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How is luxury understood in five-star hotels Mandarin Oriental and W in Barcelona, Spain?

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The standardization of what a luxury hotel should provide is not clear yet (Heine, 2011), although some organizations have provided the industry with guidelines (UNWTO, 2015). This phenomenon may rely on the different idea of what hotel brands or people have from luxury as a concept, therefore, the main objectives for this research have been designed in order to analyse what is this idea that people have from luxury and the importance they give to what is stated as so. Firstly, to understand the main characteristics of luxury, not only in the hospitality industry but as current products and as well. Secondly, to identify the features luxury hotels should have and provide. Thirdly, to analyse the importance given in the reality of luxury hotels. These objectives have guided the author obtaining reliable data towards the main research question "How is luxury understood in five star hotels Mandarin Oriental and W in Barcelona, Spain".

Methodology: The study is designed as exploratory sequential mixed method where a case study has been conducted through questionnaires to thirty individuals who are or have been employees or guests at one of the two luxury properties in Barcelona, Spain. All the participants hold experience in working or staying at luxury hotels in order to provide beneficial data for the study. An inductive approach has allowed the author to collect different types of data and complement the analysis provided in Discussion.

Findings: The study proves that there is a difficulty on defining what luxury hotels are. Moreover, standards of luxury vary depending on the concept from each company or brand in the hospitality industry and the association who defines them. Finally, participants have illustrated what is the importance they give to some of the most recurrent facilities and services in luxury hotels, and how they depend on each one's perspective and background.

Keywords: Luxury, Tourism and Hospitality industry, Service quality, Luxury hotels, Mandarin Oriental, W, Barcelona.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context of the research problem

What do we think when the world luxury comes to mind? How do we know something is luxurious when we experience it or see it?

Luxury is not available for everybody, however, this concept has become more ambiguous because of the increasing accessibility of luxury goods and services in the last years as a result of market growth and dynamism (Heine, 2011). As affirmed in Heine (2011), the luxury market has grown at about ten per cent per year, thus leading to new perspectives of what a luxury item or service actually is and, in addition, it has become an overused label for almost anything (Vickers & Renand, 2003).

In the field of tourism, luxury takes shape to the extent that, rather than price, it puts the emphasis on value, in what is now measured through the experience of the consumer (Danziger, 2005). Furthermore, it has to do with the idea of what they have from the services or facilities, what gives customers expectations, a very important factor in their level of satisfaction (Danziger, 2005; Dubois, Laurent and Czellar, 2005).

Even though luxury products and brands require a relatively high rating for all the essential characteristics, a wide range of possible ratings still exists within the luxury segment (Heine, 2011) as we can see in the hospitality industry with the different star ratings systems worldwide (UNWTO, 2015).

The theoretical background of this research will be based on the analysis of the concept of luxury and the elements that make up this conception in tourism and hospitality, focusing in two five star hotels in the city of Barcelona – Mandarin Oriental and W.

1.2 Identification of the research problem

Heine (2011) affirms that "there is no consensus about the definition of luxury and brands" and neither in the hospitality industry there is a definition of what a luxury hotel should provide, as there is no worldwide standard for official hotel classification systems due to the incredible diversity of the environmental, socio-cultural, economic and political contexts in which they are embedded, however, many associations have generated their own (UNWTO, 2015), such as Forbes or the AAA.

1.3 Originality and contribution to knowledge

Luxury is a subject that is necessary to be investigated for the hospitality industry, since until now there is no specific definition of what a luxury hotel is (Heine, 2011), being expectations and the service received important elements of satisfaction (Dubois, Laurent and Czellar, 2005). In general, there is a lack of research about the quality of service in the hospitality broadly (Santomà and Costa, 2007).

This research tries to define better the term luxury as a concept in order to help hotel companies focus better in the products they are offering as luxury, being also interesting for hoteliers which objective is to reach this level or category of service but are not sure of what people expect from a luxury hotel.

By focusing on two different luxury hotel concepts, Mandarin Oriental and W, the components that make these two properties in the city of Barcelona be called luxury hotels are going to be analysed. Not only describing its products and services but also surveying employees and customers from these two different properties in order to create knowledge of what people think or expect when it comes to luxury and what elements are more important for them.

1.4 Research aims and objectives

The aim of this research is to analyse the term luxury in the hospitality industry and evaluate how it is understood in order to confirm the differences between five star hotels depending on the idea or concept people have or expect regarding this term.

The objectives of this research are the following ones:

1. Critically analyse the literature on luxury concept; in this chapter qualitative data is going to be collected in order to analyse the concept of luxury, focusing on the tourism and hospitality industry.

2. Identify the most recurrent luxury services and facilities from five star hotels; different criteria are going to be collected of what associations have stated as unofficial standards for luxury hotels.

3. Identify the different luxury brands in hospitality; all the brands that constitute the group of luxury hotels is going to be listed, focusing in Mandarin Oriental and W as the two luxury properties in Barcelona that are going to be analysed.

4. Create knowledge of the idea of luxury that people have; by surveying people in the luxury hospitality industry – employees and customers from Mandarin Oriental Barcelona and W Barcelona hotels – and analysing what do they think or expect about a luxury hotel.

5. Recognize the most important elements that determine luxury in Mandarin Oriental and W Barcelona regarding guest and employees – ranking questions will determine which is the level of importance of the most recurrent luxury services and facilities found in the Literature Review.

2. LITERATURE

2.1. Literature review

2.1.1. Definition of luxury

The term luxury is very used nowadays referring to products, services or ways of being, however, it is not easy to give a universal definition of what the luxury concept really is.

Luxury is defined by the Oxford Dictionary (2015) as a state of great comfort or elegance, especially when involving great expense. Nonetheless, it means very different things to different people in different places at different times in history in different personal circumstances or time of life (Teicholz, 2015).

Dubois, Laurent and Czellar (2001) carried out a study in order to know the nature and characteristics of luxury, being the six following ones the definitions arisen:

Figure 1: The six characteristics of luxury.

Excellent quality	The mental association between luxury and quality is so strong that for the respondents the two words are almost synonymous.
Very high price	Such a perception is established either on the basis of the absolute value of the price or by comparison with non-luxury alternatives.
Scarcity and uniqueness	Scarcity is closely associated with the perceived excellent quality and high prices associated with luxury goods.
Aesthetics and polysensuality	Luxury involves a strong aesthetic appeal. These products become pieces of art which have to be recognized as such.
Ancestral heritage and personal history	In consumers' mind, to be luxurious, products and services must have a long history and their elaboration processes as well as consumption should respect tradition.
Superfluousness	The concept of luxury implies some perceived superfluousness or uselessness. These products are not felt to be necessary for survival. It is in the sense that consumers as well as researches oppose luxuries and necessities.

Source: Dubois, Laurent and Czellar (2001, p. 8 et seqq.)

According to Brun & Castelli (2013), historically luxury goods were always linked with wealth, exclusivity and power, as well as the satisfaction of non-basic necessities. Yet, it is a concept as

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subjective as ambiguous. Luxury goods are a wide concept, but good, expensive and not necessarily are three basic elements that compose it. "Luxuries are the extras in life that make it more fulfilling, more rewarding, more comfortable, more enjoyable" (Danziger, 2005).

