

RAUMDEUTER AS SPATIAL SERVICE INTELLIGENCE IN MALAYSIAN LUXURY RESORTS

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Abstract. This conceptual review proposes Raumdeuter as a spatial service-intelligence lens for understanding luxury resort service in Malaysia. Raumdeuter is not an established hospitality construct; it is used here as a metaphor for how frontline employees interpret physical, social, temporal, digital, and cultural cues in resort environments in real time. The review draws on servicescape theory, social servicescape research, hotel customer experience management, customer experience quality, luxury hospitality, proactive customer service performance, smart hospitality and generative artificial intelligence, and Malaysian cultural communication. On this basis, the paper argues that the luxury resort experience is influenced not only by environmental design and service standards but also by employees' capacity to read guest movement, density, timing, privacy expectations, digital signals, and culturally appropriate service cues, including the indirectness and refinement encoded in budi bahasa. The review develops a framework that links resort cues, Raumdeuter interpretation, guest-perceived experiential value, and behavioural outcomes, and offers four research propositions to guide empirical testing. The paper contributes by reorienting the servicescape discussion from environmental influence to staff-mediated interpretation and contextualising anticipatory luxury service within Malaysian hospitality culture. Practical implications are offered for staff training, guest-flow management, service personalisation, technology use, and culturally sensitive service design.

Keywords: *servicescape, guest experience, proactive service, cultural communication, guest loyalty*

Introduction

Luxury resort experiences are shaped by a complex interplay among physical settings, social encounters, employee conduct, guest expectations, and symbolic meanings. Foundational servicescape theory establishes that physical surroundings influence both customers and employees in service organisations, including hotels and restaurants (Bitner, 1992). Evidence from Malaysian resort hotels indicates that the physical and social environments are meaningful predictors of guest satisfaction and revisit intention (Ali and Omar, 2014). Recent work extends this further, showing that physical, social, and e-servicescape elements influence resort hotel guest loyalty, with place attachment serving as a principal mediator for most, though not all, of these pathways (Ariffin et al., 2025). These findings confirm that the environment matters, but they also invite a more careful look at how it is activated in real time. The growing sophistication of luxury resort experiences suggests that the environment is only part of the explanation. Equally important is the interpretive capability that enables frontline employees to read the environment in real time. Social servicescape research shows that customers form impressions from passive observation of other customers, employees, and the density of the environment (Line and Hanks, 2019b), with downstream effects on satisfaction and behavioural intentions in full-service hotels (Line and Hanks,

2019a). Customer experience management (CEM) research argues that experience is the outcome of multifunctional coordination (Kandampully et al., 2018), is best measured holistically across product experience, outcome focus, moments of truth, and peace of mind (Klaus and Maklan, 2013), and unfolds across a four-stage hotel process of identification, design, implementation, and monitoring (Veloso and Gómez-Suárez, 2023; Rahimian et al., 2021).

Luxury hospitality research shows that the field's definitions remain unsettled (Luna-Cortés et al., 2022), that six intellectual clusters organise the literature (Jain et al., 2023), and that customer luxury experience in hotels can be measured across service quality, authenticity, escapism, exclusivity, status, and aesthetic refinement (Christodoulides et al., 2025). These studies explain what affects luxury experience but offer limited attention to how frontline employees interpret spatial, social, temporal, digital, and cultural cues in real time. Proactive customer service performance research provides one entry point, defining proactive service as frontline employees' self-initiated work to anticipate and pre-empt guest needs (Bai et al., 2026), yet it explains the anticipatory behaviour itself rather than the cue-reading that determines when and how that behaviour is appropriate. The proposed Raumdeuter lens addresses this layer. For the purpose of this paper, Raumdeuter is used as a metaphor for spatial interpretation rather than as a formal theory imported from another field. The term combines the German Raum (space) and Deuter (interpreter), denoting an agent whose value lies less in occupying a fixed position than in reading available space and arriving where it matters at the right moment. Translated into hospitality, Raumdeuter refers to a spatial service-intelligence lens through which frontline employees in Malaysian luxury resorts interpret physical, social, temporal, digital, and cultural cues to anticipate guest needs, reduce experiential friction, and deliver personalised yet unobtrusive luxury service. The Malaysian setting matters because luxury services there are evaluated not only through efficiency and personalisation but also through culturally appropriate communication, refined language, indirectness, respect, and care for emotions captured by budi bahasa (Ramli, 2013), and because frontline cultural intelligence has been shown to predict service quality in Malaysian four- and five-star hotels (Jiony et al., 2021).

