

Escapist Experiences in Retail Stores Based on Restorative and Turnerian Escape Shopping Environments

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Abstract

Background In this digital age, brands strive to provide authentic offline store experiences to attract consumers. These experiences particularly highlight immersive and hedonic escapist experiences that ultimately result in positive consumer behavior. Escapist experiences within the retail sector are multi-faceted and dependent on environmental factors. Thus, this study explores how different retail environments affect the consumer escapist experience.

Methods To compare an ordinary Restorative escapist shopping environment with an extraordinary Turnerian escapist shopping environment, a survey and in-depth interviews were conducted with consumers upon their exit of escapist stores.

Results The findings reveal that shopping as a general escapist activity can be instigated by product interest and density. However, the extraordinary Turnerian escape environment provided a significantly higher escapist experience than the Restorative-escape environment in terms of flow, hedonism, and satisfaction. While Restorative escape focuses on the utilitarian aspects of the retail environment, the Turnerian escape was overall positively strengthened due to an enhanced artified environment, exploratory movements, and appealing sensory elements, although there was a negative impact from intrusive employee behavior.

Conclusions An enhanced shopping environment plays an important role in the provision of higher escapist experiences. Particularly, museumification of a shopping environment creates an enhanced experience that highlights different environmental characteristics, thus creating a more immersive, enjoyable, and satisfactory escapist experience.

Keywords Escapism, Store Environment, Consumer Experience

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Citation: Wu, S., & Kim, S. Y. (2023). Escapist Experiences in Retail Stores Based on Restorative and Turnerian Escape Shopping Environments. *Archives of Design Research*, 36(1), 43-57.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.15187/adr.2023.02.36.1.43>

Received : Jul. 18. 2022 ; **Reviewed :** Dec. 27. 2022 ; **Accepted :** Dec. 27. 2022

pISSN 1226-8046 **eISSN** 2288-2987

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1. Introduction

With the increased significance of consumer experience, brands have been striving to provide a more valuable and entertaining experience. As brand stores become a major arena for providing distinct consumer experiences, brands are seeking diverse and innovative ways to attract and engage with shoppers. Many brands are attempting to transform their stores' environment so that consumers can have unique, entertaining experiences, beyond displaying products in a showcase for purchase. For example, some representative methods are a complex cultural environment where cafés, music, books, and artwork coexist with products (Chen et al., 2021; Sabbadin & Aiolfi, 2019), a museumification space where products are artified with installations (Joy et al., 2014; Vukadin et al., 2016), and a themed environment where visitors feel as if they have entered another world (Kozinets et al., 2002). With these brand approaches, consumers can experience escapism from their daily life (Carù & Cova, 2007). Since many consumers go shopping for enjoyment and leisure, not just purchasing items, there is value in strengthening the escapist environment through immersive and hedonic elements (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982; Pine & Gilmore, 1998; Sharma & Arora, 2019; Vukadin et al., 2016). This not only enhances the luxury of the experience (Holmqvist et al., 2020) but also provides a more satisfactory and memorable one (Pine & Gilmore, 1998; Sipe & Testa, 2017). Brands can also reap various benefits from creating escapist store experiences such as positively affecting consumer behavior and word of mouth communication (Triantafyllidou & Siomkos, 2014).

However, escapism covers a broad spectrum with varying characteristics (Cova et al., 2018). Therefore, it is important to note that shopping as an escapist experience may also differ across store environments. Hence, in-depth research is needed on consumer experience regarding escapism characteristics by store environment within retail. However, previous research on escapism focuses more on extreme activities such as climbing mountains (Tumbat & Belk, 2011) and traveling abroad (Ponsignon et al., 2020), with less emphasis on everyday life experiences such as shopping, and within retail, research (Sullivan et al., 2012; Triantafyllidou & Siomkos, 2014; Willems et al., 2021) has looked at escapism more as one dimensional as opposed to multi-dimensional. Therefore, to breakdown shopping as an escapist experience, this study aims to explore the characteristics of consumer experiences according to the escapism types formed by the retail store environment, and the resulting consumer satisfaction.