We can understand that one person's luxury can be another person's necessity as it is a subjective notion since people are different regarding ethnical belonging, culture of origin, educational background and personal experience (Becker, 2009).

Luxurious experiences are tied to individuals striving to reach self-actualization and self-fulfilment through greater knowledge, appreciation of beauty, spiritual sophistication, peace, art, culture and aesthetics (Michman & Mazze, 2006).

Danziger (2005) did a classification of luxury into four dimensions (see Figure 1) that place luxury ideals into perspective; "luxury as a brand", "luxury as luxe product features", "luxury as non-necessities", and "luxury as the power to pursue your passions".

Figure 2: The four dimensions of luxury.
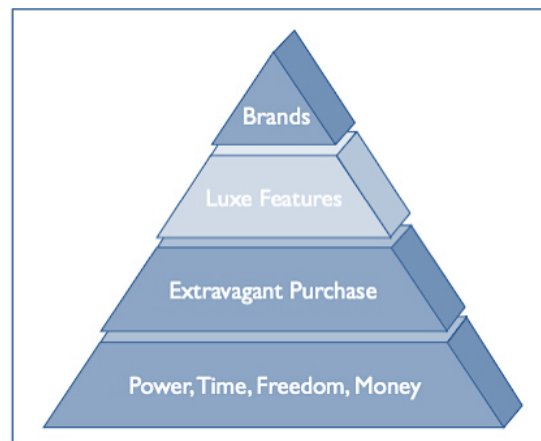
2.1.2. Luxury in tourism and hospitality

The hospitality and tourism industry began with the growth of capitalism, freedom and tentative relations to a geographic region, which heightened the need for travel accommodations (Sandoval-Strausz, 2007). Even though hotels arose to meet the needs that were born from increased mobility world-wide, the luxury hotel industry has progressed as an outlet for travellers to dream of and fantasize about other lifestyles (Curtis, 2001). It is for this

reason that the luxury hotel industry places a large focus on the guest experience along with their satisfaction and guests' high expectations as the luxury market is an important segment in the travel and tourism industry (Park et al., 2010).

As previously mentioned, Danziger (2005) affirms that a luxury experience varies for each individual and it is highly subjective, therefore, it can be a challenge to satisfy luxury hotel customers. Considering luxury to be a highly subjective and deeply related to each person's hopes and lifestyle's desires, it is also difficult to establish how a luxury hotel experience is formed. However, the former Chief Marketing Officer of the Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts, Barbara Talbott (2004), suggests that there are four key factors that contribute to a luxury hotel experience: style, comfort, service, and pampering. In this way any hotel can be considered as luxurious as long as it satisfies whatever is required in the four dimensions from Danziger and the four key factors from Talbott.

It is important to point out that Talbott's four indicators of luxury are specific to the hotel field while Danziger's four dimensions of luxury provide a wider way of defining luxury products, services, and experiences. The four dimensions are not directly describing a luxury hotel guest experience; however, they provide support to explain how and why individual hotel guests may experience luxury and they can be justified as it follows:

1. "Luxury as a brand": luxury hotels symbolize an established luxury brand and they are products and services consumed by individuals which perceive them as a symbol of luxury and the best quality.

2. "Luxury as luxe product features": luxury hotels have their specific attributes as the product or service they offer, which could be, for example, the decoration.

3. "Luxury as non-necessities": the accommodation and food are the basic needs in a hotel, but luxury hotels provide more services than just that and Becker (2009) considers them as luxury.

4. "Luxury as the power to pursue your passions": refers to the purchase of luxury products to make life more comfortable, fulfilling and enjoyable (Danziger, 2005).

2.1.3. *Quality of service in luxury hotels*

Services are generally described with the following terms: intangibility, heterogeneity, inseparability and perishability but, in the hospitality industry, other attributes, such as imprecise standards and fluctuating demand have been identified and further complicate the task of defining, delivering and measuring service quality (Bateson, 1977; Lovelock, 1981; Gronroos, 1990; Zeithaml and Bitner, 1996 cited in Mei, Dean and White, 1999).

Service quality is the result of a complex network of several dimensions and researchers have been identifying the components of it through the years (Mok, Sparks and Kadampully, 2001).

Hotels have witnessed an increasing competition for high service quality and customer satisfaction (Parayani et al., 2010). Hotel organisations therefore need to understand with as much precision as possible what the guests want from the service experience, as service quality and satisfaction are nowhere more important than in luxury properties, where guest expect high quality (Dubois, Laurent and Czellar, 2005).

Firms in the hospitality industry have established policies, rules and procedures to govern the standardisation of their product, but many aspects of service quality do not lend themselves to standards, such as friendliness, helpfulness and politeness (Mei, Dean and White, 1999).

Service standards provide the staff at luxury hotels with guidelines as to what they should be doing to provide exceptional service to their guests; personalization towards their wants and needs (Gunter, 2005). These standards also help the guests understand the level of service they can expect when they visit these hotels (Blank, 2008).

Organisations like Forbes and AAA Diamond Rating Standards provide those hotels with a base of what standards should be. Also brand standards or corporate standards are common sets because they help guests understand that they can expect the same thing when staying at any of their hotels. It is also important to mention that local governments have their own particular rules, where standards are defined in order to accomplish quality requirements.

Besides all the services the hotels have to offer, there is a core element; the performance of the employees in hospitality is seen as a critical dimension of quality (Wong et al., 1999). As reflected in the International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management (Crick and

Spencer, 2011), the employee's performance constitutes the service (Groonroos cited in Hartline et al., 2003) and employees play a significant role in enhancing the guests' self-image and status involvement and ultimately, their loyalty (Skogland and Siguaw, 2004). Furthermore, the customer's perception of service quality regarding Crick and Spencer (2011) has, at least, two elements:

1. Satisfaction with what has been provided; and

2. The way in which this has been delivered by the front line employees (Chapman and Lovell, 2006 cited in Crick and Spencer, 2011). Sim et al. (2006, cited in Crick and Spencer, 2011), also determined that hospitality was a significant indicator of customer satisfaction and that the perception of hospitality was primarily associated with employee actions.

2.1.4. Luxury hotels rating system

Hotel classification systems are widely used in the accommodation sector as a means of providing an indicator to both consumers and intermediaries on the standards to be found at individual establishments in order to reduce the gap between expected and experienced facilities and service delivery (World Tourism Organization, 2015). However, stablishing a classification system for tourism accommodation is a complex undertaking due to the diversity of both accommodation types and of the cultural, environmental and economic contexts in which the systems are embedded (World Tourism Organization, 2015). The ranking of hotels is usually by using nomenclature such as stars (or diamonds), with one-star denoting basic facilities and standards of comfort and five stars denoting luxury in facilities and services (World Tourism Organisation, 2015).

