medium to long distance, I think from the local perspective, I think the bicycle can do a lot.”*

#08: *“It is stopped along a bunch of cool sightseeing spots.”*

More specifically, the cycle lane is mainly the car-free bike lane with high-quality and specific sign (see #05) and symbol and without heavy traffic, though sometimes it is next to the highway (see #03). #05 emphasizes the importance of signs by repeating ‘very’. #03 evaluates the cycle lane as the best and lists the worst experience to prove this point of view. Regarding security, the bicycle locker is considered by participants (#08, #13, #14) when it seldom appears nearby restaurants, hotels, and café, that makes them remember the experience of losing bicycles by themselves or their friends.

#05: *“I think the signs are very, very important to lead you to the right way.”*

#03: *“The best is the cycling lane, because we go through many places when we ride, and even ride on the highway, there will always be a road dedicated to bicycles.”*

About auxiliary facilities, unlike long-distance cyclists who do not want to depend on too many facilities so carry a lot of tools including the air pump (see #01), short-distance cyclists rely more on the air pump provided along the roadside (#05, #10, #11, #12, #13).

#01: *“Because we brought our own tool kit, then repaired it ourselves, and also brought the air pump.”*

Furthermore, other modes of transportation, especially train (#07, #08) and bus (#14), are very friendly to bicycles, which allow participants to carry bicycles. With the

assistance of other vehicles, starting or ending their bicycle journey without restriction becomes possible.

In addition to toilets (#01, #02, #03, #04, #06, #12, #13), water pumps (#03, #06, #13, #17), and restaurants (#01, #02, #03, #06, #09, #11, #12, #15, #16, #17) which are mentioned by almost all interviewees, there are supermarkets (#02, #06), grocery (#03, #08, #09, #12), café (#08, #12, #13, #15), and pharmacy (#08) in the inhabited areas along the way to ensure the smooth progress of the journey.

Moreover, another negative case occurs. With people rely on electronic products, mobile network signals can ensure that interviewees can find relevant information and ask for help in time. It is worth mentioning that, though many interviewees show their reliance on electronic products and applications, no one is aware of the importance of signal.

#09: “[...] Telephone signal. [...] When I came from Finland to Sweden for three days (during cycle journey), I had no connection. So, I could not call anybody. I mean, if something would have happened, I would not be able to call and I could not look at them. So that is why signals were important for me.”

### **Accommodation**

Accommodation is highlighted as the cycle journey can spend a few days. The traditional hotel is still considered by those cyclists who do not want to camp (see #16). However, for a long-distance cycling journey, a hotel or motel is not the only choice for them, camping sites and wind shelters are also considered (see #01, #17). #01 and #17 present their consumer preference of accommodation. The camping site is favored by many interviewees (#01, #02, #03, #04, #06, #08, #09, #12, #13), especially it can provide a place for taking showers (see #01 & #02, #06, #08, #12) and cooking (see #01 & #02, #12) in a low price (see #01).

#16: *“We only stayed in a hotel because we wanted to be relaxed and we are not really campers.”*

#01: *“The camping site is very convenient and cheap, and then you can set up a tent, and then you can take a shower and cook, which basically meets all your life needs.”*

#17: *“You can sleep in these windshields for free, I think this is the best.”*

### **Odor**

Participants also pay attention to odor during their cycle journey. Transportation emissions (#02), smell of farmyard (#13), and asphalt (#04, #09) that caused by human activities impress them with negative experiences shown by their facial expression.

### **Other architectures**

On the other hand, other architectures along the way are also included. Although they have no functional role, their existence adds an atmosphere of human civilization and modern art to bicycle travel. For example, special building becomes a recreation (see #12) and a memorable landmark (see #17 in 4.4.2), while #04 also mentions that the same route with nothing new can be boring.

#12: *“I walked out along to the bigger wooden structure at the lake where you can walk out and just jump into the water.”*

### **4.1.2 Natural dimension**

Nature, highlighted by participants, is one of the most important reasons that they choose to have a cycling journey in Sweden. Not galloping past like a train or consuming time like hiking, the speed of the bicycle is considered by interviewees to

be the most suitable for appreciating and approaching nature (see #06). In other words, nature plays a significant role to construct the servicescape, as participants really feel special emotions that provided based on the interaction of cycling in nature (see #05)

#06: *“I passed by the train and the same cycling route [...] To go at different speeds is to experience a landscape completely different [...] Bicycling makes me feel integrated into nature.”*

#05: *“It is about openness, freedom, space. experience.”*

### **Temperature & Weather**

Temperature (#01, #02, #10) and weather (#02, #04, #05, #06, #10, #13) directly or indirectly determine whether to go on a bicycle trip and how is the experience of cycling. According to statement of #04, the change of emotions due to the weather is obvious from the expression.

#04: *“I would say the wind is the main issue for me or to my fingers. That is annoying. [...] The sunshine, I prefer a lot. [...] But it is mostly when it rains, and it is windy at the same time. It is pretty disturbing.”*

### **Openness**

High forest coverage and low population density provide advantages for the preservation of nature in Sweden (see #09). Regarding #06, the sense of primitiveness thus brings an opportunity for participants to escape the city life and being an animal.

#09: *“It is a lot of forest, just one road and nobody.”*

#06: *“Temperature dropped in the evening, and it was very cold when I got up in the morning, but it became warmer and warmer after I started riding. It feels as if I have returned to a very primitive, animal-like way to feel all the wind, light and temperature changes during the day.”*

Thanks to the Right of Public Access, for cyclists, the wilderness is not only a landscape that can be enjoyed, an uninhabited land that can be explored, but also a "natural accommodation" for them to sleep or have a rest for free (see #07).

