



Nonverbal communication in hotels as a medium of experience co-creation

Mohammad Shahidul Islam^a, Ksenia Kirillova^{b,*}

^a School of Hotel and Tourism Management, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, 17 Science Museum Road, TST East, Kowloon, Hong Kong

^b Institut Paul Bocuse, Chateau Du Vivier, 1A Chemin de Calabert, Ecully, 69130, France

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ABSTRACT

Although the Service-Dominant Logic literature hinted on the importance of nonverbal language for value co-creation, nonverbal communication as an experience co-creation component has not been explicitly addressed in either hospitality and tourism or general management context. Through the constructivist lens, this research focuses on kinesics, which is the most noticeable component of nonverbal communication, in hotels as a medium of experience co-creation in the guest-employee dyad. Four video-elicitation focus groups, with 12 hotel employees and 12 guests, found reciprocity (mutual recognition, insight exchange, expectation formation) and engagement (customized attention, relationship building, a sense of affinity) as two major dimensions of kinesic experience. Furthermore, employees' *imperative* and guests' *complacent* cues act as value triggers, contributing to experience co-creation between guests and employees. Based on empirical results and related literature, the framework of experience co-creation centred on kinesics is proposed; practical implications regarding frontline employees' nonverbal communication competencies are discussed.

1. Introduction

Unlike verbal interaction, nonverbal communication is comprised of expressive emotions, subtle cues, or gestures that customers and service providers (e.g., hotel employees) detect and decode (Islam & Kirillova, 2020; Lin & Lin, 2017) during interactions. Like verbal cues, these signals can induce a change in attitudes, beliefs, or behaviours and shape individuals' mutual experiences (Burgoon, Buller, & Woodall, 1989; Griffin, 2009; Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1993; Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004a). Based on such co-creation potential of nonverbal communication, this study refers to service-dominant (S-D) logic (i.e., co-creation process) (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004a; Lusch & Vargo, 2014). The logic suggests that interactional value, or value in exchange, occurring in guest-employee dyads, can trigger experiences. These values must (1) be nested within the broad organizational structure, such as operant resources (a combination of knowledge and skills; e.g., employees' interaction expertise), philosophy, and culture; and (2) influence service delivery and customer perception of service quality (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004b; Ramaswamy & Ozcan, 2018).

Nonverbal communication has gained little attention in the hospitality and tourism literature. Existing management literature sheds light on high-quality interactions and their economic value (Schoenewolf, 1990; Vargo & Lusch, 2008a, 2008b; Vargo, Maglio, & Akaka, 2008) to

an organization. However, given the importance of high-quality interactions in the hospitality industry for the sake of providing memorable experiences, the co-creating potential of nonverbal communication can be also explored as one aspect of S-D logic (Fan, Hsu, & Lin, 2020). Studies on employees' and guests' favorable/unfavorable and unfavorable/uncomfortable feelings and experiences from the exchange of nonverbal cues during face-to-face interactions may highlight new directions for developing communication competencies to enhance the resulting experience for both – a customer and an organization (Chathoth, Ungson, Harrington, & Chan, 2016; Prebensen & Xie, 2017; Prebensen & Foss, 2011). Studies of nonverbal communication were conducted in various disciplines and contexts: psychology (e.g. Briton & Hall, 1995), healthcare (e.g. Caris-Verhallen, Kerkstra, & Bensing, 1999), sport (e.g. Mellick, Fleming, Bull, & Laugharne, 2005), and law (e.g., Burnett & Badzinski, 2005), among others. However, they were primarily concerned with describing context-specific nonverbal practices (e.g. a patient-doctor communication) and their effects on outcomes that are of interest to a respective discipline. Although the insights and implications of these studies are critical from the human interaction perspective, they do not correspond to the needs of the hospitality industry. For example, they are not concerned with consumer experiences as an economic offering, employee competences, and their managerial implications.

* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: mohd.sh.islam@connect.polyu.hk (M.S. Islam), ksenya.kirillova@institutpaulbocuse.com (K. Kirillova).

Research on nonverbal communication within the co-creation framework is to advance the S-D philosophy, in which the search for co-created experiences is the core focus (Vargo & Lusch, 2016). Although the current literature on value co-creation in hospitality, and hotels specifically has clarified the importance of co-creation and customer engagement (Assiouras, Skourtis, Giannopoulos, Buhalis, & Koniordos, 2019; Chen, Han, Bilgihan, & Okumus, 2021; Lei, Ye, Wang, & Law, 2020; So, Li, & Kim, 2020), it lacks insights into characteristics and various means of offering this engagement beyond technology innovations (Chathot et al., 2016). There is a lack of attention to face-to-face encounters and interactions between a guest and an employee, even though such experiences remain valuable regardless of technological advancements (Anaya & Lehto, 2020). Further, although Chathoth, Altinay, Harrington, Okumus, and Chan (2013, 2014, 2016) and Shaw, Bailey, and Williams (2011) pointed out that value co-creation in hospitality and tourism should consider both guests' and employees' perspectives, we note the excessive focus on guests' perspectives in the co-creation literature.

The overall purpose of this study is to explore the role of nonverbal communication in hotels as a medium of experience co-creation. Although many providers within hospitality and tourism share the characteristic of intense and extensive interactions between frontline staff and employees, our research is delimited to the hotel setting because it involves 1) an extended interactional encounter situated 2) in a structured environment, 3) in which an experience has a clear starting and end point. The extant literature has shown that nonverbal communication consists of four groups, namely, (1) kinesics (body language), (2) proxemics (distance maintenance), (3) physical appearance (clothing and grooming), and (4) paralanguage (vocal behavior; Gabbott & Hogg, 2001, 2000; Jung & Yoon, 2011; Sundaram & Webster, 2000). This work focuses on kinesics expected from frontline employees and guests because it is the most dominant and noticeable component of nonverbal communication (Gamble & Gamble, 2013) and serves "as important vehicles for nonverbal communication" (Sundaram & Webster, 2000, p. 381). Thus, this study highlights the dyadic kinesic interaction between frontline employees and customers in the hotel lobby as the unit of analysis. The hotel's lobby area (considered to be the area of first impressions and a reflection of the hotel) is represented by service personnel (also called frontline employees). Their communication skills are crucial operant resources in experience co-creation (Lusch, Vargo, & O'Brien, 2007). In particular, this research seeks to (1) identify the dimensions of kinesic experiences of hotel guests and employees during face-to-face interactions; (2) identify kinesic cues that engage hotel guests and employees in terms of co-creation of experience during face-to-face interactions, and (3) outline the process that underlies kinesics-based experience co-creation between guests and employees in hotels.

By achieving the above objectives, this study makes several significant contributions to the hospitality and tourism literature. First, the present study illustrates nonverbal communication as an experience trigger in the dyadic face-to-face interactions. Second, the study extends the discourse on operant resources management in the S-D logic to pursue employees' interaction competencies to develop and succeed in experience co-creation in guest-employee dyads. The study also reveals that employees' body expressions are not just a vehicle to deliver guest satisfaction. They signal reciprocity and engagement, thereby contributing to the first impression and fostering positive relationships and affinity with guests. Practically, the study recommends developing nonverbal competencies of employees, such as cues that signal helpfulness, to co-create lasting guest experiences.