The Forbes Travel Guide is a global authority on luxury travel who yearly assess not only hotels, but also restaurants and spas, by the hand of anonymous professional inspectors who travel the world. For this, they have up to 800 objective standards used to inspect both of services and facilities in order to emphasize the quality of service with their Star Rating system (Forbes Travel Guide, 2017). This authority started in 1958, previously known as Mobil Travel Guide, and is the first in Five Star rating system in offering the world luxury hospitality and travel

advice, nowadays an online travel community. The authority describes Five Star Properties as "outstanding, often iconic properties with virtually flawless service and amazing facilities".

The process of Star Rating starts with the Forbes Travel Guide's Ratings department, who carefully vets each destination and identifies potential candidates to be a part of their collection of luxury properties. After that, they send their incognito inspector for a two nights stay to visit the properties against the standards mentioned, which are the most stringent in the hospitality industry, and gather every detail of the visit in order to submit a report to the corporate headquarters, who will determine the final Star Rating Award earned (Forbes Travel Guide, 2017).

Regarding the criteria used by Forbes Travel Guide (2017) a Five Star property has to have an "exceptionally distinctive luxury environment offering consistently superlative, personalized service and the ultimate in amenities […] exclusive attention to detail, anticipation of every need". These hotels are "remarkable in every aspect from the plush and elegant guest room design to the unforgettable culinary experiences". This category includes such properties as the Mandarin Oriental Barcelona. The characteristics that hotels have to meet are the following ones:

Figure 3: Forbes Travel Guide Five Star Hotel Criteria

Services Detail
- Staff is extremely well spoken, polite and clear, avoids slang and phrase-fragments. - Staff is extremely well informed about requirements within their department. - Overall service is flawless from initial reservation call to departure service. - Guests are offered an escort to their rooms unless they specifically decline. - Choice of at least two complimentary newspapers is offered and distributed. - Welcome gift or amenity provided by management during the visit. - Twenty-four-hour room service is available, including hot food. - Wine by the glass is presented in bottle and poured in room, for room service. - During turndown service, something noteworthy and thoughtful is included in the presentation. - At least two types of premium quality snacks are automatically offered and distinctly presented during bar and lounge service. - All mixed drinks are presented with modified or full club service. - Any work undertaken by the staff is handled with complete professionalism, and returned to guests neatly, in folders or envelopes. - If Inn, restaurant on site serving a full breakfast and dinner plus one additional meal service. - If pool service is available, guests are proactively greeted and escorted to their chairs, and set-up assistance is provided or offered. - If pool service is available, during a 90-minute period and in warm conditions, some sort of complimentary refreshment is offered (for example, mineral water, fresh fruit, water spritz).
Facilities Detail

- Public washrooms feature well-maintained cloth towels, fresh plants or flowers.
Guest Room Detail
- Guest bathroom is equipped with a telephone. - CD player/stereo is present and functional. - Ice bucket and glasses are high quality (glass, metal, stone etc.), with tongs which are clean and hygienic. - Fresh flowers are present in guest rooms. - Separate showers are present in bathroom.

The AAA Diamond Rating Process is North America's most noted hotel rating program that began to design the standards for hotel and restaurant rating system since 1977. This rating system conducted by the American Automobile Association once a year covers hotel appearance, room facility and equipment, public areas, clearance, management and service quality in which the anonymous who report professional insight will be assigned by AAA to conduct hotel evaluation process without precaution during the evaluation process, and lastly, to award a certificate of 1 to 5 star diamond for the hotels (AAA, 2017). The federation defines as Five Diamond Hotels those establishments that "provide ultimate luxury, sophistication and comfort with extraordinary physical attributes, meticulous personalized service, extensive amenities and impeccable standards of excellence reflect the characteristics of the ultimate in luxury and sophistication" (AAA, 2012). The criteria for 5 Diamonds Hotels regarding the AAA report (2012) is the following one:

Figure 4: American Automobile Association five-diamonds hotel criteria

Exterior	
General Curb Appeal	- Luxuriant materials - Leading edge design and effect
Building Structure & Design	- Grand architectural features - Leading-edge design and effect
Landscaping	- Luxuriant landscape materials - Leading-edge design and effect - Multiple accent features are meticulously integrated by design.
Main Entrance	- Luxuriant materials - Leading-edge design and effect - Expanded drive or courtyard
Other Attributes	- Location - Parking
Public Areas (Main Lobby / Registration Area)	
General Décor Style	- Luxurious materials - Leading-edge design and effect
Floor Coverings	- Custom inlays or textured enhancements - Leading-edge design and effect - Area rugs are luxurious

Free Floor Space	Area size and placement of appointments provide an abundance of space that contributes to the ultimate level of comfort and relaxation
Furniture Quality & Design	- Luxurious materials - Custom workmanship - Leading-edge design and effect
Guest Service Area(s)	Staffed concierge area (minimum 16 hrs./day)
Illumination	- Custom fixtures of outstanding quality - Leading-edge illumination effect
Seating Layout	Multiple semi-private areas
Wall Coverings	- Multiple design enhancements - Leading-edge effect
Wall Hangings / Decorative Enhancements	Variety of styles and accent pieces
Other Attributes	- Ceilings

Public Areas (Other Common Areas)

Business Centre	- Luxurious surroundings - -Or- personalized services are provided
Elevator	- Elevator cabs have additional features - Leading-edge effect
Exercise Facility	- Leading-edge facility - Luxurious health club environment - Guided training programs - Dressing area includes: lockers, showers and restrooms - In-room exercise program available
Food & Beverage Outlets	- Multiple outlets - Room service available 24/7
Breakfast Area	- Highly personalized experience - Luxurious surroundings
Meeting Rooms	- Luxuriously appointed, first-class facilities - Leading-edge effect
Plants Throughout Property	- Garden-fresh condition - Outstanding variety of uncommon/seasonal live plants and flowers - Uniquely arranged to provide leading-edge effect throughout the property
Restrooms	First-class with luxurious appointments
Signage Throughout Property	- Custom materials, design - Creatively placed for a leading-edge effect
Sundries & Shops	Variety of firs-class shops
Swimming Pool	- Luxurious materials - Leading-edge appointments - additional poolside amenities - Attendants on duty
Other Common Area Attributes	- Additional Recreation Facilities/Programs - Non-use Fee(s) - Spa

Guest Room

General Décor Style	- Luxurious materials - Leading-edge design and effect
Bed	- Luxurious materials - Leading-edge effect
Bedding	- Embroidered pillow case/shams - Luxuriously soft, silk-like feel