2. Literature Review

2. 1. Multi-Dimensionality of Consumer Escapism Experience

As the notion of escapism in consumer experience increases, many researchers have focused on the activity of shopping as a form of consumptive escape (Carù & Cova, 2007; Sharma & Arora, 2019). Particularly for retail, as escapism reflects the consumer's reaction to their surroundings (Lichtlé & Plichon, 2014), the level of escapism depends on the store environment. Previous research has analyzed escapism in terms of an "Escapes from"

structure and “escapes into” anti-structure, emphasizing immersive experiences (Cova et al., 2018). The focus has been on escapism within experiences outside the daily life structure, such as traveling (Ponsignon et al., 2020), and escaping into anti-structure as in the case of extraordinary experiences and extreme leisure activities like climbing mountains (Tumbat & Belk, 2011). However, Skandalis et al. (2019) have argued that extraordinary experiences lie not only within an anti-structure, but can also occur within “everyday” structures, such as in the case of shopping (Carù & Cova, 2007). Even within these everyday structures, most research focuses on extraordinary escapism (Skandalis et al., 2019; Tumbat & Belk, 2011) with less focus on the multi-dimensionality of consumer escapism experience.

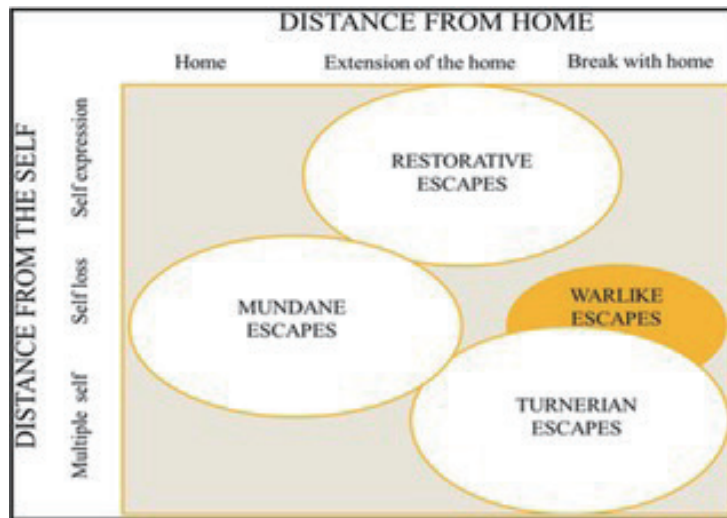


Figure 1 An Enlarged Typology of Escapism (Cova et al., 2018, p. 458)

With such a background, Cova et al. (2018) focused on the diverse characteristics of escapism in consumer culture according to distance from self and home and identified different types of escape, including Mundane, Restorative, and Warlike, based on the Turnerian framework (Figure 1). Mundane escapes are representative of small everyday escapes facilitated by digital technology, such as film, social media, and music (Cova et al., 2018). Restorative escapes are related to third places between work and home and between public and private spaces, extending homey and secure feelings (Alexander, 2019; Cova et al., 2018). Cafés and shopping centers are representative places that provide such feelings of Restorative escapes (Alexander, 2019; Chen et al., 2021). Warlike escapes are facilitated by intense physical and painful activities, such as Tough Mudder and CrossFit. Turnerian escapes are characterized by extraordinary experiences and thematic immersions. These escapes are generally bounded, secure, and thematized, such that the consumer can safely immerse themselves in a different identity or escape into a different world, such as salsa dancing and the Burning Man festival. Many of them also provide a sense of community or “communitas,” and a state of flow where consumers are so involved that nothing else matters (Cova et al., 2018). However, although separate escapes types, an environment can consist of more than one (Cova et al., 2018).

As mentioned earlier, shopping as a general consumption activity can be regarded as a Restorative escape; nonetheless, as brands today strive to deliver distinct consumer experiences through diverse shopping environments, it has allowed shopping to provide a

multi-dimensional escape, including Turnerian escapes. In particular, stores with spectacular environments providing pleasure, entertainment, fantasies, and hyper-reality (Cova et al., 2018) can be considered as Turnerian escapes. In addition, the provision of hybrid shopping experiences such as museums (Vukadin et al., 2016), dining, and sports viewing (Kozinets et al., 2002; Kozinets et al., 2004) within a themed environment, while enabling culture consumption, exemplifies such extraordinary Turnerian escapes (Cova et al., 2018; Triantafyllidou & Siomkos, 2014).

