

## **Tourism practices and experience value creation**

The case of a themed attraction restaurant

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# **Tourism Practices and Experience Value Creation: The Case of a Themed Attraction Restaurant**

## **Abstract**

This article uses practice theory to analyse experience value creation in an innovative tourism setting characterised by high interdependence between tourism actors. The theory is applied in a case and action-oriented study of a themed restaurant in a medieval re-enactment centre. It exemplifies how integration of a restaurant into a specific attraction theme provides opportunities for experience value co-creation through tourism practices. It also illustrates how integration can cause co-destruction of experience value. The action-oriented part of the study included a workshop, interviews and other communication with relevant actors. It aimed to sustain a change of practices, providing solutions to issues of value-co-destruction found in the case study. The article theorises and illustrates the complexity of experience value creation in complex tourist settings and suggests how a practice theory approach to innovation may lead to value creation in tourism and be a powerful tool for tourism managers.

## **Keywords**

tourism, innovation, experience, value creation, practice, restaurants, attractions

## **Introduction**

Practice theory (Shove, 2014; Shove and Walker, 2010; Warde, 2005) provides new approaches to interpret innovation (Fuglsang, 2018; Pantzar and Shove, 2010) and value creation, especially in experience- and service-oriented sectors characterised by employee-user interactions and co-creation and co-destruction of value (Echeverri and Skålén, 2011), such as tourism. The advantage of practice theory is its focus on what actors do, how institutional structures manifest in everyday actions, and how actors use their embodied knowledge in dynamic acts of meaning-making to cope with everyday situations and generate new practices. Therefore, the practice-based approach becomes a resource for understanding actors' situated value creation as acts of meaning-making that combine embodied experiences with the external world. Several practice-based

studies of tourism consumption and production have been published during recent years, and practice theory has been applied to a variety of tourism practices and settings. These include tourist practices in amusement parks (Torres et al., 2018), at festivals (Rihova et al., 2018), or when sleeping outdoors (Rantala and Valtonen, 2014), walking (Hannam and Witte, 2019) and running marathons (Larsen, 2019). They also include tourist providers' practices, for example in cruise tourism (Lamers and Pashkevich, 2018), and practices of tourist destination development (James and Halkier, 2019). Only a few studies have investigated practices in restaurants and other food venues. These have mainly focused on restaurateurs' practices, for example regarding sustainability issues (Alonso et al., 2018), and small business management (Welton et al., 2017). One exception is a study of the social network practices of visitors to Viennese coffee houses (Chen and Wu, 2019).

In tourism, the value creation of experiences is complex and involves different actors' activities (Binkhorst and Den Dekker, 2009; Prebensen et al., 2013; Sørensen and Jensen, 2018). This article applies practice theory to analyse and sustain experience value creation in a tourism setting characterised by high interdependence between tourism actors. It presents a combined case- and action-oriented study. The case is a themed restaurant in a medieval re-enactment centre. In tourism, different providers are often interdependent, for example at destinations. However, in some settings, such as theme parks, their interdependence becomes pronounced. The case shows how the integration of a restaurant into an attraction theme provides opportunities and barriers for experience value creation. The action-oriented part of the study included a workshop, interviews and informal communication with relevant actors. It aimed to initiate a change in practices, providing solutions to value-creation issues in and

between actors in the theme park. We investigate and illustrate how knowledge about value-creating practices can influence managerial practices and enhance value creation.

The examined research question is how practice theory may be applied to analyse and improve experience value creation in tourism, especially in themed settings characterised by high interdependence between tourism actors.

The study contributes to the existing literature in several ways. First, it focuses on practices in themed restaurants in which traditional restaurant practices of both tourists and providers are challenged. Second, by focusing on both tourists' and providers' practices, we study how coordination of practices can lead to experience value co-creation and co-destruction in themed tourist settings. Third, the study investigates how tourist and provider practices, and the resulting value creation or destruction, depend on the integration of interdependent actors' practices in a closed tourist setting. Finally, a demand exists for studies focusing on the development of practices in tourism (Bispo, 2016; James and Halkier, 2016; James et al., 2019, Lamers et al., 2017). Our action-oriented study illustrating the managerial potential of practice studies responds to this demand. Overall, the paper fills a gap in research on innovation and value creation in multi-actor-based and themed tourism experiences. The case investigated represents intensive theming and interdependencies between actors and their practices. However, theming is a reality in most tourism settings. Additionally, interdependencies between experience practices are also evident in most tourism settings. Therefore, the findings will be relevant in many tourism settings.

In the next theoretical sections, we first introduce themed restaurants as experiences and then present a practice theory of tourist experience value creation. Then we present the method, analysis and findings of the empirical study. Finally, we summarise the conclusions and implications.

## **Themed attraction restaurants**

Food has received increased awareness as an experiential value in tourism (Croce and Perri, 2010; Hall and Mitchell, 2005; Wu and Liang, 2009) and is often a key factor in tourists' destination choice (Alonso et al., 2018). However, research has paid little attention to attractions' food provision. Meal provision in attractions is often seen as a necessary service typically consisting of standardised fast food. Nevertheless, customers' experiences and satisfaction in theme parks increase if the theme is communicated and designed widely in the servicescape (Dong and Siu, 2012; Meng and Choi, 2017). A restaurant is one means to extend the communication of a theme. This involves physical artefacts, the engagement of employees and the food. A themed restaurant has an organising concept and a narrative drawn from a well-known cultural resource. The narrative is made visible and tangible in the restaurant's interior and exterior. Eating is not the only, or even the central, defining feature of a visit to a themed restaurant (Beardsworth and Bryman, 1999: 236).

Several investigations of themed restaurants are reported in the literature. Most concern restaurants with ethnic themes (Tsai and Lu, 2012; Wood and Munoz, 2007), themes involving authentic regional food culture (Munoz and Wood, 2009), nostalgia (Chen et al., 2014), Chinese Mao-theme (Conceison, 2015) and literary fiction worlds (Mossberg and Eide, 2017). However, only one prior study has examined themed restaurants in a theme park: Mossberg and Eide (2017) focused on themed restaurants in Astrid Lindgren's World—a literary fiction park.

The design of servicescapes in themed restaurants increases customer satisfaction and revisits (Meng and Choi, 2018), particularly if it enhances authenticity and customer involvement (Weiss et al., 2004). Theming aims to support customers' experience value. However, related aspects may also be important. For example,

restaurants and pubs may be places where travellers reconnect with their culture, as in the case of Australian or Irish venues (Lugosi, 2014). Furthermore, distinctions between themed and non-themed restaurants are not always clear-cut. For example, the concept of Danish kros (traditional Danish inns) is connected with the image of traditional Danish food, old fashioned buildings, warm interiors and friendly, hard-working hosts. Kros are a museum-like repository of Danish values (Johns and Gyimóthy, 2008). The Danish kros could be viewed as a themed experience, yet visitors may consider them original and authentic. To some extent, all restaurants are themed and, in tourism development, culinary heritage and traditional cooking practices and meals often become commodified thematically as part of destination branding (cf. Gyimóthy and Mykletun, 2009; Mykletun and Gyimóthy, 2010).