Floor Coverings	- Custom inlays or textured enhancements - Leading-edge design and effect - Area rugs are luxurious
Free Floor Space	Room size and placement of appointments provide an abundance of space that contributes to the ultimate level of comfort, privacy and relaxation
Furniture Quality & Design	- Luxurious materials - Custom workmanship - Leading-edge design and effect
Guest Information	- Leading-edge effect - Assortment of complimentary daily newspaper (room delivery upon request)
Illumination	- Custom fixtures of outstanding quality - Leading-edge illumination effect
Mirror	- Leading-edge effect
Seating Layout	- Furniture layout clearly design for small grouping - Two additional furniture pieces
Storage Hang Space for Clothing	- Closet is illuminated - Comprehensive selection of hanger for more than three guests - At least two satin hangers - Two or more additional features
Storage Space; Supplementary	Sufficient space to store all guest luggage out of sight
Television Type & Placement	Custom enhancement
Ventilation	Quiet and inconspicuous form and function
Wall Coverings	Leading-edge effect
Wall Hangings / Decorative Enhancements	Variety of styles and accent pieces
Window Coverings	- Custom design, luxurious fabrics - Leading-edge effect
Work Space / Writing Surface	- Space is driven by unique style/design - Uncluttered, with efficient functionality
Other Guest Room attributes	- Ceilings - Coffee Maker - Internet - Iron & Board - Microwave - Non-use Fee(s) - Refrigerator / Honor bar - Robes - Safe - Slippers - Technology - Umbrella
Bathroom	
General Décor Style	- Luxurious materials - Leading-edge design and effect
Cabinetry	Leading-edge effect
Counter/Shelf Space; Available	- Leading-edge effect - Multiple counters and/or shelves
Floor Coverings	- Custom inlays or textured enhancements - Leading-edge design and effect - Area rugs are luxurious

Free Floor space	Room size and placement of appointments provide an abundance of space that contributes to the ultimate level of comfort and relaxation for multiple guests
Illumination	- Custom function(s) provides for ambiance options - Leading-edge illumination effect
Mirror	Leading-edge effect
Personal Care	- Luxuriant selection of fashionable bath products - Ample sized bars of soap and bottled items - Leading-edge effect
Shower Base	- Leading-edge effect - Custom treatment - Separate shower and tub
Shower Curtain/Door	- Leading-edge effect - Fixed door enclosure
Shower Fixtures	Custom water features
Sink	Multiple sinks
Toilet	Enclosed toilet-only area
Towels	- Generous sized towels or bath sheets - Luxurious appearance, with intricate and detailed enhancements to design
Tub	Leading-edge effect
Tub / Shower Surround	- Leading-edge effect - Custom treatment - Integrated seating/shelving
Wall Coverings	Leading-edge effect
Wall Hangings / Decorative Enhancements	Variety of styles and accent pieces
Other Bathroom Attributes	- Ceilings - Hair Dryer - Makeup Mirror - Nightlight - Scale - Telephone - Television - Vanity Seating
Service Standards	
Reservation Services	- Operator answers telephone with three rings - Operator extends an appropriate greeting - Reservationist thanks caller for contacting the property - Reservationist provides an appropriate introduction to guest - Reservationist addresses caller by name as appropriate for the manner of the guest - Reservationist anticipates caller's needs or offers a personalized recommendation - Reservationist provide rate structure and room availability - Reservationist exhibits competent/accurate knowledge of all associated facilities and hours of operation - Reservationist reviews reservation request - Reservationist exhibits a sincere desire to comply with all guest requests - Reservationist is efficient and sensitive to the manner of the guest - Reservationist extends an appropriate closing

	- Property provides follow-up reservation confirmation in advance of arrival - The guest feels well served
Arrival Services	- Cars in queue are acknowledged and appropriately handled on arrival - Attendant extends an appropriate welcome - Attendant provides an appropriate introduction - Attendant confirms guest's name - Attendant confirms guest's name as appropriate for the manner of the guest - Attendant explains parking procedures - Valet parking is offered - Attendant promptly offers to unload luggage - Attendant explains luggage handling procedures - Attendant provides unsolicited direction to registration area - Attendant anticipates guest's needs or offers a personalized recommendation - Attendant is efficient and sensitive to the manner of the guest - Attendant exhibits a sincere and compliance to all guest requests - Attendant or lobby greeter escorts guest to the appropriate area - Attendant extends an appropriate closing - The guest feels well served
Check In Services	- Attendant extends an appropriate welcome - Attendant provides an appropriate introduction - Attendant confirms guest's name - Attendant addresses guest by name during initial greeting - Attendant uses guest's name as appropriate for the manner of the guest - Preregistered guests are not solicited for additional information - Attendant confirms rate and type of room - Attendant discreetly provides room number - Attendant provides all registration materials to the guest in a manner that is convenient for the guest - Attendant exhibits a sincere desire and compliance to all guest requests - Attendant anticipates guest's need or offers a personalized recommendation - Attendant is efficient and sensitive to the manner of the guest - Escort of guest and belongings to room is seamless - Attendant extends an appropriate closing - The guest feels well served
Bell Services (Check In)	- Attendant extends an appropriate greeting - Attendant uses guest's name as appropriate for the manner of the guest - Attendant takes the initiative in providing Information about all facilities - Attendant anticipates guest's needs or offers a personalised recommendation - Attendant exhibits a sincere desire and compliance to all guest requests- Attendant places luggage on luggage stand or in appropriate area - Attendant explains features and functions of room - Attendant offers to fill ice bucket

	- Attendant Is efficient and sensitive to the manner of the guest - Attendant extends an appropriate closing - The guest feels well served
Evening Housekeeping Services	- Attendant folds back or removes bedding as appropriate - Attendant straightens bathroom - Attendant refolds toilet tissue point - Attendant cleans soiled surfaces - Attendant replaces or straightens (if reuse elected by guest) used towels - Attendant replenishes used amenities - Attendant empties wastebasket - Attendant adjusts drapes as appropriate for manner of the guest - Attendant adjusts room lighting - Attendant delivers gift amenity such as goodnight wish or chocolates - Attendant refreshes ice - Attendant replaces used glasses - Attendant displays evening services available to the guest such as: laundry, room service or shoeshine information - Attendant leaves personalized message for guest - There is additional evidence of personalized services - The guest feels well served
Wake-Up Call Services	- Service number is answered within three rings - Operator extends an appropriate greeting - Operator uses guest's name as appropriate for the manner of the guest - Operator anticipates guest's needs or offers a personalized recommendation - Operator is efficient and sensitive to the manner of the guest - Operator extends an appropriate closing - Live call is received within five minutes of requested time - Message includes an appropriate greeting - Message includes the use of guest's name as appropriate for the manner of the guest - Message includes time of call - The guest feels well served
Room Service (Order Service)	- Service is available 24/7 - Service number is answered within three rings - Operator extends an appropriate greeting - Operator uses guest's name as appropriate for the manner of the guest. - Operator exhibits a sincere desire and compliance to all guest requests - Operator anticipates guest's needs or offers a personalized recommendation - Operator repeats order to guest for confirmation - Operator is efficient and sensitive to the manner of the guest - Operator provides time estimate for delivery (within 30 minutes) - Operator extends an appropriate closing - The guest feels well served
Room Service (Delivery Services)	- Delivered within five minutes of operator's commitment (guest is notified in advance if more than five minutes early) - Attendants extends an appropriate greeting - Attendant uses guest name as appropriate for the manner of the guest