As shopping induces varied levels of escapism, this study focuses on the difference in consumer experiences according to escapism types. While Turnerian escapes represent the extraordinary, the other three are considered more ordinary (Cova et al., 2018). However, with Mundane escapes representing online channels and Warlike escapes being hard to replicate in the shopping experience, Restorative escapes represent ordinary shopping. Therefore, this study focuses on ordinary and extraordinary consumer experiences by exploring Restorative escapes through the general shopping environment and Turnerian escapes provided by a themed environment for distinct thematic experiences. Specifically, the term “consumer” refers to consumption with or without a market relation (Carù & Cova, 2003), and a number of previous studies indicated store visitors as consumers (e.g., Bloch & Richins, 1983; Nierobisch et al., 2017; Vukadin et al., 2016). Thus, “retail consumers” in this study refers to people who engage in shopping, including various behaviors such as browsing (Benhamza Nsairi, 2012), evaluating pieces, and trying things on (Yun et al., 2015).

2. 2. Restorative and Turnerian Retail Environment Characteristics

While Restorative retail environments can be represented by a general shopping environment, Turnerian retail environments can be seen through added experiences (Cova et al., 2018). Of the previously mentioned additional experiences, museumified settings have been shown to provide strong feelings of escapism (Triantafyllidou & Siomkos, 2014). This is further underscored by Joy et al. (2014) who described general environments as akin to a typical store, whereas museumified environments are more akin to an art world, emphasizing the Turnerian characteristic of a “break with home” (Cova et al., 2018). In particular, these museumified environments are prevalent within the fashion realm and display distinctive characteristics (Joy et al., 2014; Logkizidou et al., 2019; Triantafyllidou et al., 2017). Thus, we look at the Turnerian retail environment specifically through museumification.

General shopping environment characteristics have been considered as exhibiting a utilitarian architecture (Joy et al., 2014) such that browsing and purchasing a product are the central focus (Triantafyllidou et al., 2017) in order to create a smoother shopping experience. In particular, these stores have a commercial focus (Alexander, 2019) with a market position such that employees act like sales associates (Yun et al., 2015), and the product orientation focuses on showing a variety of fashion styles as opposed to a distinct curated aesthetic (Joy et al., 2014). This product orientation also arises in the form of store designs that focus on displays using typical display fixtures such as shelves or rails. Here in particular, they focus on the efficient use of space such as organizing products and displays with greater density under general lighting for the whole store supporting utility, as the displays are usually multi-item (Logkizidou et al., 2019). Within fashion, such utilitarian design can also arise in providing multi-numbered fitting rooms and easily accessible mirrors that allow consumers to freely try on and evaluate items (Yun et al., 2015). Therefore, representative stores include

H&M, Zara, and Bershka, whose utilitarian predisposition (Triantafillidou et al., 2017) makes them familiar to the public, and thus they are Restorative-escape type stores.

In contrast, museumified environments create an art world that is characterized by artistic and hedonic architecture, where the focus is on displaying and giving products artistic qualities. In this case, the store is not simply positioned for the market but also for additional experience. In particular, as providing distinct spatial experience is one of the main aims of the store, the store design focuses on presentation and curation, and the employees act more like curators (Joy et al., 2014). While direct incorporation of art, including paintings and sculptures, can be one method, other ways include thematic or museological display fixtures with a more spacious environment through lower merchandise and display density, with product-focused lighting that highlights the product as an artistic object (Logkizidou et al., 2019). Moreover, there is generally depth within the space, such as layers of different zones that can be explored in the architecture and interior, each with a distinct feature that encourages consumers to explore the space (Joy et al., 2014). The integration of these various characteristics gives rise to a presentation that is artistically staged and provides a form of brand storytelling (Logkizidou et al., 2019), creating a more immersive and spectacular experience (Alexander, 2019; Joy et al., 2014). Therefore, representative stores have mainly included high-end fashion or luxury stores such as Louis Vuitton, which has been called a M(art) World (Joy et al., 2014) and thus falling into Turnerian-escape type stores.

2. 3. Construction of Escapist Consumer Experiences

Escapism can usually be felt within activities such as browsing social media and extreme leisure activities such as salsa dancing (Cova et al., 2018; Holmqvist et al., 2020). These escapist experiences are characterized by enjoyment and a certain level of flow where the consumer becomes highly immersed in the activity (Cova et al., 2018; Holmqvist et al., 2020; Ponsignon et al., 2020). In addition, such escapist consumer experiences positively impact consumers' satisfaction (Lichtlé & Plichon, 2014; Ponsignon et al., 2020).