2. Literature review

2.1. Nonverbal communication

Nonverbal communication is an ability to express emotions and

meanings through nonverbal cues, such as face, head, eyes, hands, body movements, tone of voice, interpersonal distance, and a dressing/grooming style (Hall, Coats, & LeBeau, 2005; Mehrabian & Williams, 1969). Verbal and nonverbal aspects of communication are complementary; however, nonverbal communication is more influential than verbal communication (Ekman & Friesen, 1972). Birdwhistell (1952) revealed that 65% of human communication is nonverbal, whereas only 35% is verbal. Mehrabian (1971) reported that human communication consists of 55% of physical movements, 38% of vocal behavior, and 7% of verbal behavior. Furthermore, Argyle (1990) found that obedience and superiority could be signaled 4.3 times more effectively through nonverbal than verbal cues.

Among the essential groups of nonverbal communication such as proxemics (distance maintenance), physical appearance (clothing and grooming), and paralanguage (vocal behavior), the contribution of kinesics, which Birdwhistell (1952) termed "bodily communication" or simply "body language," is most vital in customer-employee interactions in the hospitality setting (Jung & Yoon, 2011). It represents the most sophisticated and visible cues that facilitate the exchange of emotions and meanings (Gamble & Gamble, 2013; Lundqvist, 2008). Cues, such as facial expressions (e.g., eye contact, smiling, and nodding), and body movements (e.g., handshaking, gestures, and body orientation) complement verbal messages and thus shape experiences during social interactions. Emotional messages transmitted through kinesics signals are critical for a successful interactional event (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Pugh, 2001).

The extant literature on the role of nonverbal communication in hospitality and tourism, however, is still nascent (Islam & Kirillova, 2020). Overall, the literature available in hospitality, tourism, and service management domains has recognized the influence of nonverbal communication in service encounters and analyzed its effect on customers in terms of service evaluation (Gabbott & Hogg, 2000, 2001; Islam & Kirillova, 2020), service quality (Sweeney, Soutar, & Mazzarol, 2012), and service recovery (Yuksel, 2008). However, few existing studies highlight the significant role that nonverbal communication plays in a hospitality and tourism encounter. For example, Lin, Zhang, and Gursoy (2020) examined the relationship between nonverbal customer-to-customer interactions and statistically showed that nonverbal communication can trigger positive emotions as well as impact customer satisfaction and loyalty. Earlier, Jung and Yoon (2011) showed that employees' nonverbal communication has a significant effect on customers' positive emotions, while in Sohn and Lee (2018), open-kitchen chefs' nonverbal cues tended to affect perceived service quality. Yoo and Park (2016) demonstrated that fast-food restaurant servers' nonverbal communication influences customer loyalty and self-identification. In the context of full-service hotels, Islam and Kirillova (2020) showed that the way nonverbal communication cues are perceived by guests varies across religions (Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism).

Although valuable, previous literature has not addressed the experiential characteristics of nonverbal communication and their innate interactive attributes. Furthermore, the focus has been on tourists' perception of employees' behavior, ignoring the fact that a communicative event is bi-directional (a guest to an employee; an employee to a guest). Thus, knowledge gaps remain in terms of exploring relational and behavioral elements of nonverbal cues (e.g., smile, eye contact, facial expressions, hand gestures, and walking movements) during face-to-face interactions in guest-employee dyads. In the hotel context, appropriate facial expressions and body movements of frontline employees may serve as a pathway towards providing a customer service experience (Teoh, Wang, & Kwek, 2019). They may work as value triggers in experience co-creation as suggested by S-D Logic (Prahallad & Ramaswamy, 2004a; Vargo & Lusch, 2016). It is within this context that the present study investigates essential nonverbal cues that can moderate experience co-creation in guest-employee dyads.

2.2. S-D logic

This study is interested in understanding experience co-creation in guest–employee dyads by considering nonverbal cues as operant resources highlighted by the S-D logic (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). S-D logic's basic idea is that individuals utilize their competencies (operant resources) to benefit others and reciprocally benefit from others' competencies (Lusch & Vargo, 2014). Specifically, the S-D logic focuses on value creation through facilitation of engagement between actors in interdependent and reciprocally beneficial collaborations (Vargo, Lusch, Akaka, & He, 2016). Thus, S-D logic emphasizes the process of value co-creation by managing operant resources [e.g., employees' knowledge and communication skills (i.e., verbal and nonverbal communication skills)]. It has further advanced towards a dynamic-systems orientation, in which value co-creation is coordinated through norms, symbols, and other heuristics during a value exchange process in the interactive situation (e.g. between firm/service providers and consumers) (Vargo & Lusch, 2017).

Interactional aspects are an essential dimension affecting customer experiences in hospitality and tourism (Walls, Okumus, Wang, & Kwun, 2011). Scholars believe that service employees' interactional competencies are indicators of service quality, customer satisfaction and loyalty, and organizational performance (Kusluvan et al., 2010). Scholars in the co-creation domain add that successful interactions between a company (employee) and a consumer is also significant in experience co-creation (Pralhad & Ramaswamy, 2004a) under S-D logic (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). The premise is that the engagement between customers and employee/service providers should result in their beneficial collaboration that generates value (Pralhad & Ramaswamy, 2004a; Vargo & Lusch, 2004).

The importance of customer experience and of experience co-creation is also highlighted in the consumer engagement literature (So et al., 2020). The very concept of customer engagement underscores the interpersonal relationship and the experiential value that engages customers' cognitively, emotionally, and behaviorally (Ahn & Back, 2018). Rather, Hollebeek, and Rasoolimanesh (2021) for example, empirically demonstrated that cognitive, affective, and behavioral engagement facilitates tourist experience and value co-creation in a destination motivational, organizational, and relational drivers (So et al., 2020) trigger customer engagement, of which the latter is most pertinent to interactional competencies of hospitality employees. In terms of producing value, scholars note that employees' sociability, expressive qualities acts as predictors of customer engagement (Dedeoglu, Bilgihan, Ye, & Okumus, 2018; Chen et al., 2021). For example, Dedeoglu, Bilgihan, Ye, Buonincontri, and Okumus (2018) found that employees' communicative skills are part of hotels' overall servicescape and they positively affect customers' perception of novelty and emotional value. Aside from face-to-face encounters, customer engagement and value creation can be facilitated through instant messaging applications (Lei et al., 2020) and AI-facilitated service encounters (Li, Yin, Qiu, & Bai, 2021). This stream of literature further demonstrates that quality of consumer engagement influences consumer advocacy (Sashi, Brynidsen, & Bilgihan, 2019), satisfaction and emotions post-consumption (Organ, Koenig-Lewis, Palmer, & Probert, 2015). Although customer engagement can extend beyond the service encounter to include post-service engagement on social media (Touni, Kim, Choi, & Ali, 2020), in the hospitality and other service domains, high-quality face-to-face interactions (e.g. engaging customer emotionally, co-creating experiential events) is still considered an essential component in the co-creation process (Pralhad & Ramaswamy, 2004a; Shaw et al., 2011).

Surprisingly, relationships, intangible resources, and the value co-created between actors during an actual interaction from the S-D logic perspective are not addressed in hospitality and tourism (Shaw et al., 2011), and the literature on co-creation remains in its infancy (Chathoth et al., 2016). No empirical study exists in the hospitality context that systematically investigates experience triggered by face-to-face

interactions in such dyads. Yet, as Fan et al. (2020) note, studies on co-creation practices are limited to information technology within hotels. For example, Shaw et al. (2011) were pioneers in examining experience co-creation in hotels; however, their research emphasized co-creation and innovation in hotel information technology. Morosan and DeFranco (2016) focus on consumers' habits of using mobile devices and how it influences the degree of value of co-creation and co-creating behavior. The exploratory study of Neuhofer, Buhalis, and Ladkin (2014) suggested high technology as a critical factor in the co-creation and facilitation of high-touch experiences. In contrast, Järvi, Keränen, Ritala, and Vilko (2020) established that value can be not only co-created but also co-destroyed, as for example, in cases of contextual rigidity, inability to provide a promised service, incoherent marketing communication, excessive expectations, insufficient communication, and inappropriate behavior. While Yen, Teng, and Tzeng (2020) find that innovativeness and customer engagement are positively related to customer value co-creation behaviours, they do not discuss what hospitality and tourism organizations can do to facilitate engagement. Similarly, González-Mansilla, Berenguer-Contró, and Serra-Cantallos (2019) link value co-creation, customer participation, brand equity, and perceived value, but they do not shed light on what actually constitutes customer participation.