	- Attendant exhibits a sincere desire and compliance to all guest requests - Attendant anticipates guest's needs or offers a personalized recommendation - Attendant confirms tray/table placement - Attendant is appropriately conversant during set-up and delivery - Attendant reviews guest order - Attendant ask guest's permission to prepare table, pour beverage and remove food cover(s); acts accordingly - Food presentation and quality of ingredients reflect an upscale experience - All appropriate dishware and linens are served at the proper temperature - All food is served at the proper temperature - All food is prepared as ordered - Attendant provides written or spoken instructions for table/tray removal - Attendant is efficient and sensitive to the manner of the guest - Attendant extends an appropriate closing - Trays/tables are removed within 15 minutes, on request - The guest feels well served
Bell Services (Check Out)	- Service number is answered within three rings - Operator extends appropriate greeting - Operator uses guest's name as appropriate for the manner of the guest - Operator exhibits a sincere desire and compliance to all guest requests - Operator anticipates guest's needs or offers a personalized recommendation - Operator offers to retrieve a car or arrange other transportation - Operator is efficient yet and sensitive to the manner of the guest - Operator extends an appropriate closing - Attendant arrives within five minutes - Attendant is appropriately conversant with guest while providing assistance - The guest feels well served
Check Out Services	- Attendant recognizes waiting guests appropriately - Attendant extends an appropriate greeting - Attendant confirms guest's name - Attendant uses guest's name as appropriate for the manner of the guest - Attendant inquires about guest stay or converses as otherwise appropriate with guest - Attendant exhibits a sincere desire and compliance to all guest requests - Attendant places a copy of bill for review into the guest's hand - Attendant confirms payment method - Attendant presents guest folio options as appropriate - Attendant expresses a sincere thank you for staying at the property - Attendant sincerely encourages guest to return - Attendant anticipates guest's needs or offers a personalized recommendation - Attendant is efficient and sensitive to the manner of guest - Attendant extends an appropriate closing - The guest feels well served

Departure Services	- Given adequate notice, the guest's vehicle is waiting - Attendant extends an appropriate greeting - Attendant uses guest's name as appropriate for the manner of the guest - Attendant anticipates guest's needs or offers a personalized recommendation - Attendant is appropriately conversant with guest - Attendant reviews all of guest's belongings and their placement in vehicle - Attendant opens and closes door for guest(s) - Attendant is efficient and sensitive to the manner of the guest - Attendant exhibits a sincere desire and compliance to all guest requests - Attendant extends an appropriate closing - The guest feels well served
Concierge Services	- Concierge is on duty or a "special services" number is available for guest use 24/7 - Attendant extends an appropriate greeting - Attendant uses guest's name as appropriate for the manner of the guest - Associate exhibits a sincere desire and compliance to all guest requests - Attendant anticipates guest's needs or offers a personalized recommendation - Attendant demonstrates an extensive knowledge of all area attractions anal services - Attendant fulfils guests' special request(s) - Attendant is efficient and sensitive to the manner of the guest - Attendant extends an appropriate closing - The guest feels well served
Miscellaneous Staff Services	- All associates exhibit a professional vocabulary devoid of slang - Guests are graciously provided directions or offered assistance via escort on request - All associates consistently maintain eye contact with guests - There is evidence all associates are empowered by management to resolve guest issues immediately - All staff associates fulfil guest's special requests - All phone calls are answered within three rings - All associates are appropriately attired; name tags are clearly visible - All associates demonstrate appropriate behaviour - All associates demonstrate appropriate hygiene - Short-notice pressing is available - Shoeshine service is available - At least one food and beverage outlet is comparable to a Four or Five Diamond Rating.

Another association is HOTREC, the umbrella association of Hotels, Restaurants and Cafés in Europe. Since 2004 it has been working with its associations on bringing the hotel classification systems in the various European countries closer to one another.

The hotels associations of Austria, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland created the Hotelstars Union and the following countries joined after: Estonia (2011), Latvia (2011), Lithuania (2011), Luxembourg (2011), Malta (2012), Belgium (2013), Denmark (2013), Greece (2013) and Liechtenstein (2015). Their partnership is providing a harmonised hotel classification with common criteria and procedures in the participating countries, enhancing the reputation and quality of the hotel industry in the participating countries by creating transparency and security for the guests and thereby encouraging hotel marketing (HOTREC, 2017).

With regards to HOTREC system (2017), the criteria for a five-stars hotel is to have the following services:

Figure 5: HOTREC five-star hotel criteria

- Reception opened 24 hours, multilingual staff
- Valet parking service
- Concierge, page boy
- Spacious reception hall with several seats and beverage service
- Personalized greeting for each guest with flowers or a present in the room
- Minibar and food and beverage offer via room service during 24 hours
- Personal care products in flacons
- Internet-PC in the room on demand
- Safe in the room
- Ironing service (return within 1 h), shoe polish service
- Turndown service in the evening
- Mystery guesting

The independent Star Rating scheme in Australia started in 1950s when the Australian Auto Clubs started to officially review properties to help their members choose and book accommodation. Nowadays it is operated by Star Ratings Australia, under licence from Australian Motoring Services, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Australian Auto Clubs – the NRMA, RACV, RACQ, RAC, RAA, RACT and AANT. It defines a Five Star Property as those that "typify luxury across all areas of operation. Guests will enjoy an extensive range of facilities and comprehensive or highly personalised service relevant to the accommodation type. Properties at this level will display excellent design quality and attention to detail" (Star Ratings Australia, 2017).

In order to identify the common features that four and five-star hotels have across the globe, The World Tourism Organization, in collaboration with Norwegian Accreditation, released an extensive report on 2015 where they found many more similarities than differences, both between the geographic groups and between the star categories. This report provides a comparison of the recurrence of classification criteria across 30 European destinations and 6 global destinations with a view to identifying general trends and providing guidelines for destinations wishing to revise existing or establish new hotel classification systems that meet the needs of consumers, hotels, intermediaries and destinations.

Focusing on the Global Groups selected by the UNWTO (2015) (Australia, Germany, India, Portugal, South Africa and the US), the most recurring criteria in 5 star hotels is defined in the following categories and percentages:

Figure 6: Most recurrent criteria in five-star hotels according to UNWTO

Rooms	%	Bathroom	%
- Telephone with external line	83	- Number of bathroom amenities	100
- Desk, work table, chair	100	- Percentage of en suite bathrooms	100
- 1 Seat /chair per bed	83	- Bath rug	100
- Wardrobe or clothes niche	83	- Number of towels per person	83
- Reading light by each bed	83	- Light over WHB	100
- Minibar	83	- Wash hand basin	83
- Adequate number of hangers	83	- Hair dryer	83
- Bedside table/tray	83	- Waste bin	83
- Internet	83	- Mirror	67
- Wardrobe or clothes hangers	83	- Shelf or Tray of toiletries	67
- Safe in Room	83	- Facial tissues	67
- Power Socket	83	- Power socket near mirror	50
- Full length mirror	75	- Glass/toothbrush tumbler	33
- Luggage rack	67	- En suite and bathroom size requirements	67
- Waste basket	67		
- Quality requirements mattress/bed	83	**Front Desk**	**%**
- Appropriate room lighting	83		
- Bed size specifications single & Double	67	- Front desk hours of Operation	100
- Radio (any device to listen to radio channels)	50	- Lounge in Lobby area	100
- Writing utensils and note pad	50	- Parking or valet parking	83
- Blinds to fully darken room	67	- Luggage Service (porter)	83
- Curtains or similar	67	- Luggage Room	67
- Pillows per person	50	- International Credit Cards Accepted	50
- Bathrobes and slippers in room	67	- Number of Languages required	50
- Correspondence folder	33	- Safe at front desk	40
- Pay TV or similar	67	- Valet Parking	100
- Spy hole/peek hole in door	67	- Concierge	83
- Suite requirements	50		