Flow and immersion are considered a representation of environmental connection, and, therefore, are important factors in escapist experiences (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2014; Pine & Gilmore, 1998). Particularly, within escapism literature, they have been used as dimensions to evaluate escapist experiences (Pine & Gilmore, 1998; Tsao & Shao, 2018). However, flow is a more comprehensive measure as it captures immersion through consumers' interaction with the store (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2014; Triantafillidou et al., 2017) as well as "shoppers' feelings of absorption, total focus, and attention when they interact with a store's environment" (Triantafillidou et al., 2017, p. 1038). In addition, flow captures consumers' concentration, control or feeling at ease, immersion and loss of reflective self-consciousness, and distortion of temporal experience (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2014). This study looks at flow for the escapist experience.

Along with flow, another main factor contributing to escapism in shopping is hedonic and enjoyment. Hedonism takes into consideration emotion (Cachero-Martinez & Vazquez-Casielles, 2017) and feelings of fun and enjoyment (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). It represents that the experience is a leisure one (Holbrook et al., 1984; Triantafillidou et al., 2017), and leisure is a key component in transforming an experience into an escapist one (Babin et al., 1994; Carù & Cova, 2007; Sharma & Arora, 2019). In particular, as one of shopping's hedonic values is its "escapist potential" (Babin et al., 1994), previous research has

looked at escapist experiences through a hedonic lens (Holmqvist et al., 2020; Ponsignon et al., 2020). However, enjoyment has also been considered a part of flow (Wang & Hsiao, 2012), but as the focus of flow here is the environmental connection, enjoyment will be considered separately.

The culmination of flow and hedonic factors in a positive escapist experience can improve consumer satisfaction, which ultimately has a positive effect on the brand experience (Lichtlé & Plichon, 2014; Ponsignon et al., 2020). Therefore, to explore characteristics of consumer escapist experiences by escapism level, this study analyzes flow, hedonism, and satisfaction.

3. Method

To explore the characteristics of consumers' experience according to the escapism dimension, we conducted a quantitative on-site survey for each escape type followed by an in-depth semi-structured interview to collect qualitative data. To conduct an exploration of Restorative and Turnerian retail experiences with stronger ecological validity, two stores were selected for each type, that is, four stores in total. We chose fashion brands in line with previous studies conducted on escapism in retail shopping (Sullivan et al., 2012; Triantafillidou et al., 2017). To evaluate escapism more holistically within the different escapes, a fashion clothing-oriented store and a fashion accessory-oriented store were chosen for each escape.

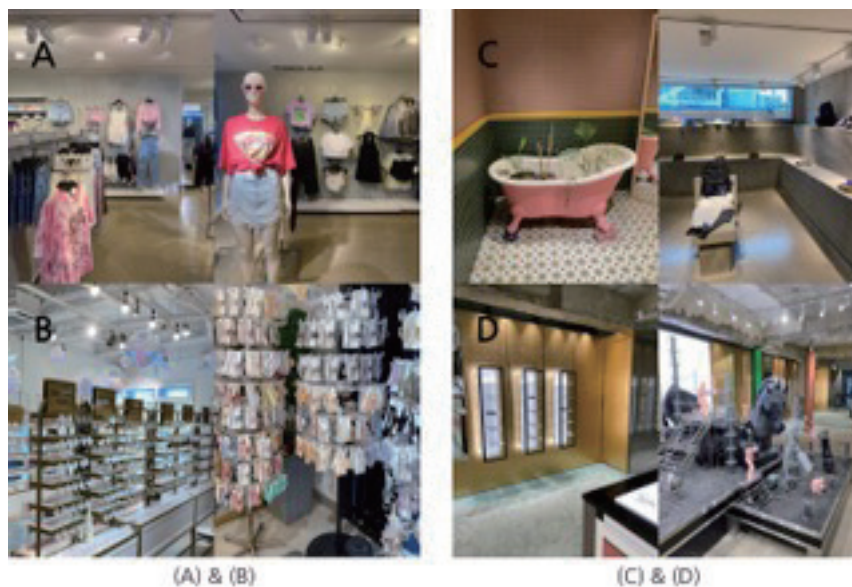


Figure 2 (A) & (B) Restorative Escape Stores, (C) & (D) Turnerian Escape Stores

With Restorative escapes exemplified by a general shopping environment, we define a representative store as a standard retailer with a utilitarian structure where browsing and purchasing a product is the central focus through product-focused displays. Stores A and B were selected as they focused on displaying a high volume of mainly fashion clothing items and fashion accessory items, respectively. With previous Turnerian retail escapes being

characterized by thematization and additional experiences (Cova et al., 2018), we define a representative store as a themed museumified environment where store design is focused on presentation and curation. Stores C and D were selected as a fashion clothing-oriented store with a retro theme and a fashion accessory-oriented store with a futuristic theme, respectively. Both were high-end fashion brands that adapted museumification techniques to the shopping environment, including but not limited to artification, such as exhibitions with installations.