Building on this definition, the paper pursues three questions. How can Raumdeuter be translated into hospitality scholarship without being overclaimed as a measured construct? Which existing literature supports its application in Malaysian luxury resorts? And how can Raumdeuter-informed service intelligence contribute to guest experience, proactive service, luxury value, and revisit-oriented outcomes? The remaining sections review the relevant literature, describe the review method, present the conceptual synthesis, and discuss theoretical and managerial implications.

Review of literature

Physical and social servicescape in resort hospitality

The servicescape framework is the conceptual anchor for environment-based hospitality research. Bitner (1992) argued that the built environment influences both customers and employees in service organisations and that its strategic role depends on the nature of the service and the intensity of the consumption experience, which is particularly relevant to resort hotels where guests spend long hours across multiple zones. Ali and Omar (2014) showed that the physical and social environments of

Malaysian resort hotels are meaningful predictors of customer satisfaction and revisit intention, and Ariffin et al. (2025) demonstrated that physical, social, and e-servicescape factors exert differential effects on guest loyalty with place attachment as the principal mediator. The social servicescape adds an important refinement. Line and Hanks (2019b) operationalised it as a third-order construct reflecting other customers, employees, and social density, all discerned through passive observation rather than direct interaction. For luxury resorts, this means that guests judge the service environment not only through direct interaction but also through what they see in the lobby, pool deck, and restaurant; even when not serving the focal guest, employees shape service quality and ambiance through their presence and behaviour. Recent work on hotel inspiration confirms that the substantive servicescape stimulates satisfaction, with communicative staging remaining analytically distinct (Liang et al., 2024). Together, this research establishes a foundation for viewing the resort as an environment rich in cues, but it leaves open the question of who activates these cues and how.

Customer experience management and luxury hospitality

Customer experience management research argues that hospitality firms cannot improve experience through a single functional area. Kandampully et al. (2018) concluded that positive experience is the outcome of an orchestrated, multifunctional approach spanning marketing, operations, design, human resources, strategy, technology, and social media. Klaus and Maklan (2013) showed that customer experience is best measured holistically across product experience, outcome focus, moments of truth, and peace of mind, and that it predicts loyalty better than service quality alone. Rahimian et al. (2021) proposed a hotel-specific four-stage process of identification, design, implementation, and monitoring, supported by organisational factors of culture, structure, leadership, and technology. Veloso and Gómez-Suárez (2023) consolidated this work and called for clearer conceptual models. For clarity, CEM denotes in this paper the firm-side managerial framework through which hotels design, implement, and monitor the guest experience (Rahimian et al., 2021; Kandampully et al., 2018), whereas customer experience quality denotes the guest-side construct through which the delivered experience is evaluated (Klaus and Maklan, 2013). The CEM framework thus denotes the managerial architecture, while customer experience constructs denote the guest evaluations that the architecture is intended to produce.