Beardsworth and Bryman (1999) created a typology for themed restaurants. They argued that ‘quasified’ experiences (i.e. ‘as if’ it were outside the modern context), such as medieval theme parks, appeal to people in the late modernity. They identified four themed restaurant prototypes: (1) Reliquary (emphasising theme artefacts, e.g. Hard Rock Cafés with guitars on the wall), (2) Parodic (fake artefacts, e.g. pirates or medieval times), (3) Ethnic (e.g. Chinese or Mexican food) and (4) Reflexive (the theme becomes the brand, and the brand becomes the theme, e.g. McDonald’s). The typology makes no clear distinctions between themed and non-themed restaurants but suggests that theming in some restaurants becomes a central part of the experience offer. In some cases, such as the medieval restaurant analysed later in this paper, the theme is the chief reason for visiting the restaurant and central to the value of the resulting experience.

However, themed restaurants in attractions can increase interdependencies between restaurants and attractions. They may require additional investment and

running costs, and could be difficult to make profitable. There may also be conflicts between themed food and tourists' demands for fast food. In the analysis, we discuss how themed attraction restaurants challenge food production and consumption practices.

### **Tourist practices and experience value creation**

Practices are habitual behaviours developed over time (Fuglsang, 2018); routine ways in which bodies are moved, objects handled, subjects treated, things described and the world understood (Reckwitz, 2002: 250). Practices are learned activities that fulfil certain actions: for example, feeling rested after sleeping in a hotel (Fuglsang, 2018). Practices are linked with acceptable ends, purposes, beliefs, projects and tasks (Lamers et al., 2017) framing the teleoaffective structures of practice (Schatzki, 2002). However, ends and purposes are often open ended and contested.

The relevance of practice theory concepts in tourism is illustrated by Lamers et al. (2017), who take expedition cruising as an example. Relevant concepts include the teleoaffective structures (guiding responsible tourism practices, for example) and the notion of practice arrangement bundles (cf. Schatzki, 2002). These bundles consist of interdependent materials and practices, such as the numerous practices involved in a holiday. They also include the notions of 'zooming in' on details of specific practices and, because practices do not exist in a vacuum, 'zooming out' to understand how practices are influenced by what happens elsewhere (Nicolini, 2012). Additionally, while research has largely neglected the importance of materiality in tourism experiences, Haldrup and Larsen (2006) and Lamers et al. (2017) emphasise its role in shaping tourism practices.

Tourists, tourism producers and their employees perform certain practices, including tourists' activities such as gazing, eating and relaxing, and tourism providers'

activities that sustain tourists' activities. The overall purpose of tourist practices is for tourists to enjoy experiences (Sørensen and Jensen, 2015). Therefore, understanding how tourists' practices result in experience value and how they are sustained by producers' practices becomes of prime importance. Experiences are not stocked and delivered but result from the emotions and feelings of individuals. From an experience economy perspective (cf. Pine and Gilmore, 1999), experience is defined as 'the mental impact felt and remembered by an individual caused by the personal perception of external stimuli' (Sundbo and Sørensen, 2013: 4). In the practice-based perspective, experiences result from engaging in practices. Participating in tourism practices can lead to valuable and memorable experiences.

Consequently, experience value results from users' physical and mental participation in certain practices and is comparable to the 'value in use', cf. service-dominant logic (Grönroos and Voima, 2013). Thus, experience value is not produced and delivered by companies. Instead, users create value while assisted by companies. This requires situated practices of producers and users. Thus, tourist experience value is often co-created in practices involving users and producers (Harkison, 2018; Shaw et al., 2011). This co-creation takes different forms. Torres et al. (2018: 215-218) identify three co-creation modes in an amusement park user group: 'Cooperative co-production' when the user's actions are in line with the producers' actions; 'compatible co-creation' when consumers redefine company resources to enhance an experience; and 'subversive co-creation' when users use products or services in alternative ways. Lugosi (2014) suggests that experiential space in hospitality venues arises from spatial practices (organisation of physical space and processes that shape visitor interactions with and within a space), material practices (mobilisation and use of physical objects), performative practices (embodied acts, e.g. physical actions, gestures, verbal



communication) and representational practices (visual and textual representations of the venue, participants and experience). The last three practices, in particular, involve co-creation practices of producers and users.

Tourists perform practices based on reflexive and un-reflexive enactments of their embodied experiences within the tourism field. This constitutes a significant aspect of the practice-based approach. Bourdieu's (1990) notion of habitus, denoting mental dispositions, bodily schemas and know-how at a pre-conscious level (Nicolini, 2012: 55), has been used to indicate that people have deep-rooted understanding, achieved through interactions with the social world, that are important for their perception of practice, value and authenticity in a tourist location (Edensor, 2001; Zhu, 2012). Furthermore, tourists' enactments of a practice within a tourism field have been seen as a performative act (rather than a subjective or existentialist experience) in the sense that practices are social acts of meaning-making (Zhu, 2012). Knudsen and Waade (2010) introduced performative authenticity as a concept based on the social practices of tourists and other actors concerning their interaction with the external world (e.g. the artefacts of an attraction). Performative practices and authenticity (Spracklen et al., 2013, Williams, 2013; Zhu, 2012) are particularly important issues in a themed attraction. Authenticity is not merely objective facts or subjective experiences but is performed, i.e. it relies on employees' and tourists' dynamic iterative performances to link tourists' habitus and embodied practices to the field (Bærenholdt and Jensen, 2009; Edensor, 2001). Authenticity is required for people to have a good experience (Gilmore and Pine, 2007). Experience in a themed attraction cannot be authentic in the sense that it *is* objectively the Middle Ages. It is through acts of performance that the experience or illusion becomes 'authentic' and, thereby, a good experience (Mossberg, 2007).

The practice theory within this framework includes peoples' social and cultural capital. How tourists experience a themed attraction and a restaurant depends on their social and cultural capital and their habitus (cf. Bourdieu, 1990); the more knowledge they have about the medieval age beforehand, the more nuanced and many-faceted their experience and performance can be. Experiencing is using all one's senses and the embodied habitus.

From a service interaction perspective (i.e. interactions between employees and users), Echeverri and Skålén (2011) argue that practices consist of three elements: *engagements* (emotionally charged purposes), *procedures* (rules and principles) and *understandings* (knowledge of what to say and do). In the service context, they argue that value is co-created when practices are congruent. Conversely, incongruent practices lead to co-destruction of value. In sum, when practices of producers and users hold similar or different structures of engagements, procedures and understandings, value may be co-created or co-destructed.