#07: *“I camped right at the edge of the middle of this lake. So, there was like an open space without a clearance on the forward. And it was like a tree on top of me. So, kind of gave me a little bit of shelter, feel arranged. And I made a little camp, you know, I made a fire. And then I was right in front of this beautiful Long Lake. And I could see the other side of the lake, I could see just trees everywhere. And it was very quiet, very silent, not too many people around. So as soon as the sun starts coming down, the lights start changing. And it was very peaceful, but it was very nice.”*

What is more, according to account by interviewees, they can reach the coast (#01, #03, #08, #10, #11, #13, #14, #15, #16, #18), forest (#01, #02, #03, #06, #08, #09, #10, #12, #14, #15, #16, #17), lake (#01, #02, #03, #07, #08, #12, #14), river (#14), and hill (#04, #05, #08, #11) as they like in Sweden by bike. It is worth acknowledging that this is inseparable from the accessibility of bicycles, but more importantly, abundant natural resources make this exploration possible.

### **Sense**

Cycling in Sweden can be considered as an audiovisual feast. From visual perspectives, it must be mentioned that participants meet with wild animals occasionally, including cattle (#01), fox (#03, #13), horse (#03), cow (#03), rabbit (#03), insect (#03, #06), bird (#03, #07), fish (#08), moose (#10, #15), swan (#12), dog (#14). It is very likely that

cyclists encounter wild animals during riding based on their narrative, while this unintentional encounter means a wilder, more inconceivable, and unpredictable servicescape. Involved in the servicescape, participants sound the birds (#05, #10, #12, #14), even the cow low (see #01), insect (#03), bird (#05, #14), wind (#09), and fox (#13). What is more, different from odor in artificial dimension, the odor in natural dimension includes sea (#08, #05, #10, #14, #15), forest (#02, #08, #10, #11, #14, #15), flowers (#02, #05), grass (#12), firewood (#17). Finally, all these senses constructure the natural dimension and further distinguish nature in Sweden from other destinations.

#01: *“Perhaps the most impressive thing is that I lived in a tent on the first day, and then was woken up by a large herd of cattle the next morning. It was very noisy, and it felt like you were calling right next to the tent.”*

#10: *“Suddenly, the big moose just appeared, and 20 meters in front of me.”*

#14: *“[...] I think the other smell I would talk about is when you are in the forest and there has been rain not at that moment, but maybe one day before. And it is important. You have got this smell of greenery, lush greenery.”*

#### ***4.1.3 Social dimension***

It is worth mentioning that whether the participant chooses to ride alone or with friends, cycling alone or with others, they always meet other people, including other cyclists, passersby, locals, and service staff. Although the first response is silence when related questions were asked, most of the interviewees would share what happened with other strangers during their journey after a brief recollection.

#### ***Locals & Passersby & Other cyclists***

All kinds of person-to-person contact are very short, just a greeting (see #01), a tiny act (see #01), a handy help (see #08, #14), an inexpensive gift (see #09), or a conversation (see #08, #09). However, among these interactions, some can heat up servicescape, but some interactions are not benign, and even have a negative effect on servicescape (see #06). It is undeniable that they are all an integral part of the servicescape. Accordingly, whether these actors play crucial roles in the servicescape is not sure, while it is true that their existence makes servicescape no longer so straightforward and weak.

#01: *“The locals, probably because of their remoteness, are very friendly to the cyclists, and basically everyone will say hello. Then when a cyclist passes by, he will smile or say hello to you.”*

#08: *“I crashed, my bicycle flew, I flew, and I had some bruises and cuts, but then it was a pretty small town. A bunch of old people ran out and started asking if I was okay, and then picked up pieces of my bike, and then I assembled it. And then, they invited me in for tea. One of the old ladies, she was a nurse, and she just wanted to make sure I do not have a concussion. [...] I practiced my Swedish.”*

#06: *“I put on a mask, and some people coughed at me.”*

### **Service providers & Volunteers/Policemen**

Service staff or volunteers here, not only represent a specific restaurant or others, but represent the town and region and even destination branding (see #14). It is worth mentioning that the interaction for the service staff is not anything “should do”, for example, restaurant manager mentioned by #09, while the spontaneous action (given the cap) can better connect with the consumer.

#14: “*And sometimes the police or maybe the voluntary police, they have been helpful. They told me where to go if my phone died. [...] and I cannot speak Swedish fluently, while they would say ‘let us speak English’.*”

#09: “*Especially one point when I get into this small restaurant, it is a small town where they said we only have three people living here. the restaurant manager starts to talk with me. [...] And he also gave me a cap with the name of the town.*”

#### **4.1.4 Virtual dimension**

People rely on information and communication technologies to collect information, that is why all participants mention the Internet.

#### **Google search & Google maps & TripAdvisor & Facebook**

Accordingly, the existing websites fulfil many demands of participants. They can download the application on their electronic devices and collect information on TripAdvisor (see #11), and more often they can check directions and weather on Google (see #08). In other words, the scattered information and web pages make the interviewees more dependent on search engines to collect basic information (see #13). However, it can be an issue that #14 points out the drawback of Google Maps, which sometimes does not show the shortest way. Cyclists also prefer to be active in their Facebook group, which helps them receive abundant useful information.

#08: “*When I want to go someplace, I Just Google.*”

#13: “*What is the rough idea I want to go for, [...] will be Google maps.*”

#11: “*I used to go to TripAdvisor. I check with companies they have and how they are ranked.*”



### *Website of Destination Management Organization (DMO)*

Participants who come from other countries and have not lived for many years normally rely on the Destination Organization Management (DMO) websites. Basically, they do not care about the layout or design of those websites, but only focus on the practicability (see #01). Too many hyperlinks can be an issue, which makes the information separated. What is more, it is interesting that some participants would refuse to use the DMO website because of too many suggestions and information, which is not suitable for them, but even ruin their pleasure of planning the journey by themselves (see #08).