Food and Beverage	%	Services	%
- Dinner service restaurant	100	- Fax available	100
- Room service breakfast	100	- Wake-up service	100
- Room service offer	83	- Laundry service	83
- Beverage offer lobby area	83	- Hotel Information (a – z)	83
- Breakfast requirements	67	- Internet available in public areas	92
- Bar	83	- Public phone in lobby	67
- Room service beverage offer	100	- Iron board & iron	83
- Lunch service	83	- Guest PC	67
Miscellaneous	**%**	- Photocopying available	67
		- Shoe polish service/machine	50
- Maximum number of floors before lift is mandatory	83	- Daily newspaper available	67
		- Ticket and transport service	50
- AC or ventilation in public areas	83	- Daily cleaning & change of linen on request	83
- Heating option in room	67		
- Rooms with adjustable AC	100	- Turn down service	67
- Sporting facilities	67	- Message delivery service	67
		- Business centre	67

Most Recurring Criteria in 5 Star Hotels Across Global Groups.
Source: World Tourism Organization (2015)

2.1.5. *Luxury hotel brands: Mandarin Oriental and W Hotels in Barcelona*

The main characteristics of luxury products correspond to a great extent to those of luxury brands and lead to the following definition: Luxury brands are regarded as images in the minds of consumers that comprise associations about a high price, quality, aesthetics, rarity extraordinariness and a high degree of non-functional associations (Heine 2011, p. 46). Therefore, companies create brands to identify a specific product.

In the hospitality industry, hotel companies, as any other companies, also create brands with the purpose of differentiating their products as a mechanism for competitive advantage (Wood, 2000).

There are many hotel brands considered in the luxury service, but, according to the Travel & Tourism Market Research Handbook elaborated in 2014 by Miller R. and Associates and also Forbes Travel Guide (2017) reports, the primary ones in this segment are as follows: Colony, Luxury Collection, Conrad, Dorchester Collection, Fairmont, Four Seasons, Rosewood Hotels and Resorts, Sofitel, Inter-Continental, Loews, Mandarin Oriental, Pan Pacific Hotels & Resorts, Park Hyatt, Peninsula Hotels, Preferred, Prince Hotels, Raffles, St. Regis, Taj Hotels and Resorts, The Ritz-Carlton, W Hotels and Waldorf Astoria Collection.

They all belong to different hotel chains and have different target markets, they may offer different products and services, but still are in the quality level of luxury.

As the research is going to be focused on Mandarin Oriental and W hotels in the city of Barcelona, it is necessary to know about them as a brand and finally the hotels themselves.

Figure 7: Mandarin Oriental and W hotel brands

	Mandarin Oriental	**W Hotels**
Mission	To delight our guests. We are committed to making a difference every day; continually getting better to keep us the best.	To scale unique experiences for guests.
Vision	To be widely recognised as the best luxury hotel group in the world.	A mix of vibes and elements that mingle to create a welcoming and social gathering place.
Values	**Delighting our guests** We will strive to understand our client and guest needs by listening to their requirements and responding in a competent, accurate and timely fashion. We will design and deliver our services and products to address their needs. In fact, we are committed to exceeding their expectations by surprising them with our ability to anticipate and fulfil their wishes. **Working together as colleagues** We will emphasize the sharing of responsibility, accountability and recognition through a climate of teamwork. By working together as colleagues and by treating each other with mutual respect and trust, we will all contribute to the Group's overall success more productively than if we worked alone. **Promoting a climate of enthusiasm** We are committed to everyone at Mandarin Oriental by providing a caring, motivating and rewarding environment. As an industry leader, we are committed to bringing out the best in our people through effective training and meaningful career and personal development, and by encouraging individuality and initiative. **Being the best** We will be an innovative leader in the hotel industry and will continually improve products and services. We will seek from our suppliers the highest quality products and services at the best value.	**Bold** *(Daring, original, risk-taking, outspoken, unmistakable).* Visionary, provocative and fearless, we never lack a point of view. **Witty** *(Clever, cheeky, bright, irreverent, playful).* We take our wit dry, with a hint of mischief. **Insider** *(Connected, savvy, local, coveted, access).* We're in the known, so you're in the known.

	Mandarin Oriental Barcelona	W Barcelona
	Delivering shareholder value We are committed to being a growing company. Our success will result in investment returns which are consistently among the best in the hotel industry. **Playing by the rules** We will maintain integrity, fairness and honesty in both our internal and external relationships and will consistently live up to our commitments. **Acting with responsibility** We will actively participate in the improvement of the environment, just as we will be responsible members of our communities and industry organisations.	
Target customer	High earning business and leisure (wealth) travellers.	Leisure and business customers who seek for high-quality service, upscale enjoyment and chasse fashionable life, who have a disruptor mind-set and a lust for life attitude
Concept	A mix of high-class and classic luxury.	Iconic design and contemporary luxury.

(Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group, 2017 and Starwood Hotels & Resorts, 2017).

Figure 8: Mandarin Oriental and W hotels in Barcelona

	Mandarin Oriental Barcelona	**W Barcelona**
Location	City centre – Pg. de Gràcia; most luxurious street in Barcelona.	Beachfront – Barceloneta boardwalk.
Rooms	92 rooms and 28 suites.	406 rooms and 67 suites.
Facilities	Dining options: - BistrEau– hotel restaurant, two Michelin Stars Chef Ángel León. - Moments – restaurant, seven Michelin Stars Chef Carme Ruscalleda. - Banker's Bar – cocktail bar. - Terrat – rooftop restaurant and bar terrace with dipping pool. - Mimosa Garden – interior restaurant and bar terrace. 2 meeting rooms, a total of 110m^2. Spa with eight treatment rooms and swimming pool	Dining options: - Wave – hotel restaurant - Bravo24 – restaurant, one Michelin Star Chef Carles Abellán. - Salt Restaurant and Beach Club –bar and restaurant open in summer - W Lounge – hotel bar - Wet Bar – outdoor pool bar - Eclipse – cocktail bar and night club 15 meeting rooms and other venues for events, a total of 6,800m^2. Bliss Spa with two manicure and two pedicure stations, eight treatment rooms,

	Fitness centre Manolo Blahnik shop	steam bath, sauna and indoor Jacuzzi. Fit – fitness center W The Store by La Comercial
Services	Welcome Desk 24h Concierge Guest Relations Butler (exclusive for suites) Valet Parking Transfer options Wi-Fi upon request – not free	Welcome Desk 24h Concierge W Insider – guest relations Whatever Whenever 24h – call centre Valet Parking Transfer options Free Wi-Fi

(Mandarin Oriental Barcelona, 2017 and W Barcelona, 2017).