In sum, the current literature on value co-creation in hospitality and tourism has clarified the importance of co-creation and customer engagement. Nonetheless, it lacks insights into characteristics and various means of offering this engagement beyond technology innovations. Prominently, we note the lack of emphasis on face-to-face encounters and interactions between a guest and an employee, even though such experiences remain valuable regardless of technological advancements, particularly in the luxury segment (Anaya & Lehto, 2020). Further, although Chathoth et al. (2014) and Shaw et al. (2011) pointed out that value co-creation in hospitality and tourism should consider both guests' and employees' perspectives, we note the excessive focus on guests' perspectives in the co-creation literature. Additionally, as a departure from existing S-D literature, which focuses on value co-creation, we prefer experience co-creation as more suited to the hospitality and tourism context because value creation depends on how consumers interpret the consumption through their experience (Vargo & Lusch, 2008b).

3. Methodology

From the ontological and epistemological points of view, the scope of this study involves exploring new insights, the semiotic world of signs and symbols, how individuals make meaning to interactions between individuals' experiences and their ideas, and what people can never know is real (Holloway & Todres, 2003). Thus, as a research paradigm, the constructivism stance appropriately serves this study's objectives when integrated into the epistemological assumption of what knowledge is, its limits and scope of knowledge, and what constitutes a valid claim to know something (Tribe, 2004). This study collected data via video elicitation focus groups, for which the constructivist paradigm can be the rationale for adhering to the relativist position and promoting the soundness of the reality that is to be constructed in the mind of interviewees (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Under constructivism, researchers' interpretation of data is necessarily influenced by their personal life experiences, and thus disclosing positionality is important. The first author has been an instructor at a hospitality training institution for 12 years. Nonverbal competency is one area of his training. The second author had eight years of industry experience as a frontline employee in upscale restaurants.

4. Method

The study uses video elicitation focus group interviews aided by an observation method (Gallagher, Hartung, Gerzina, Jr, & Merolla, 2005;

Gorawara-Bhat, Cook, & Sachs, 2007; Oorsouw et al., 2011; Zaletel, Kovacev, Mikus, & Kragelj, 2012). The present work implements a qualitative research strategy for several reasons. First, the study is exploratory (Stake, 1995) because it focuses on the exploration of experience of kinesics and thus helps understand individuals as a player and a resource integrator in experience co-creation (Lusch & Vargo, 2014). Second, its objectives are focused on the in-depth inquiry of the topic concerning *what, how, and in which way*, as opposed to seeking deductive inference (Patton, 2002). Third, a qualitative study allows the researcher to understand the events deeply rooted in the widespread phenomena of the world, including feelings or processes of thought, personal insights, and observations; such phenomena are quite complex to explore and learn through expressible quantity processes, such as quantitative or software-based methods (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Lastly, a qualitative research approach enables the researcher to play an active role in exploring the study objectives (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The study undergoes two phases. Phase-I is covert nonparticipant observations undertaken to develop and design video scenarios. In Phase-II, three kinesic interaction scenarios in the hotel lobby are directed, acted, and videotaped and are utilized as stimuli for focus groups' discussion.

4.1. Covert nonparticipant observation

Covert nonparticipant observations were conducted in lobbies of eight full-service Hong Kong hotels to explore and record kinesic cues typically displayed in face-to-face interactions between customers and employees. Had the researcher utilized overt observation, the natural and spontaneous cue display between the interactants (guests and employees) could be rendered unspontaneous or unnatural by the participants if they knew they were being observed (Oswald, Sherratt, & Smith, 2014). Specifically, the rationale and purpose of covert nonparticipant observation were to (1) identify kinesics in the field, (2) to systematize kinesics in hospitality, (3) and to understand the interactional context to help develop and design video scenarios (Henry & Fetters, 2012; Oorsouw et al., 2011). Only full-service hotels were considered because, in Hong Kong, they tend to have open lobbies with frequent guest-employee interactions.

4.2. Video production

By analyzing data from nonparticipant observation, three sets of kinesic cues were treated towards developing three different scenarios to video, such as (1) an employee greeting a guest at the front door, (2) interaction with a lobby greeter, and (3) check-in. In the hospitality context, kinesic cues such as the treatment of eye contact, smiling, and hand gestures were observed as essential prompts in the interaction within customer-employee dyads (Sundaram & Webster, 2000). Hence, these cues commonly remained present in each scenario of the study. In the three scenarios, the variation of cue projections was also included, which generated the interaction's actuality and helped the study participants express their experiences in cue variations. For example, in an interaction sequence, a guest smiles and makes eye contact with the employee; however, the employee becomes busy in his/her work without appropriate attention. In another sequence, both parties appropriately and mutually smile and make eye contact with each other. In the study of Phase-I, the variation in cue displays was also observed. Lim, Lee, and Foo (2017), Gabbott and Hogg (2000), and Yuksel (2008) also utilized cue variations in their respective studies to understand the various dimensions of displayed nonverbal cues during guest-employee interactions.

We recruited former hotel employees (four men and three women in their 20s and 30s), with at least one year of professional front-of-the-house experience, as video production actors. They were recruited from the authors' professional networks and gave their consent to be video recorded. The actors were asked to perform the three typical

interactions at three location points of a hotel: front door, mid-lobby, and front-desk (see Table 1). The authors' university lobby was used as a setting. With the assistance of a professional theatre actor, the researchers developed a role player guide containing detailed explanations of each role and performance concerns. The guide was provided to

Table 1
Kinesic cues in three scenarios.

Scenario	Cues	Interaction site	Source
1	Torso movements (slight body movement)	Hotel front entrance door	Nonparticipant observation Zaletel et al. (2012) Dallimore, Sparks, and Butcher (2007) Gabbott and Hogg (2000) Gifford, Ng, and Wilkinson (1985) Lim et al. (2017) Sommers, Greeno, and Boag (1989) Yuksel (2008) Zaletel et al. (2012)
	Tired facial expression		
	Smile		
	Long eye contact		
	Laughter		
	Eye gaze		
	(Standing) holding hands crossed forward		
	Hand direction		
	Quick eye contact		
	Body gesture (attentively polite and caring body movement)		
Bow			
Holding hands crossed at the back			
Smile			
Eye contact (with other object)			
Look around			
No smile			
Hands inside pockets			
Open body orientation (standing eagerly, enthusiastic attitude)			
Shaking head "No"			
Hand gesture (directing via hand movements)	Front desk	Nonparticipant observation Zaletel et al. (2012) Dallimore et al. (2007) Gabbott and Hogg (2000) Gifford et al. (1985) Lim et al. (2017) Sommers et al. (1989) Yuksel (2008)	
Close facial expression (a little bit disappointed)			
Busy gesture (responding to a call from a walkie-talkie)			
Raising hand			
Standing (eager, oriented and attentive to the individual)			
A couple of eye contacts			
Quick look (at something)			
Short eye contact			
No smile			
Body leaning			
Standing face-to-face			
Smile			
Shaking hands			
Smile			
Finger pointing (showing something in the paper by index finger)			
Hand gesture (as if describing something as large or small in size)			
Looking around			
Nodding "Yes"			
Comfortable facial expression (with smile and eye contact)			
Utilizing two hands (offering or handing something)			
Long eye contact			
Hand waving			

the actors before training and rehearsal sessions to prepare and be oriented to apprehend the research needs, their role, and the researchers' expectations (Dallimore et al., 2007; Gabbott & Hogg, 2000). The scenarios were recorded by a smartphone by the first author and montaged by a professional video editor.