Luxury hospitality research has moved in parallel. Luna-Cortés et al. (2022) argued that the field remains disjointed, while Jain et al. (2023) identified six intellectual clusters spanning digital interactions, brand attributes, status consumption, service quality, sustainability, and workforce traits. Christodoulides et al. (2025) introduced and validated a six-dimensional scale of customer luxury experience comprising service quality, authenticity, escapism, exclusivity, status, and aesthetic refinement, while Khan and Rahman (2017) added a complementary brand-experience lens spanning location, ambiance, staff competence, website and social media presence, and guest-to-guest experience. These two streams converge on a question they do not directly answer. Customer experience management explains the multifunctional orchestration through which firms produce experience, and luxury hospitality research explains the dimensions through which guests evaluate it. Neither stream captures the moment-to-moment interpretive work through which a frontline employee senses that an arriving

family needs slower pacing or that a returning guest expects to be greeted by name without being asked. The Raumdeuter lens fills this interpretive layer by positioning frontline cue-reading as the bridge between resort environmental cues and the multidimensional luxury experience; it does not compete with CEM or with the luxury-experience construct but specifies the employee-level activity through which their design choices and dimensions are realised in real time.

Proactive service, technology, and culturally appropriate communication

Research on proactive customer service performance offers the clearest parallel in hospitality to the proposed Raumdeuter lens. Bai et al. (2026) defined it as frontline employees' self-initiated efforts to identify and pre-empt guest needs before they are voiced, and reviewed antecedents, mediators, moderators, and outcomes, positioning proactive service as a source of reputational differentiation in hospitality and tourism. However, the construct has been developed largely through employee-level antecedents such as leadership, climate, and personal resources, and it does not yet speak clearly to the spatial reading of the resort environment or to the cultural texture through which anticipatory behaviour is enacted. Cross-cultural luxury hotel research adds that frontline cultural intelligence and emotional labour are important resources for such encounters (Lam et al., 2022). Technology adds both possibilities and caveats. Smart hospitality research argues that interconnected systems, sensors, and beacons can support context-aware personalisation across the guest journey (Buhalis and Leung, 2018; Marinova et al., 2017), and Internet-of-Things-enabled multisensory environments in upscale hotels shape guest emotions and behavioural intentions (Pelet et al., 2021). Big data analytics capabilities in hospitality and tourism are still maturing (Mariani and Baggio, 2022), and Wang (2025) cautions that generative AI raises concerns regarding complex interactions, cultural fit, service contingency, and privacy. In a Malaysian luxury resort, these findings imply that digital data are best treated as supportive intelligence for human interpreters rather than a replacement for the human reading of space and culture. Ramli (2013) argued that, within Malaysian discourse, *budi bahasa* can function as a cultural warrant encompassing politeness, refined language, indirectness, and care for others' feelings; without essentialising guests or staff, it offers a culturally relevant lens for what counts as appropriate service in Malaysian luxury resorts (see also Jiony et al., 2021).

Materials and Methods

This paper adopted an integrative conceptual review approach to synthesise hospitality and tourism literature and develop a theoretical framework. The review did not attempt a meta-analysis, a PRISMA-type systematic review, or a bibliometric analysis; it used conceptual relevance as the primary selection criterion because the purpose was to clarify an emerging conceptual lens rather than estimate effect sizes. The evidence base was assembled purposively from peer-reviewed journal articles in hospitality, tourism, services marketing, and cultural communication, identified through targeted searches in Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect, Emerald Insight, SAGE Journals, and Taylor & Francis Online, complemented by citation tracing from seminal hospitality sources, and organised around keyword families covering servicescape, hotel customer experience, luxury hospitality, proactive customer service performance, smart hospitality, generative artificial intelligence in hotels, and Malaysian cultural

communication, including budi bahasa. Articles were retained when they were peer-reviewed, directly relevant to at least one conceptual domain, focused on hotel or resort experience, and useful for theory-building around frontline interpretation. Foundational works such as Line and Hanks (2019b), Klaus and Maklan (2013) as well as Bitner (1992), and were retained for theoretical grounding, while studies from 2021 onwards were prioritised to reflect the current state of the field. The synthesis proceeded in three stages: foundational theories and constructs were first mapped to identify the conceptual foundations of spatial service intelligence; recent hospitality and tourism studies were then compared to identify gaps relating to frontline interpretation, anticipatory service, luxury experience dimensions, and culturally appropriate service delivery; and the findings were finally integrated into a proposed framework that positions Raumdeuter as an interpretive service capability linking resort environmental cues with guest-perceived experiential value and behavioural outcomes. Because the purpose was conceptual development, propositions were framed as theoretical claims open to empirical validation rather than tested hypotheses.