#01: *“I think it is very convenient. [...] It is clearly marked, which is quite practical. [...] I think it is quite simple and concise, and it is not particularly good-looking, but I think it is very simple and not messy for me, which is very good.”*

#08: *“I never use it. But Sweden has good official websites. I know they have it. [...] But I do not really need it. Because I know from experience, if that makes sense.”*

## **4.2 Cyclist value**

Compared to frame the servicescape, the exploration of consumer value can be more abstract, though it is based on the servicescape, which is still a challenge in the research. To answer the second research question and further understand servicescape better, theoretical comparisons as one of comparative methods is applied. There is a shift from focusing on details of their cycling experience to similarity and differences about all of them. Just as Corbin and Strauss (2008) mentions that, theoretical comparisons force analysis based on properties and dimension level, which means the analysis becomes more sophisticated and abstract. What is more, regarding findings, all types of value are complex, while each one maintains a subtle balance because of the servicescape.

### ***4.2.1 Therapy in the wild***

Thanks to the natural dimension of the servicescape, cycling in Sweden becomes the wildest way of psychotherapy. Cyclists riding in the wilderness, they perceive the existence of animals (see #13), and even think of themselves as animals (see #6 mentioned before).

#13: *“I have done quite a lot of night cycling. [...] 2 o’clock in the morning, [...] It is a completely different world because that is the time for animals.”*

By being in the wilderness, the cyclists see the world that they usually cannot see. In the empty scene, they relax their brains and focus on the movement of their bodies. In other words, riding keeps them away from the real world, while wilderness heals their negative emotions (see #03). It is worth mentioning that during the pandemic, cycling has become an important way for people to resolve their emotions. Online classes and online offices have caused people to be confined at home for a long time, and cycling has naturally become a choice for travel. #01 also said that cycling has greatly eased his anxiety and made him feel relaxed and happy.

#03: *“I had a little bit of personal problems before riding. [...] In the process, I suddenly became more and more positive. [...] It makes me believe that maybe the current difficulties are not so unsolvable.”*

In addition, Sweden, with a unique social environment and atmosphere, is considered quieter than other destinations (see #14), so that foreigners cannot apply it. In this case, cycling can also help foreigners living in Sweden adapt to the environment and pace of life more quickly.

#14: *“[...] especially because most of my stay in Sweden has been during the pandemic. So, there is not a lot of social life, like back in Ireland or in Hong Kong. [...] You know*

*that is quite quiet that way in Sweden. And not a lot of events are happening. I think I really enjoyed my bike right here because it takes me to the countryside, you can be healed.”*

#### **4.2.2 Swedish aesthetics**

As a type of natural-based tourism, it is no doubt that aesthetics can be one of consumer value (see #09). On the one hand, based on the description of the interviewees, Swedish abundant natural resources and the proper layout of the cycling routes make the scenery during the cycling not simple (see natural dimension mentioned in 4.1.2). Whether it is a long-distance or short-distance cycling trip, they can enjoy a variety of natural scenery. This slow transition of time and space allows cyclists to better appreciate Swedish aesthetics and integrate into servicescape.

*#09: “So, I saw for two kilometres like this down the hill and over there. It was cool, beautiful, and quite empty. It is like a space. And the further down you get the more familiar I felt because then you get the forest, and the mountains disappear. Everything is small, and very crowded. So yeah, that is nice.”*

However, it should be emphasized that aesthetics is based on the servicescape, which is not only regarding nature, but the combination of natural dimension and artificial dimension. The architecture as a stimulus plays a certain role in the aesthetics of the scene (see other architectures mentioned in 4.1.1), which enriches the viewing of the servicescape (see #17). However, only when the combination of man-made dimensions and natural dimensions reach a balance point, the cyclist can feel this value to the greatest extent.

*#17: “There is a lighthouse. If you go in the new moon, it will be very dark because there are no lights. [...] It will be very dark around 1 o'clock in the evening, and you*

*will see a very beautiful view at that time. Because you will only see it glowing, and then the light will turn around and you will see beautiful light and shadow.”*

### ***4.2.3 Cheap enjoyment***

Value here is not only as playful but cheap based on the servicescape. Whether you choose to live in the wild or camping sites, compared to traveling by other means of transportation, the interviewees unanimously stated that the cost of riding is very low (see accommodation mentioned in 4.1.1). #09 especially expressed that she opposed the demand for expensive bicycles and proved that using 30 years old bicycles can also be used for long-distance cycling trips in Sweden. This is due to the good cycling road conditions in Sweden. Simultaneously, the setting of a bike kitchen also reduces the cost of bicycle travel. People can assemble bicycles by themselves without paying high labor costs, which also can be considered as a part of enjoyment. In addition, cyclists have their own way of creating happiness in the servicescape.

*#03: “We are very happy, singing while riding. The most impressive thing was we were very happy because we had to go to the last stop. There was a big lake, and a few of us were very happy to dance there, then cheered, and finally did it, which was fine. [...] This is a kind of relaxation, but also a change of ordinary life. That means you do not have to go too far, and you do not have to spend a lot of money.”*

As mentioned in #03, riding and singing with friends, and stopping by the lake to dance together is the greatest joy on the road. Through analysis, the companion of riders has a great influence on their enjoyment, which means riding is a way for them to get along with friends (#01, #02, #03, #06, #12, #16), partners (#13, #14, #16), or family (#12). Therefore, this value can be defined as a spontaneous happiness but not expensive, which is based on overall servicescape.

### ***4.2.4 Safe adventure***

Riding in Sweden is not only an adventure, but a safe one. First, in the eyes of cyclists, a complete infrastructure has provided a guarantee for the safety of their riding. They ride on separate bike lanes most of the time, although they may sometimes ride next to the car on the highway (see #01 mentioned in 4.1.1). Compared with other countries, Sweden not only provides cyclists with convenient conditions for activities in the city, but also pays special attention to the accessibility of bicycles between cities (#10, #14). It can be seen from the narrative of #12 that the design of the route keeps him from staying away from the town that can provide supplies, which makes him feel safe.

*#12: “You could go to different places with much more adventure to offer because it would not be as familiar. However, at the same time, all this vacation feels quite safe because you can ride on a separate bike lane and you are always biking distance from a place where you can buy food, or just sit down and relax and things like that. That is more of an adventure because it offers, it offers more certainty, but also with that, it offers more discovery.”*

In addition to the exploration of unknown destinations, the presence of wild animals also adds an element of excitement to the cycling trip in Sweden. Among them, especially the experience of #01 being awakened by cattle, and the experiences of #10 and #15 seeing the moose all prompted them to regard cycling trips as adventures. At the same time, these experiences also prompted them to want to ride a trip again, because the unknown experience made them feel excited and looking forward to it. Nevertheless, they still emphasize that the journey is safe.