From an innovation perspective, Pantzar and Shove (2010) decompose practices into three constitutive elements: *image*, *material* and *skill*. They define innovation as integrating these elements to form a new practice. Their definition points to the dynamics of practices as 'changing combinations of symbolic and material ingredients and of competence or know-how' (Pantzar and Shove, 2010: 447) and the continuous work that goes into integrating these ingredients to form practices. Users may not always be able to integrate the elements, for example, when new material ingredients do not match the available skills. Thus, value co-destruction can also concern mismatches of image, material and skill.

While the elements of skills and engagements, and of images and understandings, overlap, Pantzar and Shove (2010) add the role of materiality in

framing practices and the perspective of change and innovation. Both aspects are crucial in the tourism experience context (Haldrup and Larsen, 2006; Sundbo et al., 2007). Conversely, Echeverri and Skålén's (2011) approach to value co-creation and co-destruction is relevant in tourism given the role of interactions between employees and tourists in value-creating processes (Sørensen and Jensen, 2019). Furthermore, procedures as an element of practice are central in tourism where scripted performances and other implicit or explicit behavioural rules guide many interaction practices (especially in tourism companies) (Sørensen and Jensen, 2015). Also, material settings and technologies are scripted (Akrich, 1992). Thus, procedures include, for example, what tourists should do in specific material settings, such as when entering a hotel reception, and how employees should handle objects when meeting the tourist. Therefore, we suggest a combination of the approaches to understand experience value creation and innovation in tourism.

We suggest that value creation and innovation in tourism experiences can be analysed using a framework relating practices to (a) image (immaterial symbolic meanings and emotionally charged purposes of tourist experiences); (b) knowledge (know-what, know-how and knowing-to-do in specific tourist settings); (c) procedures (more or less explicit rules and regulations of behaviour in specific tourist settings); and (d) materials (things making up the physical setting of tourist experiences). These elements frame the practices of tourists, tourism companies and their employees.

Wellton et al. (2017) analysed small restaurant owners' practices in a similar perspective to Pantzar and Shove (2010) showing how they were related to materiality and technology, knowledge and competence, and creation of meaning. They found certain conflicting practices, for example between being a good host and efficient time management practices. In another study, Chen and Wu (2019) illustrated how relational

networks of social practices impacted the intangible heritage tourism of the Viennese coffeehouse culture. The coffeehouse experience was affected positively or negatively, for example by the physical settings and servicescapes, the demeanour of employees and their interactions with tourists, in combination with tourists' image of Viennese coffee houses.

However, we could not find studies that analyse more specifically users' (possibly conflicting) practices in such settings. Following Echeverri and Skålén (2011), congruence or incongruence of tourist practices, and co-creation and co-destruction of tourist experience value, depending on whether tourists and tourism companies and their employees interpret and integrate the framing elements similarly. Following Pantzar and Shove (2010), innovation and new value creation of tourism experiences result from changes and new integrations of the framing elements. For example, there are certain agreed-on practices of employees and tourists related to dining in restaurants: waiting to be seated, ordering drinks and food, paying the bill, etc. However, different company strategies and tourist demands create varying practices. Practices in basic restaurants differ from those in Michelin-starred restaurants. They are determined by slightly different images, knowledge, procedures and materials, and they result in different experiences. Themed restaurants can challenge conventional practices; an example would be dining in darkness (changed material condition) which impacts procedures, requires new knowledge, and is loaded with symbolic meaning (see, for example, [www.unsicht-bar-berlin.de](http://www.unsicht-bar-berlin.de)). This creates new experiences (in this case, eating without being able to see). Such themes create opportunities for experience value creation in co-creation practices, but can also lead to incongruent practices and value co-destruction if there is a mismatch between the images, knowledge or procedures of the company and its employees and those of the tourists. Often, such

innovations challenge existing conventions, tourists' social and cultural capital and their 'habitus' (cf. Bourdieu, 1990) and require tourists (and employees) to learn and accept new practices. If companies do not succeed in 'educating' tourists to combine the necessary elements, the result may be incongruent practices and value co-destruction.

Therefore, concerning experience value creation in tourism, innovation can become a balancing act. Experiences are often associated with novelty, uniqueness and surprise (Sundbo and Sørensen, 2013), and innovative experiences will also often be related to novel, unique and/or surprising practices, based on new or changed elements (image, knowledge, procedures and materials). Tourists must learn to combine and appreciate these elements (cf. Pantzar and Shove, 2010) for value co-creation to occur. Learning is itself associated with experience value. Examples include immersive experiences (Hansen and Mossberg, 2013), flow experiences (Csikzentmihaly and Mirvis, 1991) and meaningful experiences (Boswijk et al., 2007). However, too-difficult-to-learn new practices may lead to co-destruction of value (cf. Csikzentmihaly and Mirvis, 1991). Thus, in tourist experience innovation, there should be balance between changing practices and maintaining congruence with existing practices to avoid value co-destruction. However, tourist experiences can also be related to relaxation and mundane well-known practices (Blichfeldt and Mikkelsen, 2013) not involving surprise or learning.

In tourism, co-creation practices between individual producers and tourists are often intertwined with other practices, and thus become elements of larger tourist experiences. In destinations, tourist experiences result from practices in hotels, restaurants and attractions (e.g. Murphy et al., 2000). In practice theory terminology, they result in practice arrangement bundles. The interdependence of practices has been analysed, for example, from the provider's perspective for a cruise ship destination

(Lamers and Pashkevich, 2018). Whether practices are congruent or incongruent in one place may depend on practices in other places in the destination. Congruent practices in one company, such as a five-star hotel, may not match the practices of other companies in the destination, such as low-budget restaurants, because elements of practices in the hotel and the restaurants differ. Therefore, when tourists combine different services into practice arrangement bundles and destination experiences, practices in the destination may become incongruent for some tourists some of the time. Thus, zooming out from the single practice (cf. Nicolini, 2012), interdependencies exist between different practices of tourists and different practices of producers. Thus, different producers' practices may need to be partially congruent (for some of the practice components) to co-create experience value. The result may otherwise be 'fuzzy' destination images (Kozak and Martin, 2012) and value co-destruction for the actors involved.