Among the many variable factors manifesting during a shopping trip, including changes in immersion (Blumenthal, 2020), shopper mood, and goal attainment, such as “because it occurred to them that they needed the object” (Spies et al., 1997, p. 6), we focus on a holistic approach with consumers exiting the store, following previous store experience literature (Benhamza Nsairi, 2012; Triantafillidou et al., 2017) that also measured escapism. From March to June 2022, surveys were conducted with willing, randomly-approached consumers. Between the two stores for each escape, 54 questionnaires per escape were collected, with a total of 108 consumers (58.3% female, 41.7% male, aged 10 and above) participating in the study.

Survey questions were created for each consumer experience dimension: flow, hedonism, and satisfaction. While there are various scales to evaluate flow, we adopted Triantafillidou et al.'s (2017) scale as it is specifically tied to escapism within store environments. We chose questions from the scale that overlapped with other flow scales used in retail studies (Park & Han, 2008; Wang & Hsiao, 2012). In addition, to address the time and control characteristics, which have been considered important features of flow (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2014), we modified and added more scales from Park and Han's (2008) and Tsao and Shao's (2018) studies. Hedonism is measured using questions adapted from the standard survey devised by Babin et al. (1994); the survey's relevance has been confirmed for the modern-day context by Picot-Coupey et al. (2021). Satisfaction is measured using questions adapted from Cachero-Martinez and Vazquez-Casielles (2017). Although there were originally four items, one item was excluded as being directly related to purchase of an item, which the consumer might not have done.

For the in-depth semi-structured interview, only participants who agreed to be interviewed from each store, with two per store, a total of four participants for each escapism type, and an overall total of eight participants were interviewed at a nearby café after the completion of the survey. The interviews lasted 30 minutes on average. They dove deeper into the responses of the consumer on the survey and the contributing store characteristics. Interview questions were split into two sections with questions on: (a) the general shopping experience, store impression, store visitation, frequency, and purpose, and (b) reasons for choosing their answer to the survey question. Interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim before conducting a thematic analysis to identify patterns and insights emerging from the data. Data familiarity, data coding, theme development, and revision were sequentially conducted. Descriptive interviewee consumer characteristics are listed below in Table 1.

Table 1 Interview Participants

ID	Gender	Age	Escape Type	Store Type
R1	F	24	Restorative	Fashion Clothing
R2	F	23	Restorative	Fashion Accessory
R3	F	23	Restorative	Fashion Accessory
R4	F	26	Restorative	Fashion Clothing
T1	F	25	Turnerian	Fashion Accessory
T2	M	28	Turnerian	Fashion Accessory
T3	M	26	Turnerian	Fashion Clothing
T4	F	21	Turnerian	Fashion Clothing

4. Results and Discussion

SPSS 26 was used for data analysis. Both scale reliability using Cronbach's α and an independent sample t-test were performed, as seen in Table 2. Cronbach's α values were all above 0.70, suggesting reliability for flow, hedonism, and satisfaction.