4.3. Data collection

Data collection lasted for three months, from July 21 to September 22, 2018. Four focus groups using the produced videos as discussion stimuli were the primary source of data in this study. The video elicitation method has an ongoing legacy in the study of nonverbal communication (Furley & Schweizer, 2016; Gabbott & Hogg, 2000; Ishikawa, Hashimoto, Kinoshita, & Yano, 2010; Gallagher et al., 2005; Lim et al., 2017). It is argued that research participants can naturally recollect their past interactions in terms of thoughts, beliefs, emotions, and experiences because screenplays or video records of interactive events can relate to participants' experiences (Bahns, Crandall, Gillath, & Wilmer, 2016).

In total, 12 hotel frontline employees and 12 guests (e.g., three hotel guests and three employees in each focus group participated in the focus groups). Based on the purposeful sampling approach, employees had at least two years of working experience at full-service hotels and guests, who had stayed at a similar type of hotels within the last six months, were recruited through posters distributed at a university campus and in one's of Hong Kong's tourist districts (Bryman, 2008; Yeomans, 2017). Guests were of various nationalities, whereas hotel employees with the required experience were predominantly ethnically Chinese, even though their ethnicity was not a sampling criterion (See Table 2).

The first author facilitated focus groups to encourage the two groups (employees and guests) to discuss each other to emulate the co-creation principle that is central to this study. The focus group protocol is presented in Appendix and was concerned with the three interaction sites at the hotel lobby (e.g. entrance, mid-lobby, and front desk points). The patterns of questions based on the kinesic cues and their related actions projected on the screen (video stimuli, without sound) is consistent with the constructivist stance: "what do you think the employee/guest is thinking about you in this scenario regarding your nonverbal expressions/body movements; what do you understand to be the meanings of

these nonverbal expressions/body movements of the employee/guest; how are the three scenarios distinct from one another in terms of the employee's/guest's nonverbal expressions/body movements; why do you think so?" Each focus group was shown in all three video scenarios (without a soundtrack) to encourage solid contributions and prompt participants to share their best possible experience in the given period.

The focus group interviews were conducted in English, were video-recorded, and transcribed verbatim. The resulting data were equal to 11 h and 13 min of video material, or 83,907 words of transcribed text. Data collection stopped when a thematic saturation, when there were no new emerging ideas in the data, was reached (Hancock et al., 2016).

4.4. Data analysis

Inductive Thematic Analysis (TA) was adopted for data analysis. The method organizes and helps provide nuanced descriptions of findings (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The inductive TA approach was appropriate, provided the study objectives are related to the world of human experiences (Silverman, 2016). Specifically, Braun and Clarke's (2006) six steps were used in this study: (1) becoming familiar with the data (e.g., reading and rereading the data, and noting down initial ideas), (2) generating initial codes (e.g., collating data relevant to one another), (3) searching for themes (e.g., collating codes into potential themes and gathering all data relevant to each potential theme), (4) reviewing themes (e.g., generating a thematic "map" of the analysis), (5) defining and naming themes (e.g., generating clear names for each theme), and (6) producing the report (e.g., scholarly report discussion). The first author was the primary analyst, but the codes and themes were discussed and finalized by the entire research team.

5. Findings

5.1. Dimensions of kinesic experience

The study revealed two major themes of kinesic experience, namely, reciprocity and engagement. Each of these themes is briefly discussed below, while Fig. 1 illustrates the major themes and their sub-themes.

5.1.1. Kinesics as reciprocity

Kinesics as reciprocity is the first main theme noted by hotel guests and employees in the study. Broadly, reciprocity is concerned with how hotel guests and employees exchanged kinesic cues to break the ice in attempts to reconcile their strangeness to each other in a new place (i.e., hotel premises). Overall, the reciprocity theme involves three sub-themes: (1) mutual recognition, (2) insight exchange, and (3) expectation formation. Each sub-theme is described in the following subsections with illustrative examples.

5.1.1.1. Mutual recognition. The first step of kinesics as reciprocity is mutual recognition. Guests and employees were interested in acknowledging each other by showing their initial attention and interest. With the dyad, both guests and employees regarding this function as kinesics as beneficial to build the further exchange. Mutual recognition by kinesics behavior (body language) enabled guests and employees to reconcile their strangeness during service encounters, thereby helping shape initial hospitality experiences, such as certainty, comfort, and motivation. For example, one of the guest participants stated that "[It's] really a great experience opening when you display body language, some cues, or show some approval for somebody else or some acknowledgement and they reciprocate you" (G-3). Similarly, an employee commented on Scenario 1: "When I greeted [the guest], she responded to me, and it was a great feeling for me. After [being near to] the door, she further nodded her head and smiled back, which made me feel relaxed" (E-8).

5.1.1.2. Insight exchange. The second aspect of kinesics as reciprocity is

Table 2
Sociodemographic profiles of hotel guests and employees.

Guest	Age	Number of trips (annually)	Gender	Nationality
G-1	26	2	Male	Nigeria
G-2	34	3	Male	USA
G-3	28	4	Male	United Kingdom
G-4	28	3	Male	Pakistan
G-5	30	3	Female	Mainland China
G-6	20	3	Male	Kazakhstan
G-7	26	4	female	Singapore
G-8	34	4	Male	Ghana
G-9	28	4	Female	Hong Kong, China
G-10	33	4	Male	Hong Kong, China
G-11	25	3	Female	Mainland China
G-12	36	2	Female	Hong Kong, China
Employee	Age	Years of work experience	Gender	Nationality
E-1	25	3	Female	Hong Kong, China
E-2	30	5	Male	Hong Kong, China
E-3	26	3	Male	Hong Kong, China
E-4	27	4	Female	Hong Kong, China
E-5	35	3	Female	Hong Kong, China
E-6	31	7	Female	Hong Kong, China
E-7	25	4	Female	Hong Kong, China
E-8	30	8	Female	Hong Kong, China
E-9	26	4	Female	Hong Kong, China
E-10	38	5	Male	Hong Kong, China
E-11	29	3	Male	Hong Kong, China
E-12	38	5	Female	Hong Kong, China