2.2 Literature map

LUXURY

Luxury Concept

The Oxford Dictionary, 2015
Teicholz, 2015

Luxury Goods and Services

Brun & Castelli, 2013
Danziger, 2005
Becker, 2009
Michman & Mazze, 2006

TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

Luxury in Tourism

Curtis, 2001
Park et al., 2010
Becker, 2009
Danziger, 2005
Michman & Mazze, 2006

Luxury in Hotels

Barbara Talbott, 2004

Luxury Hotels Brands

Heine, 2011
Wood, 2000
Miller R. and Associates, 2014
Forbes Travel Guide, 2017

Mandarin Oriental Barcelona

Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group, 2017
Mandarin Oriental Barcelona, 2017

W Barcelona

Starwood Hotels & Resorts, 2017
W Barcelona, 2017

QUALITY OF SERVICE

Quality Measurement

Mok, Sparks & Kadampully, 2001
Parayani et al., 2010
Wong et al., 1999
Bateson, 1977
Lovelock, 1981
Gronroos, 1990
Zeithaml & Bitner, 1996;

Standards - Hotels Stars Rating

Mei, Dean &White, 1999
UNWTO, 2015
Forbes Travel Guide, 2017
AAA, 2017
AAA, 2012
HOTREC, 2017
Star Ratings Australia, 2017

Customer Satisfaction and Expectation

Dubois, Laurent & Czellar, 2005
Gunter, 2005
Blanc, 2008
Groonroos cited in Hartline et al., 2003
Skogland & Siguaw, 2004
Chapman and Lovell, 2006
Sim et al., 2006 cited in Crick and Spencer, 2011

2.3 Conceptual framework

LUXURY	TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY	QUALITY OF SERVICE
- Luxury definition - Luxury goods and services	- Luxury in tourism and experience - Luxury in hotels and luxury hotel brands	- Quality measurement - Luxury hotels standards and star rating - Customers expectation and satisfaction

The term luxury is not very clear itself, it is subjective as it depends on the perspective people have about what a luxury good or service is (Becker, 2009).

In tourism, luxury is relative to the same point as it depends on the experience that people might have during travelling and at their stays in hotels, being difficult knowing how to satisfy these travellers needs (Danziger, 2005). Therefore, hotels are distinguished within different scales of quality in order to know what level of service guest can expect (Blank, 2008).

What customers take about their experience regarding the service received is related to their expectation of luxury, therefore, it is an important element of their satisfaction (Dubois, Laurent and Czellar, 2005).

As a consequence, some firms from the hospitality industry provide guidelines in order to set standards of service (Gunter, 2005) and others award them with the known stars from 1 to 5, being 5 the luxury level (Forbes Travel Guide, 2017; AAA, 2012 and UNWTO, 2015).

3. METHODS

3.1 Overall research design

Creswell (2014 p.31) distinguish the different elements that represent the perspective of how the researcher presents the information and its interconnection (see Figure 2), which are defined by research approaches, research designs, and research methods.

Figure 8: Interconnection of the key elements in a research approach
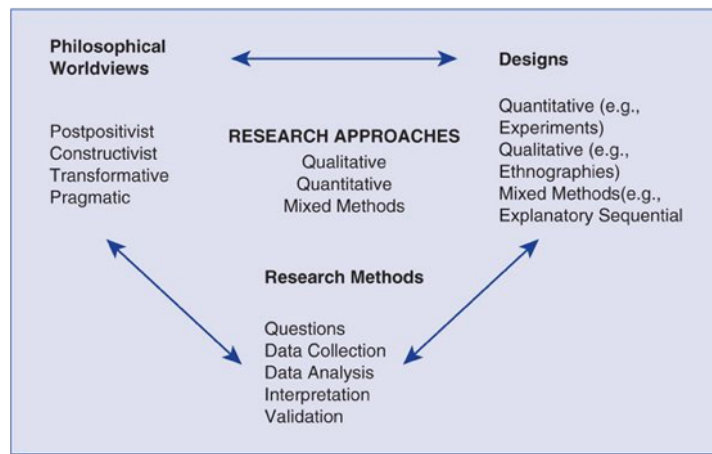
This research will be conducted through a mixed method approach, which involves collecting, analysing and integrating both quantitative and qualitative data in a study, providing a more complete understanding of the research problem than either approach alone (Creswell, 2014).

In one hand, qualitative research is used throughout all the study, referring to collecting non-numeric data (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012), either primary or secondary. On the other hand, primary data collection combines the use of a quantitative approach, as it includes numbered data that can be analysed using statistical procedures (Creswell, 2014).

Therefore, the design approached in this research is an exploratory sequential mixed method, where the researcher first begins with a qualitative research phase (Creswell, 2014), such as understanding the luxury concept and its relation in tourism and hospitality. Secondary data is then analysed, and the information is used to build into a second, quantitative phase (Creswell, 2014) which helps in this research collecting primary data about the real perception that people has from luxury hotels in Mandarin Oriental and in W, both in Barcelona.

This design has been selected as appropriate as the research question "How is luxury understood in five-star hotels Mandarin Oriental and W in Barcelona, Spain" and the objective "to evaluate how luxury is understood in order to confirm the differences between five star hotels depending on the idea or concept employees and customers have regarding this term", involves understanding the perception of diversified social groups and both qualitative and quantitative research approaches provide the intend of exploring social phenomenon (Creswell, 2014). Therefore, need of interaction between different social groups is required in order to acknowledge what and how does different people perceive luxury while working in or experiencing these two specific luxury hotels. Creswell (2014, p.16) stated that adopting an exploratory method has provided the researcher with the right tools to build a strong reliable data collection and on a second phase the possibility of analysing and explore views of different participants within the topic.

It is of great importance the explanation of the research strategies adopted for the study. The strategy used for the completion of this explanatory study was a case study. This specific research strategy relates to the study of a group of people in a specific context (Creswell, 2014). Relating this definition to the dissertation, case study research strategy has been used to further understand the perception that customers and employees from luxury hotels in Barcelona have about this concept while using questionnaires that allow the researcher combine the collection of quantitative and qualitative data (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012).

3.2 Data collection techniques and research instruments

In order to give purpose to the literature done and to reach out the objective of identifying how luxury is defined within the tourism and hospitality industry, secondary data collected for the literature review has been obtained from online sites, academic articles, journals, reports and previous research to then proceed with the primary data collection.

Collecting secondary data has been challenging as most of the research previously done does not provide with accurate information. Creswell (2014, p.191) emphasizes the difficulties on

accessing reliable research. Nevertheless, it allows the researcher to save in resources and time, being very useful when comparing other data (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012).

As previously mentioned, secondary data gathered for the literature review of this study has provided with the right tools to proceed with the primary data collection. A questionnaire has been designed and conducted based on the literature, as a primary data collection technique used in case study research strategies as a mean to obtaining different types of data due to its flexibility and creativity when designing the questions and also when administered (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012), providing with further investigation in regards of the perception that employees and customers from Mandarin Oriental and W –five star hotels in Barcelona– have regarding luxury.