#### ***4.2.5 Regular freedom***

Freedom is a word talked about by many interviewees. Because of the high coverage of the bicycle lane network, they can get to where they want to go, even to places that cannot be reached by cars. The accessibility of bicycles makes them feel unconstrained. Here, freedom is regular. Bicycle lanes can extend to many places, but they are always

man-made.

#05: *“I would like to find new places and, and I can do it by bike. [...] You can use the small roads like in the forest, you can take the shortcuts, you do not need to follow the car roads. [...] And I can use cycling to reach these spots, which could be very difficult to reach with other transportations like cars.”*

As mentioned by interviewee #5, even if they can stay away from the lane, cyclists always ride on the established road (small road, short road). Regular freedom is identified as one of value, which has some relevance to wildest therapy and safe adventure. Simply, it is a combination of wildest and safe, but it is different from them. Regular freedom is a unique value in this servicescape. It allows riders to be free while preventing them from being casual. This servicescape, especially "the Right of Public Access" allows cyclists the opportunity to enjoy freedom, and natural dimension also allows cyclists to experience freedom in life away from town (see #08). However, the artificial dimension pushes the cyclists to chase freedom on the one hand, and on the other hand restrains the cyclists from moving on the established track.

#08: *“[...] I am generally very busy. when I go cycling. [...] For me, the best part is that I do not use my phone at all. So, I guess I really enjoyed switching off for two weeks.”*

#### ***4.2.6 Memorable relationship***

The memorable relationship is basically derived from the social dimension of servicescape. As mentioned earlier, the interaction with the people in servicescape, locals, service providers, other cyclists, passersby, and police, plus fellow travelers, all promote the establishment of memorable relationships. Many interviewees regard meeting new people as an important asset for cycling, although they do not deliberately pursue long-term and stable relationships.

As mentioned by interviewees #01 & #03, they and other cyclists pass by for a moment, but the greeting and the smile can make them feel intimacy and warmth. The locals or passersby, not only mentioned by #08, #09 also got the help of a passing truck driver through a very difficult road. In this case, the value is co-created by the rider and other characters. However, value co-destruction also occurs. The experience of interviewee #6 is mentioned in social dimension, which shows that the establishment of negative relationships is also very easy.

In general, this relationship is fragile, which is easy to establish and extend. Regardless of whether the cyclist establishes a relationship with officers or other characters, he is also accumulating a relationship with the country of Sweden. Cyclists, no matter domestics, or foreigners, use wheels to measure the country and understand the geography and culture of Sweden. They pass through every town and then leave after building relationships with the people there. At first it is their memories of this small town. Over time, these relationships and memories will gradually become their connection with Sweden as a country. According to interviews, cycling has indeed allowed people to establish a deeper and positive relationship with Sweden.

#### ***4.2.7 Transformative achievement***

Cycling travel is a test of physical fitness, which is a way of traveling, but also a sport. Reaching a certain destination can become a personal goal and reaching a certain destination by riding has become the goal and pursuit, or even dream, of the cyclist. For example, interviewee #09 regards cycling back to Lund from the northernmost part of Sweden as a dream in her life and realized it. The realization of this dream also gave her a deeper understanding of pursuing dreams, which she believed could help her become a better person (see #09).

#09: “[...] *Achieve the things you want to do. [...] Because I felt a lot of people were afraid of achieving their dreams [...] Do not let your life go past, then It is going to be too late.*”

Indirectly, cycling can make people grow and progress. As mentioned by interviewee #06, riding allows her to clearly perceive her muscles and become stronger. At the same time, respondent #03 thinks that riding a bicycle makes him no longer afraid of what he was worried about before and makes him brave. Furthermore, the experience of cycling allowed interviewee #02 to change his stereotype of women

#03: “*The biggest change now is that I might see a spider, or a small bug and I would die before. But after cycling, I felt that this is something in nature and just let it go.*”

#02: “*I felt that the girl in our team would be a problem, [...] and then I finally realized that it was the three of us, boys, who slowed the progress, so I feel very ashamed of having such thoughts before.*”

The interviewees were inspired by their cycling experience in Sweden to achieve transformative achievements. The cyclist realized recharge (#08), got rid of the old unhealthy lifestyle (#06), and found a way to live with the new environment (#14). This is the value perceived by the rider based on the overall servicescape

#### ***4.2.8 Ecological consideration***

Finally, cycling in Sweden also aroused the ecological consideration of cyclists. Respondents regarded cycling as an environmentally friendly way of travel and distinguished it from other means of transportation (see #04). Especially the respondents from Sweden (see #12), they prefer to choose cycling to contribute to the environmental protection of their country. From the statement of interviewee #12, this environmental consideration not only comes from reality, but also from the virtual



dimension.

#04: *“Cycling is not really harming the environment. And that is, I think it is an important part why I like to buy a lot, because it does not contribute to any greenhouse effects.”*

#12: *“Because I am interested in environmental issues. I have tended to draw myself toward the sort of groups that do not really like flying on the Internet. In those groups who find different arguments for saying that, well, we have a lot of good tourism qualities in the local areas as well.”*

On the other hand, cycling experience in Sweden will also make people think more about the cycling servicescape in their country or the place where they have lived (see #01, #02). Swedish natural environment is shocked by the degree of protection, and this feeling is derived from other values, including wildest therapy, safer adventure, and regular freedom. Interviewees believe that the combination of natural and artificial is more harmonious in this servicescape than in the environment where they used to ride.