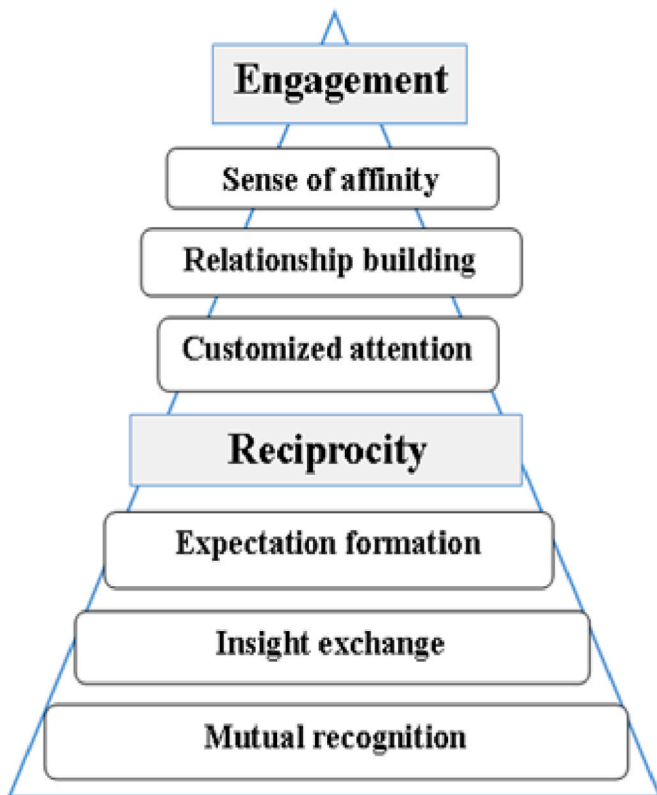


Fig. 1. Themes of kinesic experience in guest-employee dyads in hotels.

related to insight exchange. In hotels, guests, and employees produced and interpreted the meaning of nonverbal cues. They tended to emphasize the symbolic meaning of kinesic cues to realize their future relationship: “[...] A couple of good issues occurred in their interaction [...]; the first bow was for respect; the second bow was a way of showing that I (employee) am actually listening to you (guest)” (G-2, about Scenario 2). After having a recognition experience, hotel guests and employees were likely to fulfil the requirements of a successful interaction (i.e., *expectation formation*) to meet their goals, such as meaningful values in interaction or exchange. Further, the findings indicated that guests and employees agreed that an individual could display cues both consciously and unconsciously, but during face-to-face interaction, they may be unable to cast meaningful cues or not be aimed at benefiting the counterparts due to the lack of awareness of the effect of cues. For example, E-10 commented: “Anyone can nod, anyone can have eye contact, and anyone can bow. Whether it is sincere, suitable or not, as employees, we should understand what could make a difference in whether customers would want to come back to the hotel again or not.” In essence, kinesics as insight exchange must first and foremost convey an ordinary meaning.

5.1.1.3. Expectation formation. The final theme of kinesics as reciprocity is expectation formation. Guests and employees indicated that they cultivate and expect from each other such kinesics that might co-create mutually beneficial experiences. The theme is related to kinesics acting as an indicator of the future relationship between a guest and an employee as a proxy for a hotel. For example, commenting on Scenario 2, an employee participant said: “The guest is just in front of the employee. He did not change his facial expression significantly. I will just [consider] this is as business etiquette, I’m nothing special in this hotel” (E-6). Expectation formation is fluid and adaptable, reflecting the need to detect and react to each other’s kinesics changes during an interactional encounter. For example, one of the employee participants commented on Scenario 2: “Although the employee had tried his best, he could have improved [further] by helping the guest, which can [impress] the

customer further. Just smiling and everything he performed was not enough. What [other important gesture] could he do?” (E-3). With this, however, the expectation to adapt and react was more prominent for employees than for guests, pointing to the unequal relationship between the two parties in terms of power: “I want to advise the employee to notice the changes in facial expressions of the guest because everybody could see that the guest was coming with a smile, and then his facial expressions changed all the time, and in the end, he (the guest) was very angry and disappointed. The employee should notice this and respond to him ...” (G-5).

5.1.2. Kinesics as engagement

The second major theme in the study, kinesics as engagement, ran through guests’ and employees’ kinesic experience in hotels. The findings under this main theme are associated with guests’ and employees’ tendency to employ kinesics to pursue continued engagement during hospitality encounters. Here, the construction of engagement is manifested in three ways, namely, (1) customized attention, (2) relationship building, and (3) a sense of affinity. Explanations of these sub-themes are presented below.

5.1.2.1. Customized attention. As previously mentioned, kinesics display is fluid, and thus guests’ and employees’ practices of kinesics tended to continually shift and change, based on situational needs. However, unlike the previously mentioned theme of expectation formation, which is aimed to facilitate the sense of reciprocity, the theme customized attention acts as a building block to co-creating a more or less lasting relationship. Hotel guests and employees managed their interactional quality by improvising their kinesics/body language during face-to-face interactions. They demonstrated kinesic cues to each other, which they presumed suitable for improving and managing their mutual hospitality. For example, at the hotel entrance, the critical role of customized attention is demonstrated by the two parties, as follows. An employee interpreted the scenario as

[It seems as if] the employee can anticipate but not know what a guest actually needs. The guest needs help. She signals to the employees [as if to ask]: “Can you come up and give me a hand?” You have to think about what to do before [the guest voices out [his/her need]]. (E-3)

Below is how a guest participant interpreted the same encounter:

When the employee saw the guest approaching and then nodded [while opening] the door, he actually wanted to make sure that she would enter the door comfortably and safely. (G-5)

This practice of customized cues was also reflective of participants’ thoughts, considerations, and feelings regarding how they live and work in the world, of which a hotel is a specific context. This situation demonstrates that the moment of truth during face-to-face interactions is critical for customizing attention to continue towards co-creating memorable experiences. An employee (E-8) said, “You need to observe [the guest’s] emotions all the way through to see how he’s changing and feel that is he comfortable with your service.” In sum, participants customized the display of kinesic cues to benefit each other, such as (1) being negotiable toward the potentials of mutual engagement and (2) being comfortable with each other in preparing the ground for developing lasting relationships.

5.1.2.2. Relationship building. Customized cue practices in hotels directed how guests and employees obtained stimuli to build their relationship. Our findings indicated how the exchange of appropriate kinesics (i.e., signals of understanding, respect, politeness, and friendliness) in guest-employee dyads dramatically transformed their consciousness toward mutual relationship building. Although relationships can be formed in various dimensions, certain traits (i.e., interest, devotion, respect, and trust) should be shown to emphasize strong relationships because “relationship development in a hotel context is very

important, [and] maybe it can change a lot" (E-1). As findings demonstrated, hotel guests and employees felt that they should be willing to devote time and attention to each other and that they were committed to accommodating the differences and challenges (i.e., urgent and efficient check-in process and apathetic posture due to long travel) that typically emerged during face-to-face interactions at hotels. The findings showed that good relationships are generally developed by a sense of fairness and equality in distributing kinesics to maintain mutual trust and respect. The participants discussed how kinesic cues created a friendly atmosphere to establish a potential relationship by displaying how cooperation (employees') and relaxation (guests') oriented cues stimulated their friendliness and trust for each other:

We have the safety distance in our mind, right? We don't want to get too close to strangers. [The door] was opened at an angle by [the employee], just enough for the [guest] to get in, and the [guest] stepped in. That meant the [guest] trusted this guy standing close to her and didn't mind getting a bit close to him because she knew that she was using the services, and she trusted this hotel." (G-9)

In a similar vein, hotel guests and employees derived the sense of trust and respect, based on the kinesic cues demonstrating relational qualities such as politeness, sincerity, respect, and belongingness: "[The guest and employee] were smiling. They were standing close. [The guest] was looking satisfied ... When the guest received the keycard, he [looked at it], then at the receptionist, then at the keycard again" (E-4). The feeling of looking at the keycard and, subsequently, looking at the employees and again at the keycard showed the attribute of relational learning and engagement, thereby further affecting the quality of the relationship in guest-employee dyads.