4. 1. Shopping as a General Escapist Activity

The means of both Restorative and Turnerian escape stores were high, greater than 4, and above average for flow ($R=4.35$, $T=5.25$), hedonism ($R=4.71$, $T=5.47$), and satisfaction ($R=4.66$, $T=5.71$), confirming that shopping in general can be considered an escapist activity. Findings from the qualitative interview also showed that both Restorative and Turnerian store participants were absorbed in and enjoyed the act of shopping itself; however, more importantly, the interviews highlighted the specific aspects of the shopping activity that contributed to its escapist qualities. Specifically, the participants mentioned being "lost in the activity" (R1) and "focused on the glasses you're trying... so you don't really think about other things" (T1), and that a display of "lots of products" (T1) could promote this behavior. R2 even mentioned she was so focused and immersed that she "keep trying on that one ring." These statements reveal that immersive flow can be instigated not only during typical shopping behavior but also by product interest. In addition, many participants said that one reason they prefer shopping offline to online is the act of shopping itself, highlighting that the physical activity of shopping itself provides enjoyment regardless of whether a purchase is made. However, in the Restorative store, participants specifically focused more on the shopping activity when discussing their experience. This can be explained by the fact that Restorative stores represent the typical utilitarian-focused shopping environment, unlike Turnerian stores, in which the space designs are more hedonic and aesthetic. Furthermore, the survey analysis of the Restorative stores also supports the statements from the interviews. Restorative stores showed the highest values in flow items F1 immersion, F2 absorption, and F3 attention and focus ($R > 4.50$) and in hedonic items H3 enjoying the shopping trip regardless of purchase, H5 staying in the store out of want not need, and H6 excitement in the product hunt ($R > 5.00$). While H3 and H5 show that there is enjoyment in the shopping activity itself, the flow items show that escapist feelings in shopping are characterized by shopping itself being an immersive experience, and H6 shows that such immersion can be product centered. These findings are also in line with previous research

where typical shopping behavior like browsing was found to be an immersive escapist activity (Benhamza Nsairi, 2012); however, the results of this study also suggest that such behavior is tied to product interest as well as product density.

Table 2 Scale Reliability, Means, and Independent T-test Results

Measurements	R	T	t-score	p-value
Flow ($\alpha = .908$)***	4.35	5.25	-4.094	.000
F1 I was totally immersed in the experience*	4.67	5.37	-2.594	.011
F2 I was totally absorbed in the experience**	4.67	5.50	-3.110	.002
F3 My total focus and attention was on the experience**	4.61	5.41	-2.739	.007
F4 I was thinking of nothing but what was happening in that moment***	4.00	5.35	-4.159	.000
F5 The store truly felt like an escape from daily life***	4.13	5.24	-3.631	.000
F6 I felt that I was in a different world***	3.76	5.06	-4.433	.000
F7 While in the store, time passed fast*	4.48	5.20	-2.493	.014
F8 While in the store, I felt at ease and relaxed	4.31	4.93	-1.824	.071
F9 While in the store, I was able to forget my problems*	4.54	5.22	-2.279	.025
Hedonism ($\alpha = .865$)***	4.71	5.47	-3.980	.000
H1 This shopping trip was truly a joy*	4.85	5.52	-2.254	.027
H2 Compared to other things I could've done, the time spent in the store was truly enjoyable***	4.54	5.61	-3.907	.000
H3 I enjoyed this shopping trip for its own sake not just for the items I purchased***	5.13	6.09	-4.197	.000
H4 I enjoyed being immersed in the products/environment**	4.98	5.83	-3.171	.002
H5 I continued to stay in the store not because I had to but because I wanted to*	5.09	5.72	-2.264	.026
H6 During the trip, I felt the excitement of the hunt for a product**	5.19	6.07	-3.451	.001
H7 While in the store, I felt a sense of adventure***	4.50	5.70	-4.276	.000
H8 I had a good time because I was able to act on the "spur of the moment"***	4.85	5.81	-3.598	.001
H9 This shopping trip was not a very nice time out	3.28	2.89	1.045	.298
Satisfaction ($\alpha = .907$)***	4.66	5.71	-4.209	.000
S1 I'm satisfied; this is one of the best stores I have visited***	4.35	5.56	-4.426	.000
S2 I'm satisfied with the products/services of this store**	4.67	5.70	-3.486	.001
S3 I'm satisfied because I enjoyed the shopping experience in the store**	4.96	5.89	-3.582	.001

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001, R - Restorative escape, T - Turnerian escape

4. 2. Differences in Restorative and Turnerian Escapist Consumer Experiences

We further examined shopping as an escapist experience through a store-environmental lens by comparing Restorative and Turnerian escapist consumer experiences. Although both experiences provided escapist feelings, Turnerian stores were found to significantly enhance the consumer escapism experience in all three aspects in comparison to Restorative stores ($p < 0.001$) confirming the aptness of Cova et al.'s (2018) framework. However, the ways in which the environments induced and impacted such an experience differed. Through a qualitative analysis of the interviews, the main reasons can be identified for the differences in flow, which affected hedonism and satisfaction.