Furthermore, in tourism, interdependencies also exist between practices performed in the same place by different tourists. Different practices, such as family tourist practices and binge drinking practices, can lead to incongruence of practices and value co-destruction for some actors because of different images, procedures and resulting practices. Conversely, co-creation of value among users may also occur whether this is planned, as when organised groups of users meet up and go to theme parks together (Torres et al., 2018), or unplanned. Also, Rihova et al. (2018) show how variety of customer-to-customer co-creation practices is central to festival-participants' experiences. In other cases, such as Viennese coffee houses, the mere presence of (too many) other tourists may ruin the feeling of authenticity and negatively affect individual tourists' experiences, even when all tourists perform similar practices (Chen and Wu, 2019). However, little is known about how incongruent practices influence experience value for tourists (Guthrie and Anderson, 2007). As the following analysis will show, in

some cases – such as themed restaurants in attractions – interdependencies of several practices may become particularly strong, and practices (of several producers as well as of tourists) must be coordinated.

Overall, the above theoretical discussions suggest how practices are formed by integrations of image, materials, knowledge and procedures and how practices in tourism may lead to creation or destruction of experience value. This depends on what happens at several levels: (1) whether practice elements (image, materials, knowledge and procedures) integrate to form individually valuable practices of meaning-making; (2) whether individual interaction practices of employees and tourists are congruent or incongruent; (3) whether practices of different tourists are congruent or incongruent; and (4) if different providers' practices result in congruent or incongruent practice arrangement bundles. These different levels are interdependent and, for example, incongruence between providers' practices may affect the integration of elements of individual practices. Furthermore, we have suggested how innovative tourist settings, such as themed restaurants, may be particularly vulnerable to value destruction because they require tourists and employees to successfully integrate elements of practices in new ways. In the following, we use the above suggestion to analyse value creation in a themed restaurant located in a theme park setting. Additionally, we analyse how knowledge of practices guided by the theoretical framework can inform management in making strategic and organisational choices.

## **Method**

The research combined case study with action-oriented research. The case is a themed restaurant (medieval inn) located within a medieval re-enactment centre, where there is also a fast-food café. The case was chosen because it represents the most compelling and extreme case of theming and interdependencies between actors that was accessible

to the researchers. Compared with a typical case, extreme cases can reveal more information on a given phenomenon because they activate more basic mechanisms in the situation studied (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Because the purpose of the case is to elucidate an extreme situation, a single case study was chosen rather than a multiple or comparative case study. Choosing a single case representing a rather small tourist space poses limitations in terms of acknowledging the larger complexities of interdependencies of practices and value creation existing in destinations. However, focusing on a small enclosed space helps to reduce complexities and to identify them more clearly. These aspects are also enhanced by the case's extreme character. Thus, the chosen single case study facilitates description and analysis of phenomena that might otherwise be overwhelmingly complex and difficult to analyse in much detail.

### ***Case introduction***

The Golden Swan is a themed restaurant located within the Medieval Centre - an attraction in the town of Nykøbing Falster in Denmark. The Medieval Centre is a re-enactment centre with medieval buildings (Figure 1), a medieval market, a knight tournament arena, shops, war machines and more. During the tourist season, activities and events, including demonstrations of trebuchets and knight tournaments, take place daily. The Centre also organises special events such as theatrical performances and craft fairs. Re-enactment involves employees and volunteers 'inhabiting' the village, dressed in medieval clothes, performing daily activities in the market and the medieval houses. The attraction has a marked high season (July and August) and about 50,000 visitors a year.

[Insert Figure 1 here]

[Insert Figure 2 here]



The Golden Swan is part of the re-enactment activities within the attraction, but its operation is outsourced to a tenant. The Golden Swan is built, decorated and furnished like a medieval inn, with old-style wooden tables, wooden benches without backrests, and no electric lights (Figure 2). At the tables, guests find a bowl, cup, knife and spoon, all made out of wood, but no fork or glass. Dishes are medieval and made only of ingredients available in Denmark in the 15th century. This excludes pasta, rice, potatoes, coffee and other modern products. Food is normally served as a buffet with, for example, pâté, salmon, herrings, sausages, pork ribs, chicken legs and stewed cabbage, all of which are prepared as in medieval times (Figure 3). Employees of the inn are dressed in medieval clothes and greet guests with ‘God’s peace!’ In keeping with the Medieval Centre as a whole, the re-enactment scheme is strict; for example, employees are forbidden to wear glasses in the restaurant because glasses did not exist in the Middle Ages. The restaurant corresponds partly to Beardsworth and Bryman’s (1999) parodic type of themed restaurant, but also possesses elements of reliquary restaurants.

[Insert Figure 3 here]

[Insert Figure 4 here]

Next door to the inn, there is a traditional fast-food café in an open space with tables and benches and a playground. Here, food is ordered and collected at a counter (Figure 4). Foods sold include modern fast food such as French fries, hotdogs, burgers and sandwiches. In the fast-food café there are no traces of re-enactment and the physical aspects of the café bear no resemblance to medieval life.

### ***Data collection and analysis***

The study analyses practices in the inn primarily, the fast-food café secondarily, and also draws on insights about practices in the Medieval Centre. Data collection techniques included qualitative interviews, observations, a workshop and regular communication with representatives of the Centre.

First, qualitative interviews were conducted with the inn (and fast-food café) tenants, a supervisor of volunteers at the Medieval Centre, and the Centre's daily manager. The interviews' overall focus was to identify possible congruences and incongruences of practices in the inn and between the inn, the café and the Medieval Centre. Thus, the interviews focused on production and consumption practices in the inn (food, services and experience) and the fast-food café, how the inn is integrated with the Medieval Centre's practices, both thematically and logistically, and the roles of employees, volunteers and management of the Centre. The interviews were semi-structured and lasted between one and two hours. In the analysis, these interviews are referred to as 'interview one with tenant', 'interview with supervisor' and 'interview with manager'.

Second, participant observations were made at the inn, Medieval Centre, and fast-food café. During observations, the researchers followed the general flow of visitors at the inn, the Centre and the fast-food café. The purpose was to observe employees' and visitors' practices and sense the visitor experience and how it was created through different practices. Thus, tourists' and employees'/volunteers' practices of the entire experience, as well as of the particular experience associated with the inn, were observed. Particular attention was paid to value-creating practices in the inn and the Medieval Centre. Attention was also paid to how value was potentially affected by congruent or incongruent practices between the Medieval Centre, the inn and the fast-

food café. Participant observations were made by two researchers during two visits to the Medieval Centre. Additionally one researcher visited the Medieval Centre on several other occasions, both as a professional and a regular visitor. These visits provided initial insights into the case study. In the analysis, the participant observations are referred to simply as ‘observations’.