Results and Discussion

Defining Raumdeuter in the hospitality context

As defined in the Introduction, Raumdeuter refers to a spatial service-intelligence lens through which frontline employees interpret physical, social, temporal, digital, and cultural cues in the resort environment to anticipate guest needs, reduce experiential friction, and deliver personalised yet unobtrusive luxury service. The definition is deliberately modest: it proposes no new measurement scale and does not claim to replace servicescape theory, the CEM framework, or the customer luxury experience construct; it complements them by shifting analytic attention from what cues exist to how employees read and respond to them in real time. The review's findings are organised around five interpretive dimensions.

Five interpretive dimensions of Raumdeuter in luxury resorts

Spatial cue interpretation refers to employees' ability to read guests' movement through lobbies, restaurants, pathways, beachfront areas, villa clusters, pool areas, and activity zones. It is grounded in the servicescape framework, which positions spatial layout, ambient conditions, and symbolic cues as stimuli influencing both customer and employee behaviour (Bitner, 1992). In the Malaysian resort setting, Ali and Omar (2014) showed that the physical environment predicts satisfaction and revisit intention, and Ariffin et al. (2025) demonstrated that spatial layout and signs positively affect place attachment. A Raumdeuter lens reframes these findings by asking what the design asks employees to notice in real time. Social cue interpretation refers to employees' ability to read other guests, group composition, family needs, social density, privacy expectations, and behavioural appropriateness. It draws on the social servicescape, defined by the observable characteristics of other customers and employees, including similarity, appearance, behaviour, and density (Line and Hanks, 2019b), and is consistent with Ali and Omar (2014) finding that the social environment significantly predicts outcomes in Malaysian resort hotels. The Raumdeuter contribution is to emphasise that employees are themselves readers of the social servicescape, not only its objects.

Temporal cue interpretation refers to employees' ability to detect critical moments in the guest journey, such as arrival fatigue, waiting tension, breakfast crowding, activity transitions, check-out stress, and service recovery windows. This dimension extends customer experience management, where hotel CEM is built on identifying customers, designing the experience, and monitoring touchpoints (Rahimian et al., 2021), and where customer experience quality is a time-extended construct in which moments of truth and peace of mind sit alongside product experience (Veloso and Gómez-Suárez, 2023; Klaus and Maklan, 2013). Proactive customer service performance research supports this reading by defining the proactive capability as anticipating needs before they surface (Bai et al., 2026). In a Malaysian luxury resort, temporal reading is what separates scripted service from discreet anticipation. Digital cue interpretation refers to employees' ability to use pre-arrival and in-stay digital information ethically to personalise service. Smart hospitality research argues that interconnected and interoperable systems, sensors, and beacons can supply employees with context-aware information at the right moment (Buhalis and Leung, 2018; Marinova et al., 2017), and Internet-of-Things-enabled multisensory environments in upscale hotels shape guest emotions and behavioural intentions (Pelet et al., 2021). Big-data analytics capabilities are still maturing in hospitality and tourism (Mariani and Baggio, 2022), and Wang (2025) cautions that generative AI struggles with complex interactions, cultural fit, service contingency, and privacy. A Raumdeuter lens, therefore, treats digital intelligence as input to human interpretation, not as a substitute for it; in a Malaysian luxury resort, technology should enable the frontline employee to read the guest better rather than replace the relational work of reading (Lam et al., 2022; Ramli, 2013).