5.1.2.3. Sense of affinity. The final sub-theme sense of affinity is an epitome of kinesic experiences in hotels and refers to the sense of inherent likeness and connection to another person and maintaining an ongoing relationship. Sympathy, empathy, patience, and harmony were commonly mentioned as messages necessary to convey through their guests and employees' kinesics. Participants emphasized that, in the hospitality sector, building relationships between a guest and an employee is complicated, and achieving progress may require further effort by practising affinity kinesics exchange. For example, E-7 recalled an episode from her professional experience "I saw a guest who was queuing for a long time and seemed impatient. I just calmed him down [...] and then looked at him and gave him a [sympathetic] smile with a [slight] frown to show concern for him. That would make the guest feel much better most of the time."

The data also suggest that affinity-oriented cues contributed to fostering new relationships or strengthening existing ones. Participants discussed that during the complicated interactional situation (i.e., after a long trip, impatient waiting for a long time), affinity kinesics' role is critical. For example, a hotel guest after a long journey still showed kindness in returning a smile to the hotel employee (doorman) who may have been "incredibly tired [...]; he has been standing out there for several hours a day" (G-5); likewise, the employee showed a refreshing smile to let the guest feel relieved: "[it] seemed that she had forgotten that she was tired" (G-7).

5.2. Kinesic expressions and guest-employee engagement

Two distinct ways of kinesic expressions, namely, *imperative kinesic expressions* (for employees) and *complacent kinesic expressions* (for guests), are conceptualized from the findings. They are expressive value triggers that tend to engage hotel guests and employees in terms of experience co-creation during face-to-face interactions. Both types of kinesic expressions in guest-employee dyads are briefly discussed as follows.

5.2.1. Imperative kinesic expressions

The guest participants indicated that the *imperative kinesic expression* of employees deliver a sense of value proposition and is a necessary stimulus to achieve experiential benefits. To engage guests in pursuit of co-creation of experience, commentators (e.g. [Batat, 2019](#); [Cetin & Walls, 2016](#); [Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004a](#)) suggested the use of emotional and cognitive stimuli for the beneficial collaborations, or values in exchange. Similarly, in our context, during the face-to-face interaction in hotels, beneficial collaborations or values occurred from imperative or necessary kinesic expressions that employees exchanged, through which guests tended to determine their engagement with employees in terms of co-creation of experience. These include cues that express willingness to help, sincerity, attentiveness, and empathy. For example, G-6 commented on employees' imperative kinesics: "Nonverbal cues are very powerful. Anyone can nod, anyone can have eye contact and anyone can bow, whether they are sincere or not. As customers, we can understand that is what could make a difference in our feelings about [the employees'] attitude: helpful, useful, conscious, or careless." Although a wide array of kinesic cues could convey the above messages, the most prominent include hand gestures (e.g. pointing, open hand position), nodding (as sign of approval), smiling with eyes (also known as smizing).

5.2.2. Complacent kinesic expressions

Based on the data, kinesic cues displayed by guests are conceptualized as *complacent kinesic expressions*. For hotel employees, the *complacent kinesic expressions* of guests deliver a sense of value and are perceived as beneficial to mutual engagement. These kinesic cues included those that express gratitude, satisfaction, being in a good mood and easygoing ("because people cannot tell lies with their body language" E-8). Such kinesics is seen as unthreatening, risk-free and thus contributing to employees' sense of engagement in a hospitality encounter: "If you don't see any kind of positive cue, any kind of pleasant facial expression, any kind of good outlook toward the guests' gesture, you might feel anxious or embarrassed. Are you [behaving properly]? Is there any clarity? Do you need to do something again? You might start to feel slightly concerned" (E-2). Most prominent complacent kinesics expected from guests include relaxed (vs. raised) shoulders, e.g. "[The guest] [leaned] his shoulder on the reception desk a couple of times while the employee was working. That made me feel that we're giving the right atmosphere to the guest ..." (E-7); slow (vs. fast) walking pace; and relaxed (vs. concerned) facial expressions.

6. Model: kinesics in experience co-creation

Based on the empirical findings and existing literature in SD-logic, [Fig. 2](#) outlines the kinesics' model as a medium of experience co-creation in a hospitality encounter, which involves both a service provider and a guest. At its heart, the experience co-creation has the six dimensions of experience (*mutual recognition, insight exchange, expectation formation, customized attention, relationship building, and sense of affinity*), which have two major functions: first, to establish a sense of reciprocity and, second, to maintain engagement in the dyad. This process is very much subjective and context-oriented ([Vargo & Lusch, 2008a, 2008b](#)). Co-creation in guest-employee dyads implies that the two parties are engaged in mutual collaboration and in the creation of what should be a high-quality interaction (i.e., processes that evoke emotion and meaning between individuals, motivating them to elicit a relational response; [Chathoth et al., 2016](#); [Burgoon, Buller, & Woodall, 1989](#); [Griffin, 2009](#); [Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004a](#)). In turn, these are responsible for producing experience elements between two parties (i.e., guests and employees).

Iterative in nature, the experience involves each party decoding the meanings and motives behind each other's kinesics (imperative—for employees and complacent—for guests), which can make both parties feel engaged affectively, affiliatively and cognitively in the given context

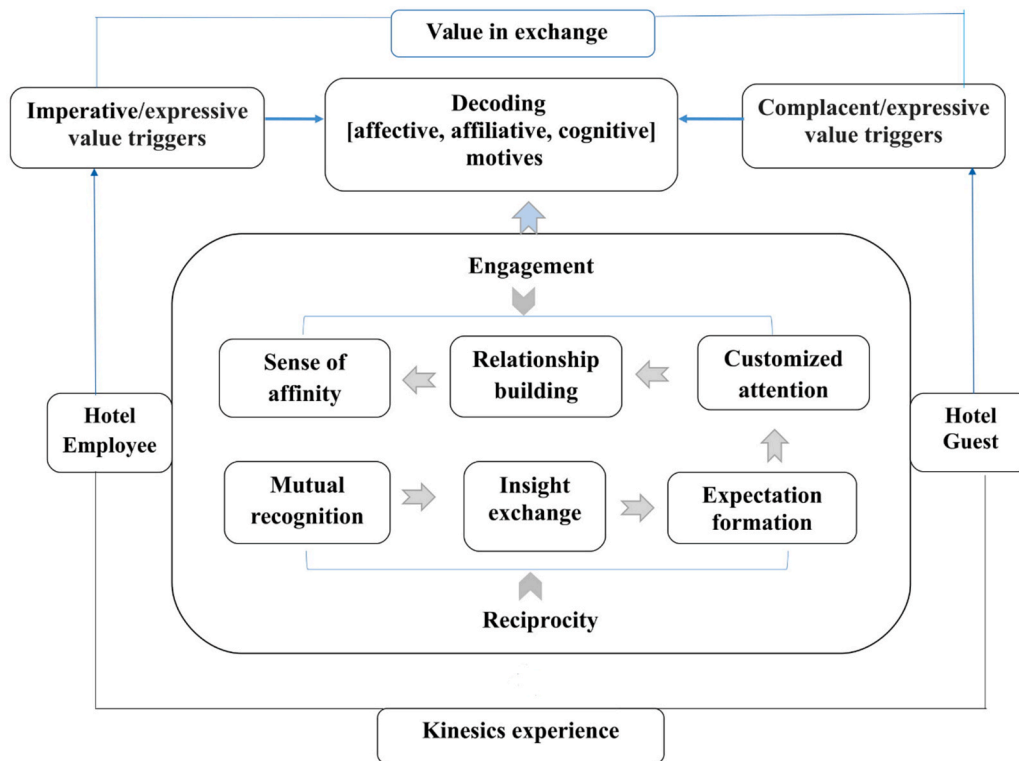


Fig. 2. Kinesics as a medium of experience co-creation in hotels.