### **4.3 Summary of analysis**

In conclusion, there are four dimensions and relative elements categorized regarding grounded theory. As Corbin and Strauss (2008) mentions that each researcher has his or her own preference to analyze, questions are answered, emotional reflections are caught, negative cases are reviewed to analyze collected data. Regarding the framework of servicescape, it looks complicated with many elements which are aware or ignored before. The range of the whole framework is huge, which is beyond a physical environment, but including people and virtual environment. The framework is not totally controllable, while it involves many uncontrollable elements even dimensions like the natural dimension. According to the structure of narrative by interviewees,

different interviewees show different preference of each dimension. In this way, it is worth discovering the relationship between each dimension in servicescape. On the other hand, eight types of value derived from the servicescape are interesting and complicated. The name of each type of value seems to be a subtle contradiction, but it can be explained according to the material. It is because of the servicescape. Therefore, the relationship between each type of value and each dimension of servicescape should be discussed, which can explain cyclist value in Sweden clearer and understand the servicescape deeper.

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1 A leisure servicescape for cycle tourism

The result of empirical findings can answer two research questions. Regarding the first research question, the framework of the servicescape involves four dimensions: artificial, natural, social, and virtual (See Figure 5.). Considering the typology of servicescape, Wakefield and Blodgett (1994) that cycle tourism as a kind of leisure service, no matter the length of the cycling journey, the servicescape of it is always important. Therefore, it is necessary to explore the servicescape. In addition, the interpretation and analysis of the servicescape is helpful to understand the whole servicescape.

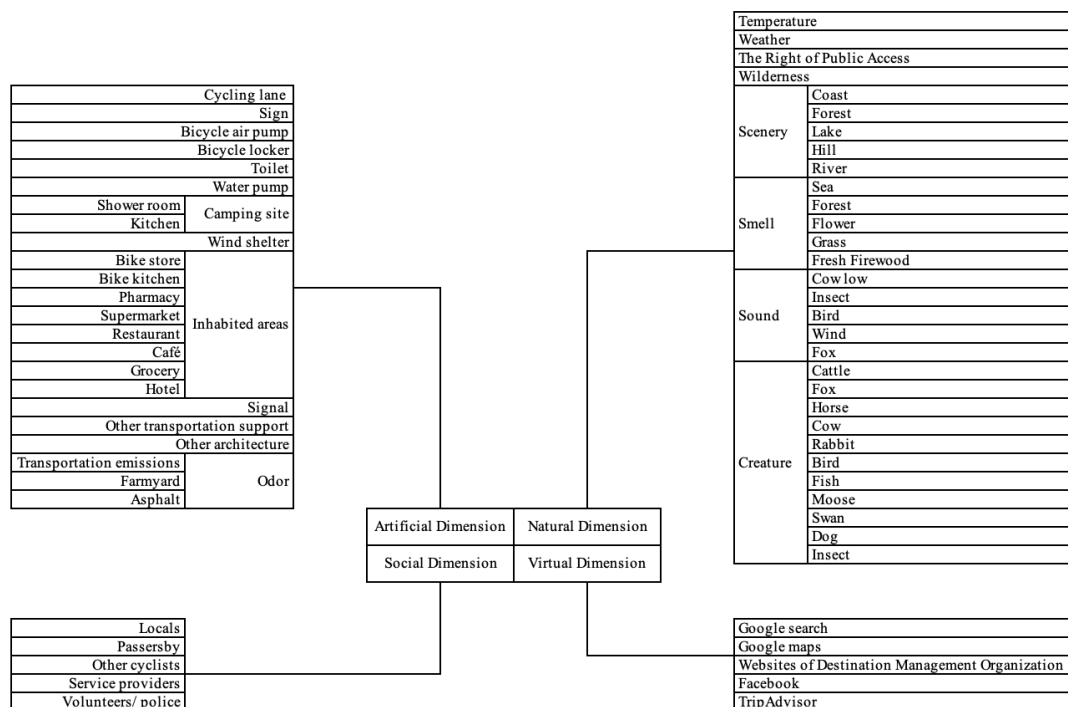


Figure 5. The framework of Swedish cycle tourism servicescape

Firstly, focusing on the environmental dimensions of the servicescape (see Figure 1.) by Bitner (1992), it mainly refers to the dimension controlled by humans, which is related to the artificial dimension here. However, Bitner (1992) not only over-evaluates the function of humans in servicescape but ignores the role of nature and other dimensions. Considering the elements, wildness and the Right of Public Access and landscapes is similar as 'being away' and 'fascination' identified by Rosenbaum and Massiah (2011) Regarding natural dimension, Margaryan and Wall-Reinius (2017) mention that unpredictable elements are crucial to keep the authenticity, therefore involves those uncertainties in the servicescape. Especially considering cycle tourism as natural-based tourism in the two-dimensional natural-based servicescape (see Figure 4.) (Fredman et al., 2012), naturalness and facilities are two opposite dimensions but involved together. What is more, involving nature into the servicescape also proves that the servicescape is not totally objective but can be unpredictable and unmeasurable (Rosenbaum & Massiah, 2011).

However, the artificial dimension on the other hand shows that part of the servicescape is controlled and necessary. Just like Margaryan (2018) mentioned that artificial settings, the infrastructure for example, is the support of natural-based tourism, the artificial dimension ensures the operation of servicescape from the perspective of safety and convenience. Regarding the abundant elements included, it is similar to the argument by Wakefield and Blodgett (1996) that more adequate ancillary service areas can fulfill demand of cyclists for long travel. Wakefield and Blodgett (1994) also argue that servicescape is required entertainment except for attractiveness and upkeep facilities as stimulation. It is similar as the other architectures as an element mentioned in 4.1.1. More specifically, the odor in artificial dimension is limited and detailed, but still a component of the servicescape, which is supported by Girard et al. (2019). What is more, interviewees show their preference to cycling in Sweden instead of other destination (#01, #02, #06, #10, #14), which proves the statement mentioned by Tsaour et al. (2020) that cycle tourism as adventure tourism is affected by the place-related factors more than the activity-related factors. In other words, the artificial dimension

here should be concentrated on. Besides, Wakefield and Blodgett (1996) argue that the service encounter of short duration makes consumers pay more attention to intangible factors, while this finding illustrates that participants are more able to perceive physical factors because of a lack of equipment.