Third, a small workshop was organised. The workshop supported the practice-oriented part of the study and aimed to develop solutions to issues found in the interviews and in the observations of value creation in the inn, fast-food café and Medieval Centre. Thus, the overall aim of the workshop and the action-oriented part of the study was to establish and illustrate how knowledge of practices can be applied in managerial practices to enhance value creation. The interviews and observations highlighted some issues in the organisation, production and consumption of tourism experiences at the inn. These issues provided input for the workshop, which followed a service innovation future workshop format (Scupola, 2017). Thus, after a presentation of findings from interviews and observations, the workshop included a critique phase, a fantasy phase and a realistic suggestion phase. The aim was to find practical solutions to the observed issues. The Medieval Centre’s manager, the inn tenant, a possible future tenant and three researchers participated in the workshop. The workshop resulted in several possible initiatives. No decisions about specific initiatives were taken, but the Medieval Centre’s management used the ideas in their initiatives for the following season. In the analysis, observations and findings from the workshop are referred to simply as ‘workshop’.

Fourth, to determine the impact of the workshop in developing the Medieval Centre, follow-up interviews were conducted with the Medieval Centre’s manager, the inn tenant, and the museum director before the following tourist season. The purpose of

the interviews was to identify which (if any) of the initiatives developed at the workshop were being implemented. Therefore, questions concerned which ideas developed at the workshop were being implemented, how, to what degree, with what characteristics and for what purposes. The interviews were qualitative and semi-structured and lasted about one hour. They are referred to as ‘follow-up interviews’ in the analysis.

Fifth, during the following tourist season, tourists were interviewed at the inn and the fast-food café. The purpose was to gain further insights into the inn, café, attraction and visitor co-creation and co-destruction practices. For example, visitors were asked why they chose to eat at the inn or fast-food café; what their meal consisted of; how they liked it; their interactions with the employees and how these affected their experience; their perception of the physical surroundings of the inn or fast-food café and how these connected to the rest of the Medieval Centre; how this connection affected the total experience; what else they had seen and done in the Medieval Centre; and what they would tell friends or relatives about the visit to the inn or fast-food café. Fifteen interviews were conducted at the inn and 19 at the café. These semi-structured interviews lasted about 10–15 minutes each. Interviewees were selected to obtain information from various types of tourists, including old and young visitors, couples, families and groups of friends. With one exception (a group of mixed nationalities), all interviewed visitors were Danes. Because time slots for serving food at the inn were short, and because weather conditions sometimes limited the number of visitors to the inn and the café, interviewees were also selected based on convenience (for example, tourists who seemed not to be hurrying). In the analysis, the interviews are referred to as ‘visitor interviews’.

Sixth, the results of the data collection were presented to the Medieval Centre's manager and board members, and feedback was received about the validity of the findings and regarding future perspectives and possible development initiatives. The findings were also presented to the tenant of the inn in a second interview about continuing issues of value creation (referred to in the analysis as 'interview two with tenant'). Further informal communication and feedback from the Centre and the inn followed. Also, through this unstructured communication, we asked for information about possible additional initiatives relevant to experience value-creating practices in the inn and the café, aiming to further identify potential solutions to the issues found in interviews and observations.

The study took place over almost two years. Prolonged engagement and feedback from actors about results and implications support the validity and reliability of qualitative studies (cf. Lincoln and Guba, 1986). Misunderstandings and misinterpretations in this study have been corrected and findings validated through feedback from the actors involved in the case.

## **Analysis**

Below we analyse experience value-creating practices in the medieval inn and the fast-food café. We then discuss practice congruence and incongruence resulting from interdependencies between inn, fast-food café and attraction. Finally, we discuss solutions to eliminate identified incongruent practices.

### ***Lunchtime tourist practices***

The inn challenges conventional restaurant practices. Material conditions mean that guests must learn to eat without a fork (using a spoon instead) in dim light, and eat

medieval dishes made without many of the ingredients of modern food. The material conditions also mean sitting uncomfortably on hard wooden benches, thereby conflicting with modern restaurant practices, which normally involve sitting comfortably (interview one with tenant; observations).

While the material conditions confront conventional practices, they are also central to the experience, according to interviewees: 'It is fun sitting here, in medieval surroundings, eating medieval food with a knife and a wooden spoon' (visitor interview, family with two children, ages 46, 41, 6 and 3). This impression was typical of most tourists interviewed in the inn and indicated the fundamental role of materials in the themed experience. However, as acknowledged in other studies (e.g. Lamers et al., 2017; Lugosi et al., 2014), material conditions also play a fundamental role in framing practices in the restaurant, because they are integrated with and sustain images of the Middle Ages. This integration was expressed in several interviews: 'Coming into a dark room, eating like you did then. Then I imagine that was the kind of food that was made' (visitor interview, mother with daughter, ages 53 and unknown); 'The atmosphere is fantastic. It is like going back to the Middle Ages' (visitor interview, retired couple with granddaughter, ages 69, 67 and 6); 'You start thinking about the Lord of the Rings' (visitor interview, family with two children, ages 46, 41, 6 and 3).

This integration of materials with an image of being in the Middle Ages means that visitors accept the practices associated with eating at the inn. However, for this to succeed, employee procedures are central. The employees facilitate value co-creating practices by imparting knowledge to tourists that helps them combine image and materials in experience-creating practices. The following quote illustrates this:

They are really good at explaining so that you are told something about history.

Why are there no forks? Because they were not introduced before the

Renaissance! It is fun but also a bit annoying not having a fork. But okay, there is a reason! (visitor interview, parents with three children, ages 41, 39, 19, 10 and 1)

Different procedures frame the employees' practices in combination with material conditions and their image and knowledge of the Middle Ages. This includes procedures for teaching tourists about material conditions that help to link them with the image and knowledge of the Middle Ages. The employees thereby assume a central role in helping tourists to newly integrate image, materials and knowledge by providing the latter. Interestingly, the tourists' experience is not propagated via guidance but mainly through acts of meaning-making. The result is an experience that involves learning and developing new practices that facilitate immersion in the setting (cf. Hansen and Mosberg, 2013). In this sense, it is similar to the unique educational experiences that Boswijk et al. (2007) termed meaningful experiences:

It is really interesting being here and sort of travelling back in time, having the food like it was then and under those conditions. The way the tables are laid, the bowl for the bones, the atmosphere in the room, the light. I have never experienced anything like it. It is fantastic to be here. (visitor interview, mother with adult daughter, ages 59 and 22)

The interactions described in the inn resemble the congruent practices leading to co-creation of value described by Echeverri and Skålén (2011). However, in this case the employees assume a particular role as carriers and providers of knowledge that helps tourists integrate the elements of practices emphasised by Pantzar and Shove (2010) – i.e. image, materials and knowledge – in value-creating practices. As discussed in the theory section, tourism innovations can challenge existing practices and result in incongruence of their elements. Therefore, the role of employees in such situations can

be particularly crucial for tourists' value creation. In other words, through their interactions with tourists and physical artefacts, the employees create a performed authenticity that facilitates the illusion of being in the Middle Ages and that links tourists' habitus and embodied practice to the field (cf. Bærenholdt and Jensen, 2009; Edensor, 2001). They frame tourists' social and cultural capital (cf. Bourdieu, 1990) in the specific space to help them experience the innovative themed environment.