Cultural cue interpretation refers to employees' ability to deliver service in a manner appropriate to Malaysian culture. Ramli (2013) showed that budi bahasa can function as a warranty component in Malaysian discourse, reflecting politeness, respect, refined language, indirectness, and care for others' feelings. As conceptual illustrations rather than empirical findings, each component can be translated into a strategy for authentic service in the luxury resort setting. The halus (refined) preference for indirect conversation (Ramli, 2013) supports offers that suggest rather than interrogate, such as proposing a quieter table when a guest hesitates at a restaurant entrance, rather than questioning the hesitation. Discretion, listed among the core budi qualities, supports unobtrusive presence around private moments such as family meals and poolside rest. Care for others' feelings, together with the social emotion of malu (propriety), supports service recovery by resolving a complaint away from other guests, so that no guest is made to feel exposed. Politeness, respect, and refined language shape greeting, tone, and the measured pacing of compliments. Malaysian empirical evidence supports the weight of this dimension: Jiony et al. (2021) found that the cognitive and behavioural facets of frontline cultural intelligence positively predicted service quality in Sabah hotels, and Lam et al. (2022) reported that cultural intelligence and emotional labour shape job satisfaction among luxury hotel employees serving cross-cultural guests in Asia. Enacted in this way, cultural reading operates as a strategy for authenticity and gives Malaysian luxury resorts a distinctive identity in a global luxury market that increasingly values authenticity and local culture (Christodoulides et al., 2025; Jain et al., 2023).

Conceptual framework

Figure 1 shows the main conceptual flow: resort environmental cues (physical, social, temporal, digital, and cultural) are read through Raumdeuter interpretation, which shapes guest-perceived experiential value, which in turn drives behavioural outcomes. Raumdeuter interpretation is theorised as an employee-level interpretive activity drawing on servicescape theory (Bitner, 1992), social servicescape research (Line and Hanks, 2019a, 2019b), CEM and customer experience quality (Rahimian et al., 2021; Kandampully et al., 2018; Klaus and Maklan, 2013), proactive service (Bai et al., 2026), smart hospitality (Wang, 2025; Pelet et al., 2021; Buhalis and Leung, 2018), and Malaysian cultural communication (Lam et al., 2022; Jiony et al., 2021; Ramli, 2013). Guest-perceived experiential value follows the six dimensions of customer luxury experience (Christodoulides et al., 2025) with brand-experience attributes as a complement (Khan and Rahman, 2017), and behavioural outcomes draw on resort findings of satisfaction, place attachment, revisit intention, word of mouth, and loyalty (Ariffin et al., 2025; Ali and Omar, 2014).

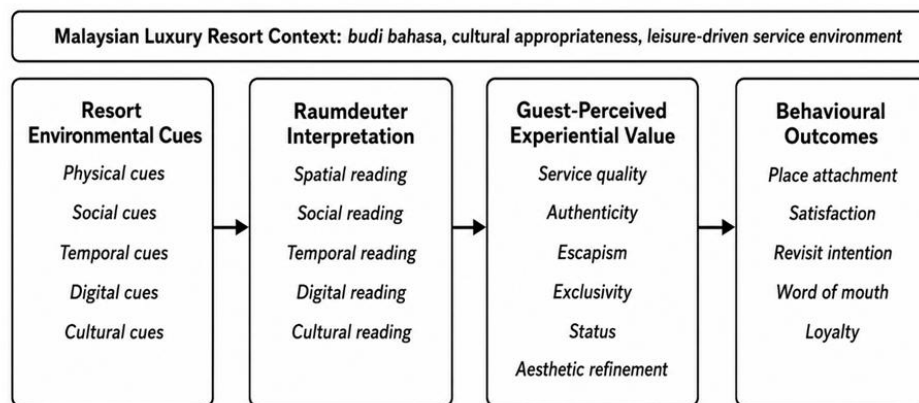


Figure 1. A conceptual framework connecting resort environmental cues, Raumdeuter interpretation, guest-perceived experiential value, and behavioural outcomes in Malaysian luxury resorts.