Thirdly, regarding social dimension, it is worth mentioning that the cyclist is the main actor in this servicescape, while the short interaction with service providers mentioned by interviewees further proves this statement. When scholars discuss experience and servicescape, interaction is considered generally, since services require direct human contact (Bitner, 1992). However, unlike Bitner (1992) make the employees and customers outside the environmental dimension of servicescape, Rosenbaum and Massiah (2011) point out that employees should be considered as one of environmental stimuli as it can influence a customer experience, while the relational benefits provided to the customer can be different. Rosenbaum and Massiah (2011) and Wei et al. (2019) argue that employees like service providers and police, customers like other cyclists, and other actors like the locals and passersby, should be considered as “fixtures” in servicescape and involved in social dimension. It is worth mentioning the important role of other customers in the servicescape, which is showing that customers prefer to create value through interaction among customers (Fernandes & Neves, 2014).

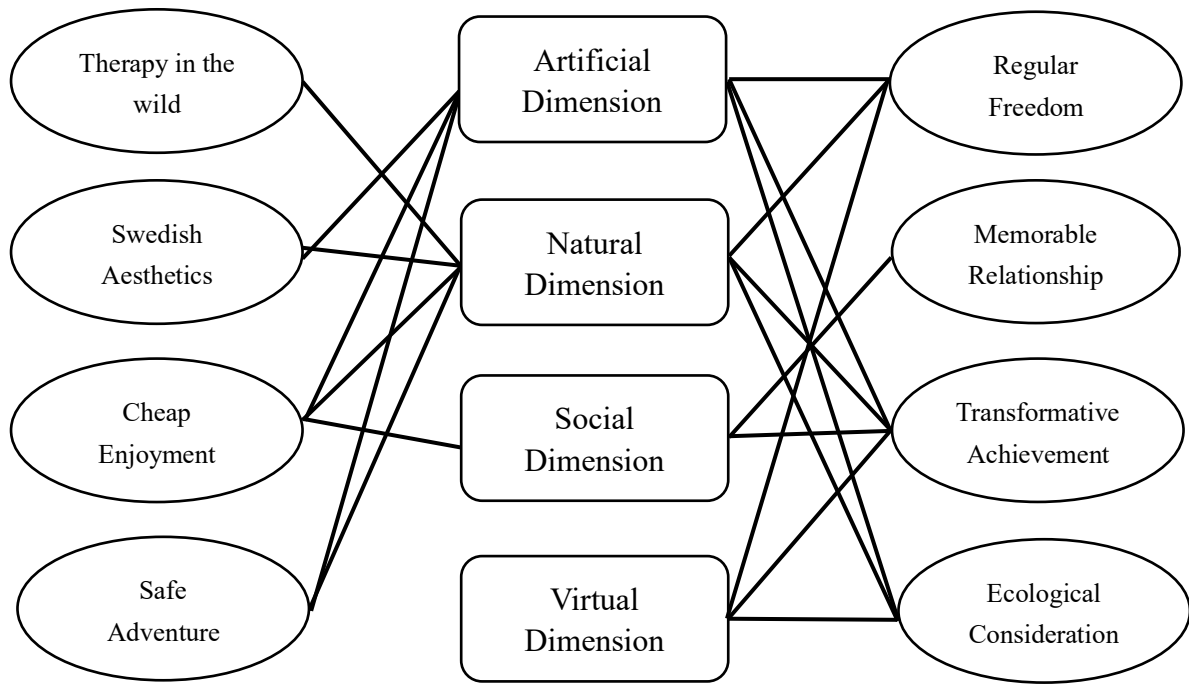
Last, cyclists depend on the information and communication technologies to collect information, plan their cycling journey, and check the route. Therefore, the virtual dimension should be considered in the servicescape. Compared to previous study, servicescape on the Internet is named as e-servicescape, which is generally divided into several dimensions like aesthetic, layout, functionality and financial security (Huang et al., 2017). However, the e-servicescape of cycle tourism in Sweden is complicated, as it is basically occupied by Google applications while the DMO website shows its potential. It is worth noticing that interviewees show their demand of a universal website or a specific application, which can include the maps, weather, routes, camping sites, and so on. The collected data do not allow to categorize and summarize the

dimension of e-servicescape. Thus, the virtual dimension is regarded as one of dimensions in the servicescape.

Overall, as statement of interviewees (#06, #08, #09), servicescape of cycle tourism in Sweden allows everyone to enjoy a bicycle holiday, regardless of age, speed, professionalism, bicycle price, and the length of the holiday. It is necessary to discuss the relationship among each dimension in the servicescape because each dimension cannot be separated clearly but converging and merging at the same time. Even though natural-based tourism, adventure tourism, and eco-tourism emphasize the importance of natural dimension and artificial dimension in servicescape (Fredman et al., 2012; Margaryan, 2018; Tsaur et al., 2020; Valentine, 1992), it requires to avoid conflict between artificial dimension and natural dimension in the servicescape at the same time (Ingólfssdóttir & Gunnarsdóttir, 2020; R. May et al., 2019). What is more, there is a socially-symbolic dimension mention by Rosenbaum and Massiah (2011), it is strongly refer to ethnic, while only #12 mention about perception of Viking signs/symbols during cycling journey for one sentence.

## **5.2 Value dimensions for cycle tourism**

To answer the second research question, eight types of value are introduced according to semi-structured interviews. Though Holbrook (1999) proposes a framework of consumer value, the exploration of consumer value can be more specific, so that the consumer value is suitable to the specific industry (Sánchez-Fernandez & Ángeles Iniesta-Bonillo, 2006). What is more, the cyclist is the main actor in the servicescape, so that cycle tourism can be considered as visitor-oriented (Chan, 2009) and requires the exploration of value. In addition, the consumer value from the servicescape is attracting more attention from researchers, both artificial environment (Fernandes & Neves, 2014) and natural environment (Picard, 2015).