However, experience value co-destruction was also observed. Some tourists requested more knowledge about the food but, at busy times, employees did not have time to teach tourists about it (interview one with tenant). Consequently, the tourists did not know what they were eating and found it harder to appreciate the food: 'We could not be told what we were eating. We could not even see it!' (visitor interview, couple, retired/not retired, ages 73 and 65). Several other tourists mentioned that it was difficult to see the food because the room was dark: 'I don't see well, so I haven't seen much. It is dark' (visitor interview, pensioner couple, ages 77 and 73). This was especially the case with older tourists who were also uncomfortable on the wooden benches. Therefore, not all tourists could integrate the elements in new practices, even if the practices were explained. Others who did not receive the necessary information from employees did not appreciate or understand the materials, image and procedures. Thus, they could not integrate these into value-creating practices.

Despite the strict re-enactment scheme to which the inn must conform, modern practices, such as paying with credit cards, still exist. Furthermore, on occasions the chef enters the room in a modern cooking outfit and wearing glasses (observations; interview one with tenant). In this way, materials and procedures sometimes ruin the image of being in the Middle Ages, which could result in practices losing experience value. However, interviewees did not raise this as an issue.



For many tourists eating in the fast-food café, the inn and its related practices did not appeal. It looked too dark, too expensive and not very child-friendly. However, many visitors to the inn were families with children, and they all stated that the children enjoyed the visit. This suggests that the inn and its practices do not cater for all segments, but also that some understanding of the elements described by Pantzar and Shove (2010) needs to be in place before consumption. Thus, when new practices confront existing habits, for example in themed restaurants, it is particularly important to distribute information about the venue and its practice elements so that they make sense to potential visitors.

Nevertheless, those who decided against dining in the inn chose other lunchtime activities. For some, there was the fast intake of food to fulfil a basic need (cf. Maslow, 1962) rather than to create an experience to fulfil mental needs (cf. Sundbo and Sørensen, 2013): ‘We didn’t go for the food experience. We just needed some food’ (visitor interview, father with children, ages 53, 8 and 7). This desire was supported by employee and tourist procedures and by material configurations in the fast-food café, which resulted in efficiency-oriented practices:

One person takes the order, and you pay. Then you go to the window to the right or to the left, depending on whether you ordered food or coffee or tea. Then you get what you ordered... It was easy and very effective (visitor interview, grandparents, parents and children, ages 68, 66, 43, 40, 11, 6 and 4).

Also, the food itself supported desired ends and sustained value creation: ‘When the children are with us, they use every opportunity to have a hotdog if they can manage it’ (visitor interview, father with children, ages 53, 8 and 7). Thus, the relatively low food quality – in terms of nutrition, health aspects and (for some) taste – was accepted

in this context: ‘It is a fair price for a quick meal, when you are hungry and you need to eat’ (visitor interview, grandparent, parents and children, ages 78, 44, 43, 6 and 4).

Thus, the practices in the café do not result in experiences in the same way as in the inn, and as perceived in experience economy terminology (e.g. Sundbo and Sørensen, 2013). However, relaxing, mundane and well-known practices, such as those in the café, can also constitute tourist experiences (Blichfeldt and Mikkelsen, 2013). In this way, materials (fast food, playground), procedures (focusing on speed and ease), the dominating image (of fast food as a typical and easy attraction-food solution), and knowledge (of how to produce and consume quickly and with as little hassle as possible) favoured co-creation of value in mostly congruent practices, in a very different way than in the inn.

Thus, within just a few metres, very different food experience consumption and production practices were performed (see Table 1, which also includes practices in the Medieval Centre). Each practice relied on different materials (food products and material surroundings), procedures (of tourists and employees), and food production and consumption images (as something quick and easy or as a unique experience). Knowledge had different meanings for different practices. In the fast-food café, knowledge of how to produce and serve food quickly was important for employees, and knowledge of how to have lunch quickly and without too much hassle (with children) guided tourists’ practices. At the inn, gaining new knowledge about food and food consumption practices was important for tourists’ experiences and thus for value creation. Therefore, the employees’ practices of re-enactment and communicating knowledge were crucial.

[Insert Table 1 here]

Therefore, the themed restaurant breaks with and challenges tourists' traditional food consumption practices. While this is an experience that makes sense for some, it is less appealing and over-complicated for others. Nevertheless, various tourists interviewed in the café would like some medieval experience practices to be introduced there, for example, by making the surroundings more medieval and introducing medieval (fast) food in the café: 'It could be cool if you could do the medieval thing here. Maybe just raw meat and a piece of bread' (visitor interview, mother with child, ages unknown). This suggests that there is room for introducing certain elements related to materials (food and surroundings), knowledge (learning about medieval food) and image (of food as experience) in the café, combining them with its current images (food intake as easy and hassle free) and procedures (fast ordering, serving and consuming). According to Pantzar and Shove (2010), this would lead to innovation in terms of changed practices resulting from providers' and tourists' coordinated new integrations of image, knowledge and materials, potentially evoking new value co-creation through the actors' collaborative framing of meaning.

### ***Interdependencies between practices***

The interdependence between attraction, fast-food café and inn results in both congruent and incongruent practices. First, as described above, the integration of re-enactment procedures with the related image, materials, and knowledge of the attraction shapes practices in the inn and results in experiential value for tourists. Thus, the visit to the inn becomes part of the overall attraction experience. For other tourists, experience value at the inn is limited because of difficulties in integrating seeing and knowing about the food with, for example, uncomfortable seating. This is also a consequence of the thematic interdependence between attraction and inn. Thus, imposed elements of

practices in the inn, due to interdependencies with attraction practices, result in congruent practices for some (but not all) tourists in the inn, thus affecting the experience value positively or negatively.

Second, the attraction practices have their own 'attraction logic'. This involves filling the day with events to engage and entertain tourists (interview with attraction manager). At lunchtime, one hour between 1 pm and 2 pm separates the main daily events: demonstration of trebuchets and knight tournament. This means that the visit to the inn becomes part of a flow of events, but also leaves only a brief time slot of one hour for eating there (interview with manager; interview one with tenant). Consequently, the inn has only one daily seating with limited time for employees and tourists to create experience value from lunchtime practices. This impacts possibilities for employees to provide tourists with the knowledge needed to fully engage in the medieval experience: 'When the restaurant is full we just have to serve them. When it is calmer, we can tell them the stories. Then they feel that they get treated well' (interview two with tenant). Also, other practices are adjusted to conform to the brief timeslot: for example, guests at the inn are given their bills before requesting them to speed up payment processes (interview one with inn tenant; observations). This means that logistic practices and practices of flow (between events) generated by the attraction do not fit practices of teaching, learning and re-enacting assumed by the inn (interview one with inn tenant).