(Argyle & Dean, 1965; Berger & Calabrese, 1975; Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1993; Holbrook, 1994; Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004a; Vargo & Lusch, 2016). The evidence suggests that this particular context is built through guests' complacent expressiveness (i.e., exhibiting satisfaction, gratitude, and no hostility towards employees) and employees' imperative expressiveness (helpfulness, empathy, sympathy) during face-to-face interactions. It is this particular context that creates moments of mutual engagement in terms of co-creation. S-D logic designates this context as a triggering episode of experience co-creation occurring in an idiosyncratic, experiential, contextual, and meaningful manner in dyadic interaction moments (Vargo & Lusch, 2017).

The above process highlights the joint creation of value that occurs through the exchange in the hotel context between guests and employees (Aarikka-Stenroos & Jaakkola, 2012; Vargo & Lusch, 2008b). Although the model described how the kinesics-based experience co-creation should occur, we acknowledge that both parties may not always be motivated to engage with each other by exchanging kinesic cues. Instead, their engagement in co-creation depends on their motives to fulfil their beneficial collaboration and respective value perception in the process of exchanging cues. Accordingly, the mutual kinesic exchange must have expressive value triggers that depend on guests and employees' two distinct motives during face-to-face interactions, that is, guests' complacent expressiveness and employees' imperative expressiveness. However, the model serves as a reference point for kinesics as a medium of experience co-creation in hospitality and tourism.

7. Conclusion

This study's broad objective was to explore kinesic behavior as a medium of experience co-creation in hotels. The findings of this study provide a rich description of the phenomenon of experience co-creation in hotel guest-employee dyads by concerning its core dimensions of experience together, such as (1) *reciprocity* ((i) mutual recognition, (ii) insight exchange and (iii) expectation formation) and (2) *engagement* ((i) customized attention, (ii) relationship building, and (iii) sense of

affinity). More than descriptive research, the study further conceptualizes kinesics practised by employees as imperative and by guests as complacent expressiveness. Hotel employees and guests articulated imperative kinesics expressions (e.g. helpfulness, empathy) and complacent kinesics expressions (e.g. satisfaction, no hostility) as the contribution to engagement with each other in experience co-creation in hotels. Finally, integrated within the broader literature on S-D logic, the empirical findings allow us to conceptualize the kinesics-based experience co-creation process in hotels.

7.1. Theoretical implications

This study contributes to the extant literature at several levels. First, although nonverbal behavior in service encounters in hotels has been explored with the focus on a guest, this study is an original empirical attempt to examine the experiential dimensions of nonverbal communication in the guest-employee dyad. Although much is known about how consumers (in this case, hotel guests) evaluate the nonverbal signs of service providers (e.g. Islam & Kirillova, 2020), hotel employees are equal participants in the communicative exchange and therefore deserve comparable attention. With the unit of analysis as a guest-employee dyad, we highlight that guests and employees' kinesics are necessary inputs into the process of co-creating experiences in which value in exchange is ultimately synchronized.

The study also underscored the importance of employees in experience co-creation from another angle. Employees are not passive sources of nonverbal signs; they are aware and willing to contribute to hotels' efforts in developing guest service offerings. Experience co-creation within the S-D logic derives from the integration of face-to-face interaction resources (i.e., verbal and nonverbal signs or cues) between interactants. Thus, in addition to technological innovations that allow for value of co-creation (and co-destruction) in a hotel context, as abundantly documented in existing hospitality and tourism literature, the present research demonstrates that conventional face-to-face interaction has the same potential. The study is a reminder that neither verbal nor

nonverbal communication during service encounters should be neglected. Acting on behalf of an organization, frontline staff directly helps form guests' overall experience and could affect service quality perceptions and loyalty.

Second, the study illustrated the importance of nonverbal behavior in consumer experience and highlighted the value of deconstructing the concept of nonverbal communication in hospitality into detailed dimensions. Specifically, grounded in the empirical data and the S-D logic, the study develops a new theory by integrating dyadic kinesics into the experience co-creation process. The co-creation principle has been well acknowledged in the hospitality & tourism literature (and beyond), with the recent attention also dedicated to co-destruction (e.g. Järvi et al., 2020). We show that kinesics is an essential aspect of experience co-creation (and possibly co-destruction) that has a multidimensional role in this process. With reciprocity and engagement being at the foundation of kinesics, it functions as a means of mutual recognition, insight exchange, expectation formation, customized attention, relationship building, and delivering a sense of affinity. Thus, unlike previous hospitality and tourism research that looked at nonverbal behavior solely as a vehicle to deliver service quality, guest satisfaction, this study zoomed into the phenomenon of kinesics-based experience itself. Similarly, the present study extends the literature on nonverbal behavior in fields such as psychology, healthcare, and sports.

7.2. Practical implications

The study provides practical implications for hotel managers. First, hospitality and tourism businesses should be aware that employees' body expressions are not just vehicles to deliver guest satisfaction. They are a multi-functional and multi-modal means of establishing rapport with guests: they invite and signal reciprocity; they help engage and become engaged, thereby contributing to co-creating lasting experiences. Therefore, we advocate for the training of mid-level and line hotel managers to understand the role of staff's nonverbal behavior in achieving a hotel's long-term organizational goals. These should go beyond guest satisfaction and loyalty, including establishing a sense of 1) reciprocity and 2) engagement with guests. While the former is focused on signaling and decoding cues to facilitate a favorable first impression, the latter is aimed at maintaining continuous positive relationships. The lasting value for guests is co-created when both of these components are present.

Second, we recommend the development of imperative nonverbal competencies. Another aspect of training is employees' ability to recognize and decode the complacent kinesics of guests. Since specific kinesic cues are subject to corporate (for a hotel) and national (for guests) cultures (e.g. Islam & Kirillova, 2020), we recommend that hotels first establish which cues are frequently occurring vs. which cues are most desirable. Like in this research, video scenarios can be developed to illustrate what complacent/imperative cues look like and what they mean. The role-play method is recommended to place employees in a practical context. Third, the study illustrated that employees' and guests' kinesic behaviors are interdependent, and thus hotels should also consider encouraging positive kinesic expressions from guests. For example, a sign, e.g. "Please smile to our staff. They work hard for you" or "A smile goes a long way", can be posted. Such a reorientation is necessary if the co-creation principle is to be truly embraced.

Finally, the study's findings also have important implications for developing tertiary education curricula in hospitality and tourism programs. Essentially, kinesics is a type of soft skills that modern hospitality/tourism graduates must have to become competitive in the labor market. For example, advanced nonverbal communication skills are increasingly seen related to one's professional qualities, emotional and social intelligence. Educational institutions can adopt the two found themes (reciprocity & engagement) and six sub-themes as the baseline for curricula development.

7.3. Limitations and suggestions for future research

The study is not free of limitations. The study was contextualized in full-service hotels. Expectations and perceptions of nonverbal behavior of guests and employees may vary due to the different styles and level of service in, for example, a luxury or limited-service hotel. Similarly, we focused on interactions occurring in hotel lobbies, consequently limiting the transferability of findings to other areas in a hotel. Future research efforts may extend to other types of hotels and various service settings (i. e., housekeeping and dining areas). Research is also encouraged to understand nonverbal behavior in other hospitality & tourism contexts, e. g. a sightseeing tour, a restaurant experience. Additionally, the study considered only kinesics, as it is most dominant aspect of nonverbal communication. Future research is invited to integrate all four types of nonverbal signals, namely kinesics, proxemics, physical appearance and paralinguistic. From the methodological standpoint, although cues integrated into video scenarios varied (both positive and negative), participants tended to discuss the positive aspects. Reflecting this positivity bias, findings and the framework tend to emphasize what kinesics "should be" as opposed to "can be." Research on kinesics in value co-destruction is one research avenue to counter this bias.