4. 2. 1. Artfied Environment

One of the most significant ($p < .001$) differences in flow between the two escapes can be seen in survey item F6, a different world, and two of the three most significant ($p < .001$) hedonic items, H2 and H7, which are more store-focused statements. This indicates that although shopping is an escapist activity, the shopping environment can enhance the experience, as in the case of the Turnerian store. This is further supported in the interview; while Restorative shopping environments provided escapist feelings mainly through the products, the Turnerian shopping environment provided escapist feelings through immersion and enjoyment linked to the spatial aspects in addition to products. Specifically, the participants from Turnerian stores mentioned that they felt that the store was a “different world” (T2), “no longer in [place in Korea]” (T4), whereas participants considered Restorative stores “bland” (T4), “basic” (R1), “white” (R4), and “pharmacy looking” (T1) with only products. This difference in impression is also tied to the roles consumers took on in Turnerian stores of both shopper and spectator. Specifically, in the interviews, participants mentioned they likened the Turnerian store experience to visiting a “museum” (T1), “gallery” (T2), or “art exhibition” (T3), where they have come to see the design of the store, highlighting that the escapist experience did not consist of only shopping. However, among museumification techniques, this added experiential attraction was due to the enhancement of the shopping environment through artification techniques such as, on the “first floor you can see the sculptures” (T1), and colors such as, “a lot of blue in the store” (T4) and the “wall that is all yellow” (T2). It was also noted that if these elements are used throughout the store such that it makes the store “more cohesive” (T4), it can enhance immersion in such a way that “the impact of the design of the entire store takes you” (T4) to a different world, again supporting F6.

In addition, by offering greater hedonic feelings through added experiences beyond shopping, Turnerian stores were also seen to provide a more enjoyable and satisfactory escapist experience as seen in H3, enjoying the shopping trip regardless of purchasing something, and S1, one of the best stores I have visited, both of which are highly significant ($p < .001$). Additionally, in the interviews, participants mentioned the unique, aesthetic value they obtained from the Turnerian stores, specifically saying that it “adds something to my day” (T2) and “doesn’t feel like you wasted your time” (T1). This is also strengthened by Joy et al.’s (2014) qualitative study stating that stores more akin to a world are aesthetically positioned within the market.

Furthermore, the results confirmed the findings from previous literature that a spatially enhanced environment not only contributes to escapist feelings but also stimulates impulse purchases, as seen in H8, being able to act on the “spur of the moment.” Specifically, T1 mentioned that “the way it’s designed, the products catch your eye immediately.” This refers to the enhancement of products not only through art but also through their exhibition; for instance, display of products on pedestals and cubes that create a feeling of extra space around products helping one to “see things better” (T2). This highlights the previously mentioned museological display methods (Logkizidou et al., 2019). More importantly, such techniques stimulate impulse behavior as in the case of T4, where she wanted to “try to find something that I can take home with me.” This behavior is also supported by previous research that reports how artistic elements stimulate impulse purchases (Vukadin et al., 2016), as the mere presence of art has a positive influence on product evaluation (Baumgarth & Wieker, 2020).

4. 2. 2. Movement and Sensory

Further differences in escapist feelings between the two shopping environments can be attributed to the fact that while Restorative stores provide flow and hedonic feelings through the product and shopping activity, Turnerian stores provide greater flow and hedonic feelings by creating excitement through movement between and exploration of spaces. This behavior can be seen not only in H7, where it created a sense of adventure and revealed the biggest difference in hedonic items, but also in the interviews, with T2 mentioning how he was “curious about what would happen next” and considered the store his “playground,” and T4 mentioned that “shopping is not necessarily an adventure but when I got in there I felt like I was exploring things” because “not only did the different rooms have unique creative elements but also the layout of the whole store was unique.” These comments show that Turnerian stores were not predictable, which made participants look forward to seeing the next space. In the Restorative stores, the overall spatial characteristics could be understood at a glance, and with this product-oriented spatial design, participants focused more on shopping behavior; therefore, utility played a big role, which affected F4, thinking of nothing but the moment. Specifically, the interviews emphasized that because “the division of clothes was confusing” (R1) in the Restorative store, it made the participants “frustrated that I have to remember” (R4) where items were located and if it was a previously seen item, thus breaking their flow.

In addition, participants in Turnerian stores were found to have more escapist feelings due to multi-sensory factors such as music and fragrance, which intermingled in the environment. However, in the Restorative store, such factors were not recognized or were in fact detrimental to the shopping experience by interfering with the shopping activity. Specifically, participants would mention that they developed “more stress from the design” (R4), because of the “loud music and cold lighting” (R1). This stress also further affected F4, as they kept thinking of the environment.