Third, as mentioned, the attraction theme leads to practices at the inn that make it impossible to sell and consume modern (high-profit) products such as coffee. In combination with the limited time slot for serving tourists, this results in a low volume of profitable business for the tenant (interview one with tenant).

Fourth, despite the intense interdependence between inn and attraction, the tenant was often unaware of activities in the attraction that could impact his activities. For example, volunteers often prepare medieval food in the village or at the market (Figure 5). Volunteers cannot sell this food to tourists due to food production regulations (visitors may only receive samples) (interview one with inn tenant). The tenant and several tourists requested the possibility of buying the same medieval food at the inn (visitor interviews), but lack of communication between volunteers and the tenant inhibited this (interview one with tenant). Thus, the lack of practices to coordinate attraction and inn activities meant that certain experience value creation potentials were unused.

[Insert Figure 5 here]

Fifth, for some café guests, the modern style and food of the café conflict with elements and practices of the medieval attraction experience. However, it seemed to affect inn guests' experience more profoundly: 'The only thing I don't like is all the modern things out there [in the café] ... the burgers and the fries and all that. I don't think it belongs here at all' (visitor interview, grandparents and grandchild, ages 70+, 70+ and 15). This indicates how others' practices and their elements can impact experience value for tourists. This ruining of authenticity does not result from the mere presence of other tourists (such as observed by Chen and Wu, 2019) but, rather, occurs when tourists observe practices that are incongruent with their own: 'I don't think there should be a fast-food café out there ... there are a lot of families with children ... but then I think they should try and separate it' (visitor interview, couple, ages 73 and 65).

The above suggests that both incongruent and congruent practices, respectively co-destructing and co-creating tourists' experience value, can arise in tourist settings with high interdependence between actors. A visit to the Medieval Centre can be understood as a practice arrangement bundle (Lamers et al., 2017; Schatzki, 2002) of activities related to different daily events. In comparison to the provider-side analysis of cruise tourism practices by Lamers and Pashkevich (2018), the analysis of bundled practices here involves the co-creation practices of both tourists and producers. Consequently, the above analysis shows how incongruence can arise at different levels in bundled practices: (a) when the practice arrangement bundle imposes limitations on individual practices (such as when there is too little time to teach and be taught in the inn); (b) when different practices in the bundle are themselves incongruent (for example, producing and eating fast food in the Medieval Centre); and (c) when practices of different tourists are incongruent.

Thus, creating tourist settings that support experience value co-creation is a matter of eliminating incongruence *in* and *between* products' practices and their framing elements (*internal* and *external* incongruence). Instead, congruent practices and framing elements of these practices must be developed in and between products (i.e. *internal* and *external* congruence).

### ***Practised solutions***

Thus, while some practices were congruent, certain incongruent practices and co-destruction of experience value were also identified at the inn. These included limits to practising a themed environment when visitors are not given the necessary knowledge, as well as dining in uncomfortable conditions given the material circumstances (sitting and seeing). In the café, it was particularly the absence of medieval materials, procedures and knowledge that limited experience value creation. Additionally,

interdependencies between attraction and restaurant practices impacted value creation negatively for visitors and for the tenant (concerning profit-making). This resulted from event-related procedures that impact the flow of visitors in the attraction and to the inn, limitations that material conditions impose on producing and selling modern products (e.g. coffee), and limited coordination between non-scheduled activities of volunteers and the restaurant.

The workshop, and later the interviews and informal communications, showed that the issues were partly related to lack of awareness of each other's practices. The inn and attraction functioned as two separate organisations with limited communication and integration, despite their intense interdependence (workshop; interview one with inn tenant; interview with attraction manager). Thus, interdependencies were not articulated. The workshop resulted in different solutions to the issues being identified. For example, the tenant became involved in the attraction's management group to improve communication and integration between restaurant and attraction (follow-up interviews with tenant and attraction manager). Thus, closer collaboration between tenant and attraction management was established. This helped create an understanding of challenges for the inn, making it easier to find solutions to them and to coordinate inn and attraction practices (interview two with inn tenant).

Furthermore, there is now greater understanding of how different external incongruent practices impact value creation at the inn. This has resulted in restrictions imposed by the medieval theme being eased at the inn. For example, loudspeakers and subdued lighting have been installed. Additionally, logistical problems related to the limited time slot have been lessened by improved logistics-related procedures (for example related to new cash registers) (interview two with inn tenant).

Furthermore, the café has begun to sell fast food inspired by the Middle Ages. There is potential to expand on this theme. For example, there is a wish to create a market-like ‘medieval fast food’ atmosphere and to construct a medieval outdoor kitchen. However, this requires investment in new material conditions. Changes have also been made to the buffet in the inn, and prices have been lowered in an attempt to appeal to some of the fast-food consumers (interview two with inn tenant).

These initiatives address some of the challenges identified and aim to limit both internal and external incongruences and to sustain co-creation of experience value. How, and how intensively, the actors want to challenge existing elements that frame practices at the inn and the café depend on a continuous negotiation of the theme and its boundaries in relation to creating both an authentic experience and an economically viable business: ‘We are up against what the Medieval Centre thinks is right ... If we had them [fast-food café guests] in [the inn], at least they would be dry [in rainy weather]... But then they want coffee and chips’ (interview two with inn tenant).

Thus, improving experience value creation at the inn and café requires changes to the elements of practices. However, at the inn, this must be done without ruining the image, whereas changing the image may help further value creation practices in the café (resulting in medieval fast-food experiences). Accordingly, experience practices generated by the café and attraction can become more congruent. However, the inn and attraction continue to have incongruent practices, with attraction events leaving only a brief timeslot for lunchtime practices at the inn. This continues to limit the experience value and profitability of the inn (interview two with inn tenant). The main reason that the schedule cannot be changed to suit the inn is that many visitors in term time are school children who must return to their schools before 3 pm (interview with manager). Thus, zooming out (cf. Nicolini, 2012) from the practices in the inn and the Medieval



Centre shows how they are interwoven with and dependent on other practices—in this case, non-tourist, educational practices in the Danish school system. Nevertheless, the initiatives indicate how insights into practice congruence and incongruence, co-creation and co-destruction, in individual practices and within practice arrangement bundles, can provide relevant inputs to managerial strategies in tourism.

## **Conclusion**

This article has applied practice theory to analyse an innovative tourism context characterised by high interdependence between actors. The analysis showed how tourism innovations, such as those of themed restaurants, challenge conventional tourist practices because of the changed framing elements of practices (image, knowledge, procedures and materials). This can result in experiential value for tourists but requires congruent and knowledge-creating interactions with restaurant employees. In the absence of such interactions, tourists may not learn and understand how to appreciate the practices required. Additionally, some tourists find conventional tourist practices more appealing, such as those related to fast food. Thus, innovation of value-creating practices in tourism can be a balancing act and must be learned, appreciated and understood by those engaging in the practices. Therefore, from a managerial perspective and in the specific context of (attraction) restaurants, the findings show that when changing restaurant settings to make them more experiential and themed, developing a strong sense of tourists' food practices and how these can be addressed in new themed contexts becomes an important restaurateur competence.