Nonverbal cues, their coding and decoding vary according to cultural norms and values (e.g. Islam & Kirillova, 2020). As interactions in tourism are often cross-cultural, we invite comparative and cross-cultural research on the role of nonverbal communication in hospitality/tourism experiences. Finally, although we treated guests and employees as equal interlocutors in this study, the power-relationships in the dyad cannot be ignored. One such aspect is that employees must exercise emotional labor while consciously regulating their kinesics according to organizational goals and needs. Using employees as instruments presents ethical issues. Future research is needed to propose ways to balance hotels' operational needs while preserving employees' health and well-being.

Author statement

Mohammad Shahidul Islam: Conceptualization, Methodology, Data collection, Data analysis, Writing-Original draft (50%), Project administration. **Ksenia Kirillova**: Conceptualization, Methodology, Data analysis; Writing-Original draft (50%); Supervision; Project administration.

Impact statement

Although there is limited attention to nonverbal competencies in the hospitality & tourism literature and in practice, it is an important aspect of any consumer experience. Like verbal, nonverbal communication skills convey one's professional qualities, emotional and social intelligence. This research emphasizes the perspective that employees' body expressions are not just a vehicle to deliver guest satisfaction. They are a multi-functional and multi-modal means of establishing rapport with guests: they invite and signal reciprocity; they help engage and become engaged, thereby contributing to co-creating lasting experiences. The findings provide baseline suggestions for how to structure and deliver a comprehensive training in hospitality organizations. At a larger scale, there is an impact on hospitality & tourism tertiary education. Soft skills are notoriously difficult to teach and evaluate. Educational institutions can adopt the two found themes (reciprocity & engagement) and six sub-themes as the baseline for curricula development.

Declaration of competing interest

None.

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APPENDIX. Focus group interview protocol

Scenario I Questions	
Objective-ii: To identify kinesic cues that engage hotel guests and employees in terms of co-creation of experience during face-to-face interactions	1. From this video scenario, please list the nonverbal expressions/body movements the employee/guest has displayed to you?
	2. What do you understand to be the meanings of these nonverbal expressions/body movements of the employee/guest?
	3. What are the nonverbal expressions/body movements of the employee/guest that make you engaged/attentive about the employee/guest in this video scenario? Please explain why?
Objective-i: To identify the dimensions of kinesic experiences of hotel guests and employees during face-to-face interactions	4. What do you think the employee/guest is thinking about you in this scenario regarding your nonverbal expressions/body movements?
	5. What do you want to achieve by displaying your nonverbal expressions/body movements to the employee/guest?
	6. What are your impressions of the employee's/guest's nonverbal expressions/body movements in this scenario?
	7. What impressions would it make if the employee/guest does not display the nonverbal expressions/body movements at the entrance of the hotel? Why do you think so?
	8. What is the importance of the nonverbal expressions/body movements of the employee/guest at the entrance of the hotel?
Objective-ii: To identify kinesic cues that engage hotel guests and employees in terms of co-creation of experience during face-to-face interactions	9. At the entrance of the hotel, what nonverbal expressions/body movements do you like to see in the employee/guest? Why?
Objective-i: To identify the dimensions of kinesic experiences of hotel guests and employees during face-to-face interactions	10. Please share any memorable feelings you got from this interaction with the employee/guest?
Scenario II Questions	
Objective-ii: To identify kinesic cues that engage hotel guests and employees in terms of co-creation of experience during face-to-face interactions	1. From this video scenario, please list the nonverbal expressions/body movements the employee/guest has displayed to you?
	2. What do you understand to be the meanings of these nonverbal expressions/body movements of the employee/guest?
	3. What are the nonverbal expressions/body movements of the employee/guest that make you engaged/attentive about the employee/guest in this video scenario? Please explain why?
Objective-i: To identify the dimensions of kinesic experiences of hotel guests and employees during face-to-face interactions	4. How do you feel about the nonverbal expressions/body movements of the employee/guest in this scenario?
	5. What do you (not) like about the nonverbal expressions/body movements of the employee/guest in this scenario? Why?
	6. In the context of this scenario, how should the employee/guest display nonverbal expressions/body movements to you? Why?
Objective-ii: To identify kinesic cues that engage hotel guests and employees in terms of co-creation of experience during face-to-face interactions	7. To make the employee/guest feel comfortable, what nonverbal expressions/body movements should you display to the employee/guest? Why should you do so?
Objective-i: To identify the dimensions of kinesic experiences of hotel guests and employees during face-to-face interactions	8. What goes through your mind when does the employee/guest not display the nonverbal expressions/body movements that you expect?
Objective-ii: To identify kinesic cues that engage hotel guests and employees in terms of co-creation of experience during face-to-face interactions	9. Which particular nonverbal expressions/body movements of the employee may indicate that you are going to have a positive/negative experience with the hotel? Which particular nonverbal expressions/body movements of the guest may indicate that he/she is willing/unwilling to use your services?
Objective-i: To identify the dimensions of kinesic experiences of hotel guests and employees during face-to-face interactions	10. Please share any memorable feelings you got from this interaction with the employee/guest?
Scenario III Questions	
Objective-ii: To identify kinesic cues that engage hotel guests and employees in terms of co-creation of experience during face-to-face interactions	1. From this video scenario, please list the nonverbal expressions/body movements the employee/guest has displayed to you?
	2. What do you understand to be the meanings of these nonverbal expressions/body movements of the employee/guest?
	3. What are the nonverbal expressions/body movements of the employee/guest that make you engaged/attentive about the employee/guest in this video scenario? Please explain why?
Objective-i: To identify the dimensions of kinesic experiences of hotel guests and employees during face-to-face interactions	4. How do you feel about the nonverbal expressions/body movements of the employee/guest in this scenario?
	5. How do you feel when your nonverbal expressions/body movements get no response from the employee/guest?
	6. What are the negative and positive nonverbal expressions/body movements of the employee/guest? Why do you think so?
	7. What do you understand to be the nonverbal expressions/body movements that can show the employee's particular attitudes? What are these particular attitudes? Please explain.
	8. In this type of interaction scenario, what nonverbal expressions/body movements do you expect from the employee/guest? Why?
	9. Please share any memorable feeling you got from this interaction with the employee/guest?
Objective-ii: To identify kinesic cues that engage hotel guests and employees in terms of co-creation of experience during face-to-face interactions	10. How are the three scenarios distinct from one another in terms of the employee's/guest's nonverbal expressions/body movements? Why do you think so?
Objective-i: To investigate how kinesics is mutually experienced by hotel guests and employees during face-to-face interactions	11. Which of the nonverbal expressions/body movements of the employee/guest among the three video scenarios give you the most memorable experience? Please explain.
Objective-ii: To identify kinesic cues that engage hotel guests and employees in terms of co-creation of experience during face-to-face interactions	

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Mohammad Shahidul Islam (mohd.sh.islam@connect.polyu.hk) received his PhD degree from School of Hotel and Tourism Management, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University. His research interests include consumer/employee behavior, hospitality experience, emotional labour, marketing management, training and development. Currently, he is a Senior Faculty at National Hotel and Tourism Training Institute, Dhaka, Bangladesh.



Ksenia Kirillova (ksenia.kirillova@institutpaulbocuse.com) is an associate professor of marketing at the Paul Bocuse Institute, France. She is interested in consumer experiences in tourism/hospitality and destination marketing, preferring to approach these issues from the sociological and philosophical angles.