Research propositions

The argument is summarised in four propositions, derived from the cited reasoning, to guide empirical testing. Servicescape research treats environmental cues as stimuli whose effects are mediated by interpretation (Line and Hanks, 2019b; Bitner, 1992), and recent evidence from Malaysian resorts shows that physical, social, and e-servicescape elements influence loyalty largely through place attachment (Ariffin et al., 2025). Place attachment alone, however, does not specify the human work that converts cues into perceived value; customer experience quality locates this work in moments of truth and peace of mind (Klaus and Maklan, 2013). Frontline cue interpretation is therefore positioned as the carrier:

Proposition 1

In Malaysian luxury resorts, frontline employees' Raumdeuter interpretation mediates the relationship between resort environmental cues and guest-perceived experiential value. The customer luxury experience scale validates six dimensions, namely service quality, authenticity, escapism, exclusivity, status, and aesthetic refinement, as the constituents of perceived luxury experience in hotels (Christodoulides et al., 2025), with

hotel-brand-experience attributes as a complementary specification (Khan and Rahman, 2017). The five Raumdeuter readings are not interchangeable: spatial reading most directly serves privacy and aesthetic refinement, social reading shapes exclusivity and status, temporal reading is the natural home of moments-of-truth service quality (Klaus and Maklan, 2013), digital reading enables informed personalisation while preserving privacy (Wang, 2025; Pelet et al., 2021), and cultural reading anchors authenticity in Malaysian terms (Jiony et al., 2021; Ramli, 2013). This differentiated mapping leads to.

Proposition 2

The five interpretive dimensions of Raumdeuter are expected to contribute differentially to the dimensions of customer luxury experience identified by Christodoulides et al. (2025), with the precise mappings open to empirical testing. Proactive customer service performance is defined by self-initiated, anticipatory acts that pre-empt customer needs, with positive effects on service evaluation in hospitality and tourism (Bai et al., 2026). Proactive behaviour is not culturally neutral, however; in luxury hotel settings in Asia, cultural intelligence and emotional labour shape how staff actions are perceived (Lam et al., 2022), and Malaysian frontline cultural intelligence has been linked to service quality in four- and five-star hotels (Jiony et al., 2021). Ramli (2013) shows that budi bahasa can function as a warranty component for what counts as appropriate communication in Malaysian discourse, placing weight on refinement, indirectness, and face sensitivity. The same proactive act may therefore be perceived as gracious or as intrusive depending on whether it is enacted through budi bahasa cues:

Proposition 3

Cultural cue interpretation anchored in budi bahasa strengthens the perceived appropriateness of proactive service in Malaysian luxury resort settings. Finally, a fourth proposition is required to articulate the explanatory weight that a Raumdeuter lens adds beyond what is already captured by established constructs. Servicescape research has shown that physical, social, and e-servicescape elements each exert direct effects on resort hotel outcomes, with place attachment serving as the principal mediator (Ariffin et al., 2025; Ali and Omar, 2014), and customer experience research has documented direct effects of CEM and customer experience quality on satisfaction, loyalty, and word of mouth (Veloso and Gómez-Suárez, 2023; Klaus and Maklan, 2013). To justify its conceptual addition, a new interpretive lens must explain variance that established servicescape constructs and the CEM framework do not account for, and must do so through a mechanism that is theoretically distinct from them rather than redescribing them under a new label. On the first property, servicescape constructs describe the cues that the environment makes available, whereas Raumdeuter interpretation describes the act of reading those cues at the moment of the encounter (Bitner, 1992; Line and Hanks, 2019b); the CEM framework describes the orchestrated organisational architecture through which experience is designed and monitored, whereas Raumdeuter interpretation describes the discretionary frontline judgement that converts that architecture into a particular guest moment (Kandampully et al., 2018; Rahimian et al., 2021). On the second property, the mechanism by which Raumdeuter interpretation should lead to behavioural outcomes is consistent with proactive customer service performance research, which positions employee anticipatory behaviour as a determinant of guest evaluations rather than a parallel correlate of the service

environment (Bai et al., 2026). The most defensible specification, therefore, pairs incremental prediction with partial mediation through guest-perceived experiential value, as specified in Proposition 1, rather than a parallel path that bypasses experience. Empirical evidence from Sabah hotels shows that frontline cultural intelligence predicts service quality through psychological capital, lending initial plausibility to this mediated framing in the Malaysian setting (Jiony et al., 2021).