4. 2. 3. Employee Behavior

Another noticeable difference between the escapist experience in Restorative and Turnerian stores was employee behavior. This can be seen in its effect on F8, feeling at ease, the only insignificant flow item between Restorative and Turnerian escapes ($p > .05$). In the Restorative store, participants mentioned that they were glad that employees were not following them. However, in the Turnerian stores, participants were always aware of the presence of employees, mentioning how the employees followed them around and that their staring made them uncomfortable. They described this behavior as “harassing” (R2), “bothering” (T1), and “adding pressure” (T2), and it made them feel not only “distracted” (T1 & T3) but also as if they cannot “freely try on” (T1 & T2) things, thus leading to stifling exploratory behavior. Furthermore, T3 even equated the employees to “bodyguards,” and although he was not bothered since they did not follow him around and that he was with a friend, he mentioned that “if I go there alone, I would feel very uneasy, especially if they're following where I'm going, and I won't feel comfortable.” Therefore, it was found that depending on the person and situation, such as if they were with a friend, employee behavior may not have directly affected hedonic feelings or satisfaction but it did inhibit flow, as being aware of employee presence prevents immersion and focus on the experience. These findings also coincide with previous literature, where museumification of stores, as in the Turnerian

case, often involves employees who act more like museum curators (Joy et al., 2014), leading shoppers to feel uncomfortable, as they realize that the staff are watching them (Esmark et al., 2017). Therefore, it is important to offer guidance without the pressure of constant observation (Esmark et al., 2017, Vukadin et al., 2016).

5. Conclusion

This study attempted to explore the characteristics of consumer shopping experiences based on escapist spatial environments through ordinary Restorative and extraordinary Turnerian shopping environments. As such, escapism aspects of flow, hedonism, and satisfaction were examined through a survey and in-depth interviews. This study's contribution is three-fold. First, we break down shopping as an escapist experience not only by shopping behavior but also by shopping environment. In particular, our findings show that while escapist shopping behavior can be stimulated through product interest and density, museumified retail environments can enhance shopping as an escape such that consumers are not only shoppers but also spectators. Second, through retail environment analysis, we add to previous literature by providing more concrete evidence that higher escapist environments provide a stronger consumer experience, and more specifically that Turnerian experiences can be extended to everyday activities. The statistical findings show that Turnerian escapism store environments did afford respondents a significantly higher shopper escapism experience. Third, we give practical implications as well by tying retail environment design characteristics to factors of escape. For Restorative environments, the findings suggest that maximizing user experience of store layout, regulating sensory elements, and installing more product-focused displays can enhance escapist experiences by allowing consumers to focus on the shopping activity without stress or interference. For Turnerian escapist experiences, the interesting findings included intrusive employee behavior as the single detrimental aspect of the escapist shopping experience and an emphasis on exploratory movement to enhance the experience. Thus, the findings suggest that Turnerian environments should concentrate on not only a cohesive use of artification to create a store that is more of a brand world and drive product interest but also nonintrusive employee behavior and unpredictable store layouts so that the store can become a "shopper's playground." Additionally, while it is recommended that Restorative stores take on Turnerian characteristics, this requires careful consideration. One risk, as noted, of artification is that consumers may visit the store without buying anything, through which the cost might exceed the benefits (Vukadin et al., 2016). Thus, we have highlighted design guidelines with regard to store position.

A limitation of the study was that while there are various types of Turnerian escapist experiences, only the museum Turnerian escapist experience was examined. Additionally, as it was not feasible to compare the different environments within the same brands, the individual brand images might have affected the result of the study. Based on the limited number of interviews, the generalization of data is also limited in that more explanations and individual differences should be considered when interpreting the interview findings. Lastly, this study examined retail from only a fashion perspective and is not based on the effects of having a shopping buddy. Therefore, future studies can look at retail apart from fashion, other Turnerian escapist experiences besides museums, controlling brand images, and the

effects of shopping buddies on retail escapism. Nonetheless, this study is meaningful since, in a situation where online shopping attracts attention, it focused on how offline shopping can promote foot traffic through escapism experiences, and further examined multi-dimensional escapism characteristics in the shopping environment. This study also contributed to future design directions offline stores can take.

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