*Figure 6. The relationship of value and servicescape*

The value is derived from different dimensions of the servicescape (See Figure 6.), which is also introduced in chapter 4. It proves that the collaboration of each dimension can contribute to the cyclist value, which proves the statement of Holbrook (1999) that the consumer value entails an interaction between subject (the servicescape) and object (cyclists). Considering the findings, the framework of Holbrook (1999) also makes sense to interpret the cyclist value, while it is too general. More specifically, Sotiriadis (2017) also argues esthetics as one of experiential dimensions in wildlife tourism.

What is more, Holbrook (1999) mentions that the consumer value is comparative, personal and situational. Firstly, the same dimension of servicescape can generate different types of cyclist value. Connecting with natural-based tourism, adventure tourism and ecotourism, the aesthetics of nature (Sotiriadis, 2017), the emotional reaction (Zakrisson & Zillinger, 2012) and safe consideration (Schlegelmilch & Ollenburg, 2013), the sustainable consideration (Beall et al., 2020) are not included in the framework by Holbrook (1999).

In addition, the characteristic of a person is illustrated by the different experiences collected through the interviews. Every cyclist has their own keywords to define their cycling journey and value differently. The different motivations and different objectives result in different types of value after experiencing the cycling journey. Third, situational is one of the reasons to apply the study as case study. Folmer et al. (2019) also point out that cycling in Tibet is a transformative experience for Chinese millennials, because it is not only a spiritual journey but a physical test. Both the subjects (Chinese millennials) and the situation (Tibet) confine their findings, so that Folmer et al. (2019) comes up with the specific term: transformative.

Servicescape can act on experience (E. Nilsson & Ballantyne, 2014), while most studies on cycle tourism ignore the important role of servicescape. Though it takes place in nature, while cannot do without infrastructures. Therefore, compared to other types of servicescape, servicescape of cycle tourism is more complicated, which is challenging but meaningful to explore. Although Swedish providers are willing to build the bridge between outdoor recreation and natural-based tourism (Margaryan & Fredman, 2017), studies on cycling system are rarely referred to tourism in Sweden, but simply confined to artificial facilities as transportation.



## **6. Conclusion**

### **6.1 Academic considerations**

To answer the first research question, the research contributes to the study of servicescape in tourism, especially cycle tourism. It supports to the consideration of nature as one of the dimensions involved in servicescape, which highlights the unpredictability and uncontrollability in the servicescape. What is more, the previous study focuses on exploring how the servicescape impacts on customers and employees, while customers and employees are considered as elements in social dimension and discusses how these elements influence the servicescape. Furthermore, as the combination of information and communication technologies and tourism, e-servicescape is identified as one dimension in the servicescape as a virtual dimension, which provides a new perspective to discuss the role of e-servicescape. In addition to the development component of the servicescape, findings illustrate the co-operation of several dimensions and the balance between dimensions can optimize the servicescape. As for the second research question, the findings contribute to the study of consumer value in tourism industries, particularly cycle tourism. Though various studies shed light on discussion of consumer value in tourism, the relationship between consumer value and servicescape is lack of discussion. More specifically, the research enriches the typology of value in cycle tourism and identifies the complex of value regarding the servicescape.

### **6.2 Practical implications**

The framework of servicescape and the exploration and interpretation of types of value based on the servicescape provides some suggestions for the Swedish cycle tourism. Especially the artificial dimension, the deconstruction helps to analyze the function each element: More cycling lanes can be established to increase the accessibility, while

the design of cycling route and architectures can be more creative to increase the enjoyment and aesthetics; The condition and sign along the cycling lanes can be promote, the number of bicycle lockers can be increased, so that cyclist can feel safer; The camping site and wind shelter customized for cyclists can be built to encourage more people explore the Sweden by bike; More bike kitchen for cyclists to fix their gear. Besides, from the natural dimension, keep preservation of nature and wild animals, so that the wilderness can be maintained. Thirdly, develop the propaganda of cycle tourism in Sweden in English to attract more tourists from all over the world, so that cycle tourism in Sweden is no longer a popular domestics tourism but international tourism. The cycling culture can further influence the elements of social dimension. Last, regarding the virtual dimension, the e-servicescape of cycle tourism in Sweden can be developed, for example, the mobile application for cyclists in Sweden, which can not only cover the useful information for cyclists but helps them build a community on the Internet. The contents generated by cyclists can further inspire the development of Swedish cycling servicescape. Last, the ignorance of Viking culture as a socially-symbolic dimension should be paid more attention, while the development can make the servicescape involved more dimensions thus more attractive.

What is more, other destinations can learn from the case study of Sweden, thus promoting the development of cycle tourism from each dimension. In terms of artificial dimension, other destinations can learn from the establishment of infrastructure in the servicescape. Because the research shows that artificial dimension plays an important role in cycle tourism, showing the function of arrangement. In this way, it is possible for other destinations to copy a servicescape according to their tourism resource. Independent cycling lanes can be added to the design of urban planning. Regarding natural dimension, the preservation of nature can be valued, especially avoiding potential conflict caused by man-made facilities. The Right of Public Access can be promoted so that it increases the freedom of cyclists. Except for training the service providers, the destination should consider promoting the culture of cycling, which can be beneficial to create a cycling friendly atmosphere.

### **6.3 Limitations**

The study has limitations. First, the case study covers the whole of Sweden, while the research scope can be reduced to a region of Sweden. Because there might be differences from each region of Sweden regarding the servicescape of cycle tourism, while the research now cannot present the distinction. Second, though pointing out the potential relationship between different dimensions in the servicescape, there is a lack of interpretation of how the relationship be built. Third, the research only comes up with types of value, while how to categorize those types of value is not mentioned. The relationship between each type of value and the dimension of value is lacking in explanation.

### **6.4 Further research**

To sum up, further research can narrow down the research scope, for example, exploring the servicescape of cycle tourism in the Island of Ven. In addition to case study, the comparative study can be applied in the study of servicescape of cycle tourism, so that advantages and disadvantages of each servicescape can be identified further. Thirdly, in the servicescape of cycle tourism, how each dimension operates and functions on each other, how to rank the importance of each dimension, how to develop each dimension can be discussed in the future research. Fourth, other tourism industries like hiking, climbing, or diving, which also requires both natural environment and artificial facilities, the servicescape of those can be explored.