The findings also show how interdependencies between tourism actors can affect tourist practices and experience value. For example, themed restaurants that are part of larger attractions have particular potentials for tourist experience value creation. However, they can also face restrictions, which can affect profitability when different

tourism practices collide. In that sense, congruent and incongruent practices of interdependent actors influence the potential of practices to create experience value both positively and negatively. In the case presented here, to overcome restrictions and utilise potentials, there was a need for more awareness and closer collaboration and coordination between attraction and restaurant, in terms of exploiting the image, knowledge, procedures and materials related to the practices of the attraction theme, and in terms of logistically integrating food experience practices with attraction practices.

More generally, the findings suggest how integration of image, knowledge, procedures and material frames tourist practices, and how interaction and awareness practices can co-create experience value in a tourism setting in different ways. However, the findings also suggest that unique innovative experiences can lead to value destruction and how employees can play a central role in avoiding this. Additionally, the findings show how interdependencies between tourism actors can result in value creation but also value destruction when different actors' practices are incongruent, and that awareness, collaboration and coordination of practices and their elements is important to avoid this. To develop tourist settings that support experience value co-creating practices, internal and external incongruence of practices and their elements must be limited and internal and external congruence developed instead. From a management perspective, the practice approach helps break down value creation into practices, and practices into their constituent elements. This can bring managers a new understanding of how to adjust elements of practices to facilitate tourist experience value co-creation. Thus, the practice approach brings new possibilities for innovating tourist experiences and improving the tourist experience value gained from participating in a practice.

From a research perspective, the practice approach helps in understanding both the value creation and the value destruction of tourism experiences. Furthermore, it can highlight aspects of value creation that have been largely overlooked in tourism, despite their importance for tourists' value creation. This includes how incongruent practices by different tourists in the same place impact value creation (Guthrie and Anderson, 2007), as well as the role of materiality in tourism experiences (Haldrup and Larsen, 2006). Practice theory also suggests new avenues to analyse tourism experience innovation and to sustain such innovation (Sørensen and Jensen, 2019). Thus, while 'what goes on' in particular settings may seem obvious, practice theory provides terminology that helps in understanding a complexity beyond the obvious. We suggested how managers could apply practice theory to facilitate value creation. However, further research on the potential managerial applications is important for practice theory to become truly valuable in the business context.

This study and its findings contribute to existing literature in several ways. The findings confirm the relevance of different practice theory approaches to tourism, such as the innovation approach of Pantzar and Shove (2010) and Schatzki's (2002) notion of practice arrangement bundles. The findings also illustrate the relevance of the service-oriented co-creation/-destruction practice model of Echeverri and Skålén (2011). In this way, our study complements Lamers et al.'s (2017) illustration of the relevance of practice theories in tourism. Also, co-creation between employees and tourists has been analysed, for example, in hotels (Harkison, 2018), and guest-to-guest co-creation has been analysed from a practice perspective in theme parks (Torres et al., 2018) and at festivals (Rihova et al., 2018). Our study complements these studies by illustrating how employees in innovative contexts, where well-known traditional practices are challenged, assume an important role in helping tourists to integrate elements of

practices, thereby co-creating immersion (Hansen and Mossberg, 2011) and meaningful experiences (cf. Boswijk et al., 2007) with tourists. Thus, the article also contributes to studies of themed restaurants (e.g. Beardsworth and Bryman, 1999; Johns and Gyimóthy, 2008), as well as practice studies of restaurants (e.g. Wellton et al., 2017) by providing new knowledge of employee-tourist co-creation practices in themed restaurants.

The findings also contribute to existing literature on performative authenticity in tourism (e.g. Bærenholdt and Jensen, 2009; Edensor, 2001; Spracklen et al., 2013; Williams, 2013; Zhu, 2012) by emphasising both tourists' and employees' practices and how they are intertwined with physical artefacts through performative acts. The tourists' experience is not propagated via guidance but through acts of meaning-making that link the tourist to the field and generate a new practice.

Additionally, while the relevance of the term 'practice arrangement bundle' in tourism is emphasised by Lamers et al. (2017), and relations between interdependent provider practices in cruise ship tourism are illustrated by Lamers and Pashkevich (2018), our study illustrates the complexity of practice arrangement bundles when also including tourists and co-creation between them and providers. Finally, there have been calls to investigate how tourist practices change (Bispo, 2016; James et al., 2019; Lamers et al., 2017). This study has gone one step further by illustrating how findings from practice studies can create change when integrated in managerial decisions in tourist settings.

Based on our qualitative study, we cannot conclude how and to what degree the findings are replicable in other contexts. Not all themed restaurants require visitors to learn new practices. Furthermore, we analysed an extreme case in a small enclosed setting in which few providers operate. Thus, in larger, more complex settings, the

findings would be of higher complexity. Conversely, in other tourist settings where theming is less important, interdependencies between different practices may be less pronounced and issues identified in this article would be less relevant. However, most tourist settings are somewhat themed and consist of interdependent actors. Thus, the concept of transferability of findings from qualitative studies (Guba and Lincoln, 1982) indicates that the practice-based approach can improve understanding of how experience value is created in practices in different contexts and how these practices come into being. It can enrich understanding of the importance of interaction and co-creation of tourist experience value when several actors are involved, and how such value creation can be improved.

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Table 1: Central elements of congruent practices in a) inn and b) fast food café c) medieval centre

<div>Place</div> <div>Central elements of practice</div>	Medieval inn	Fast food café	Medieval centre
<b>Image</b>	Experience of being and eating like in the middle ages	Food intake as a hassle-free necessity	Experience of being and living like in the middle ages
<b>Material</b>	Medieval food ingredients, decoration, wooden cutlery and furniture	Fast food products, playground, modern outlet design	Medieval buildings, interior, gardens, machinery etc.
<b>Knowledge</b>	Knowledge about food and eating in the middle ages	Knowledge of fast food 'logistics' and how to keep children happy during lunchtime	Knowledge about living, craftsmanship, buildings etc. in the middle ages
<b>Procedures</b>	Teaching/learning, re-enacting	Quick ordering and serving	Teaching, learning, re-enacting, events



Figure 1: Buildings in the Medieval Centre



Figure 2: The medieval inn



Figure 3: Part of the buffet in the inn.



Figure 4: Ordering food in the café



Figure 5: Volunteers preparing medieval food samples in the Medieval Village.