Proposition 4

In Malaysian luxury resorts, guest-perceived Raumdeuter interpretation by frontline employees exhibits incremental predictive validity for place attachment, satisfaction, and revisit intention beyond the direct effects of physical, social, and e-servicescape elements, and this incremental contribution operates through the partial mediation of guest-perceived experiential value rather than as a parallel independent path; the strength of this mediated effect is expected to be greater for guests for whom culturally appropriate, discreet anticipation is salient than for guests for whom efficiency is salient, providing a theoretically motivated boundary condition for the proposition.

Theoretical implications

The review yields three theoretical implications. First, it extends servicescape research by shifting analytic attention from cues as stimuli to employees as interpreters of cues; whereas Bitner (1992) discussed how physical surroundings influence behaviour, the Raumdeuter lens adds a staff-mediated layer that operates in real time, complementing recent Malaysian resort findings that place attachment mediates the relationship between most servicescape elements and loyalty (Ariffin et al., 2025) by clarifying the employee activity through which cues become felt experience. Second, it reframes the customer luxury experience literature by suggesting that the six dimensions of luxury experience (Christodoulides et al., 2025) and the moments-of-truth measure of customer experience quality (Klaus and Maklan, 2013) depend partly on employee cue-reading, particularly spatial reading for privacy, cultural reading for authenticity, and temporal reading for discreet timing, although the precise mappings await empirical testing. Third, it contextualises anticipatory luxury service in Malaysian cultural communication: budi bahasa acts as a warranty component guiding the appropriateness of action (Ramli, 2013), meaning that proactive service in Malaysian luxury resorts must include refined indirectness, face sensitivity, and discreet non-intrusion as positive service acts, adding a culturally embedded layer to the proactive customer service model (Bai et al., 2026; Lam et al., 2022; Jiony et al., 2021).

Practical implications

For resort managers, the Raumdeuter lens implies a training and design agenda. Frontline staff should be trained in cue reading across the five domains developed above: space, people, time, digital signals, and culture. High-ambiguity zones such as lobby transitions and pool terraces should be staffed with employees who have the interpretive confidence to act discreetly without prompting; zoning should protect privacy without producing emptiness (Line and Hanks, 2019a, 2019b); and technology should deliver pre-arrival preferences and live signals to the right employee at the right moment while honouring privacy and data-governance concerns (Mariani and Baggio,

2022; Wang, 2025). The service vocabulary should treat cultural congruence as part of the experiential aesthetic rather than incidental to its design.

Conclusion

This paper has proposed Raumdeuter as a spatial service-intelligence lens for Malaysian luxury resorts. Framed as an interpretive lens rather than a validated construct, the proposal clarifies how frontline employees read physical, social, temporal, digital, and cultural cues to deliver luxury experiences that are personalised yet unobtrusive. The framework links resort environmental cues, employee interpretation, guest-perceived experiential value, and behavioural outcomes, drawing on servicescape, social servicescape, CEM and customer experience quality, luxury hospitality, proactive service, smart hospitality, and Malaysian cultural communication research. The contribution is conceptual: the paper offers a vocabulary to investigate how luxury performance is produced at the front line. Future empirical work should test whether guest-perceived Raumdeuter behaviour predicts customer luxury experience dimensions, place attachment, satisfaction, and revisit intention, and whether discreet anticipatory service differs across domestic and international guests.

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Conflict of interest

The authors confirm that there is no conflict of interest involving any parties in this research study.

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