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## 8. Appendix 1. Interview guide

### Personal information

- Where are you from?
- Do you mind let me know your age?
- Study/work?
- What is your major?

### Basic questions about cycle tourism:

- Do you like cycling for tourism? Why?
- Do you think travel by bicycle is different from other types of transport//hiking?  
//What's the difference? Which one do you prefer?
- How often do you have a cycling trip?
- What is your favorite time of a year to go cycling?
- How many days do you normally spend on cycling trips?
- Go cycling alone or with others, which one do you prefer?
- If solo, why? If with others, who?
- Have you ever had a cycling trip in Sweden?
- How's it going? (Where? Which route? How long? How many days have you spent?
- If you have had a cycling trip in another country before, are there any differences?

### Before the cycling journey:

- What do you want to experience? What do you want to gain?
- What will you do for preparation?
- (Do you get information from the Internet for preparation?
- What kinds of information?
- What role do you think the Internet plays in your trip?
- What do you think about those websites? (Is the layout convenient for you to get information? Is the information practical or enough? Are pictures or text attractive?)

### During the cycling journey:

- During the trip, what existing facilities/infrastructures are beneficial to your trip?
- How's your experience when you used it?
- What do you feel about nature?
- What do you think about the air condition, temperature?
- How's your perception with the weather: wind, sunshine, rain?
- Is there any specific smell, voice or view you can't forget?
- Could you share your most impressive experience during the trip? Please describe the scene at that moment. What role does the scene play in your trip?
- Do you remember any experience with service providers? How about their attitudes?
- What interactions with people make you impressed?

### After the cycling journey:

- What have you gained?
- Do you want to do this again? Why/why not?
- Do you mind sharing your regret of the trip?
- What role does the cycling trip plays between the relationship of you and Sweden?
- Considering the security/convenience, in terms of establishment/environment in Sweden, what promotion do you expect that might be beneficial to your cycling trip?
- Please use several words to describe a cycling trip.

## 9. Appendix 2. Post

# LOOKING FOR Participants

**\*Value\*Nature\*Facilites\*Experience\*Cycling\***



Any member of cycling lover



Experienced cycling trip(s) in Sweden



Willing to be interviewed



Cyling for tourism



Incentives is 100 kr

Please contact [he8866gu-s@student.lu.se](mailto:he8866gu-s@student.lu.se) before 1 May

### 10. Appendix 3. Table of interviewees and labels

No.	Labels
#01	Cycling lane; Inhabited areas; Restaurant; Toilet; Shower room; Camping site; Parking lot; Cycle air pumps; Air quality; Temperature; Sound of Cow low; Coast; Forest; Lake; Wilderness; Cattle; Locals; Other cyclists; DMO website; Google maps; Friends.
#02	Sign; Supermarket; Restaurant; Toilet; Shower room; Camping site (Kitchen); Cycle air pumps; Architecture; The smell transportation emissions; Air quality; Temperature; Weather; The smell of forest and flower; Forest; Lake; Locals; Service providers; Other cyclists; DMO website, Friends.
#03	Cycling lane; Restaurant; Grocery; Toilet; Parking lot; Water pumps; Architecture; The sound of insect; Coast; Forest; Lake; Wilderness; Fox; Horse; Cow; Rabbit; Insect; Bird; Other cyclists; DMO website; Google maps, Friends.
#04	Cycling lane; Toilet; Camping site; The smell of asphalt; Weather; Hill; Google search.

#05	Cycling lane; Sign; Cycle air pumps; Air quality; Weather; The smell of sea and flower; The sound of bird; Hill; DMO website; Facebook.
#06	Cycling lane; Sign; Supermarket; Restaurant; Toilet; Shower room; Parking lot; Water pumps; Weather; Forest; Locals; Service providers; DMO website, Friends.
#07	Cycling lane; Other transportation support; Lake; Bird; Other cyclists; Google maps.
#08	Cycling lane; Pharmacy; Café; Bicycle component store; Grocery; Bike kitchen; Other transportation support; Shower room; Shower room; The Smell of sea and forest; Coast; Forest; Lake; Hill; Fish; Locals; Google maps.
#09	Cycling lane; Restaurant; Grocery; Bike kitchen; Signal*; Camping site; The smell of asphalt; The sound of wind; Forest; Wilderness; Passerby.
#10	Cycling lane (between city); Cycle air pumps; Temperature; Weather; The smell of sea and forest; The sound of bird; Coast; Forest; Moose.



#11	Cycling lane; Restaurant; Cycle air pumps; The smell of forest; Coast; Hill; Google search; DMO website; TripAdvisor.
#12	Cycling lane; Restaurant; Café; Grocery; Toilet; Shower room; Camping site(kitchen); Architecture; The smell of grass; The sound of wind; Forest; Lake; Swan; Viking; Friends; Family.
#13	Cycling lane; Café; Toilet; Camping site; Water pumps; Cycle air pumps; Bicycle locker; The smell of farmyard; Weather; The sound of fox; Coast; Wilderness; Fox; Google map; Facebook; Partners.
#14	Cycling lane (between city); Sign; Bike kitchen*; Other transportation support; Cycle air pumps; Bicycle locker; Agricultural field; The smell of the sea and forest; Coast; Lake; River; Dog; Volunteer/ Policeman; Google maps*. Partners.
#15	Restaurant; Café; Cycle air pumps; Agricultural field; The smell of farmyard; The smell of the sea and forest; Coast; Forest; Moose.
#16	Cycling lane; Restaurant; Hotel; Camping site; Cycle air pumps; Coast; Forest; Wilderness; DMO website, Friends, Partners.

#17	Restaurant; Camping site (wind shelter); Water pumps; Architecture; Air quality; The smell of fresh firewood; Forest.
#18	Cycling lane; Coast; Locals; Facebook.