The questionnaire has been structured in order to obtain the more information possible from the respondent. Firstly, open ended questions have been designed in order to not limit the answer of participants and get a better understanding or the views and perceptions according to the customers and employees opinions (Crewswell, 2104), thus collecting qualitative data. These type of questions are appropriate when the researcher is unsure of the response, such as in exploratory research (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012), like in this case. Nevertheless, bias may also be found when interpreting findings as respondents provide information according to their opinion regarding luxury (Creswell, 2014).

Moreover, ranking questions have been designed to discover the importance that customers and employees give to specific services in a hotel in order to gain insights about the topic in a specific contextual situation while collecting quantitative data (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012).

All the questionnaires have been conducted through Internet thanks to the tool Google Forms (see Appendix A – Questionnaire). Thereby, a link has been provided to the respondents as it allows them to answer themselves to the questions and the researcher to easily administering and controlling them, thus collecting real data (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012). Nonetheless, ten out of the thirty questionnaires have been personally administered to the employees from Mandarin Oriental and W hotels and filled in by phone as of the close relation with them, while the other twenty were sent by email to customers from these hotels due to

its professionally and the lack of relationship within the researcher and the respondents. The process of collecting this primary data took place in between the period of March 2017 to April 2017.

The gathered data has been compiled in order to obtain in-depth insights within the topic being studied and to provide with reliable and trustworthy findings through the research while answering the objectives mentioned in 1.4 Research aims and objectives.

3.3 Research context and participants

The research is focused in two different luxury hotels from the city of Barcelona, the Mandarin Oriental and the W due to the proximity of the researcher to gather this data. Questionnaires are going to be asked to answer to customers and employees in order to have information from first hand about their perception of luxury not only in hotels, but also in general (see Appendix A – Questionnaire).

A total of 30 interviews were conducted, dividing them in 20 customers and 10 employees, being ten customers and five employees from each hotel. These participants were selected ignoring any demographical criteria, such as gender, age or social status, however, they had to work in one of these two properties in the case of employees and, on the other hand, customers have had to be guests in any of the properties.

3.4 Data analysis

The data has been analysed using a constructivist philosophy, which combined with interpretivism gives opportunity for the researcher to gather facts or opinions from a smaller sample of population (Creswell, 2014) and therefore, leading into a subjective research. This specific philosophy allows the researcher to focus on the experience of not only customers, but also workers, within the five star hotels and its perception of luxury due to that social phenomenon. Interpretivism is a way of examining social phenomena from which particular understandings of these phenomena can be gained and explanations attempted, in this case,

by collecting qualitative and quantitative data through questionnaires (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2012).

It is also relevant to explain the research approach used for the analysis of the data in this study. As per the qualitative structure, an inductive approach has been adopted as it allows the researcher to collect data and build theory (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012). The focus on the idea of luxury from employees and customers in five star hotels in Barcelona is a topic that analyses a social phenomenon in a human based context. Therefore, it is correct to state that this study is cross-sectional as it is studying a particular phenomenon at a particular point of time (Creswell, 2014). As time goes by, this study may not be applicable because of change in customers and employees perceptions of luxury, as well as other brands appearing in the market. Therefore, qualitative data gathered from the questionnaires has been summarised, categorised and unitised in order to observe it, examine it, find relationships and then create conclusions (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012).

On the other hand, quantitative data obtained from the questionnaires has been analysed through ranking questions that allowed the researcher to find differences by gathering all answers in statistics.

3.5 Ethical considerations

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012, p. 160 and p. 183) associate ethical considerations to the implications for the negotiation of access to people and organisations and the collection of data. All those ethical issues that the researcher should consider when designing the research and choosing the appropriate behaviour in relation to the rights of those who become subject of the study either are considered in this research and revealed throughout the whole study.

Secondary data collected in the Literature Review has properly been referenced using the Harvard style adapted in School of Tourism and Hospitality Sant Ignasi in order to show respect for intellectual property and confidentiality, acknowledging the work from other researchers or authors.

It is important to mention that previously to collecting primary data, an ethics forms provided by the University was filled-in taking in considerations the risk that primary data collection may have and then signed by the supervisor and the researcher in order to proceed with the questionnaires (See Appendix B – Ethics Form).

In addition, the anonymity of participants in the questionnaires was respected and that sample of population was not under any embarrassment, pressure or any other disadvantage (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012) as they were aware of the identity of the researcher, their rights and the aim of the questionnaire (See Appendix C – Information and Consent Form).

Moreover, the study being done was explained to the respondents in order to reinforce the reliability of the answers (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012) and they were free to refuse to answer the questionnaire or to limit their answers within the terms they believe. Finally, the validity of the study was ensured by the creation of.

With regards the reliability and validity of the data produced with this study, as Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012, p. 297) mention, it can be challenging to avoid testifying according to our past experiences regarding a certain topic. As mentioned before in 3.2 Data collection techniques and research instruments, the selected primary data approach for data collection may lead to either participant and/or observer bias and affect the reliability of the study (Creswell, 2014). Therefore, the researcher designed a proper questionnaire giving the opportunity to conduct it within the topics relevant for the study.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Findings

The findings presented on the following chapters have been obtained through the techniques analysed in 3.2 Data collection techniques and research instruments. Results have varied according to the perception and opinion among the different respondents regarding luxury and the hotel they have experienced. These were produced through self-administered questionnaires, were designed according to the data collected on 2.1 Literature review.

The results will therefore analyse what does people understand from the term luxury itself, how do they define a luxury hotel and what importance do they give to elements that define the luxury hotels and the quality of its services.

In the first question related to the fourth objective of this research, the intention is to analyse what does people understand about the luxury as a concept, thus being the respondents asked to define this term in three words. Thereby, it is easier to find similarities and differences between the answers due to the complexity on defining this idea that has already been stated in the Literature Review.

Out of 90 words used to describe "luxury" some have been repeated several times (see Appendix B – Questionnaire Results). After grouping them by similarity, it can be said that the 5 most common words that describe luxury are:

    (1) exclusivity;

    (2) service;

    (3) excellent quality;

    (4) personalization; and

    (5) experience.

It is important to mention that differences have been found depending on the hotel that contributors have referenced to. As distinguished from the questionnaires, employees and, most of all, customers from Mandarin Oriental Barcelona have related luxury to something

with high class and standards. On the other hand, respondents from W Barcelona have referred to it as different and personalized product or service.

The second question was designed with the same purpose as the first one in order to contrast the data with the literature review, answering the second part of the objective in order to analyse the idea that people has from a luxury hotel. This time, respondents were asked to write a short description (see Appendix B – Questionnaire Results) and, from the answers gathered, the most common definitions out of 30 are:

    (1) A place with the best quality in service and products;

    (2) that exceeds customer needs or expectations; and

    (3) that creates a unique experience.

Even if personalization of service and stay in general are present in the answers from both hotels, it can be distinguishing that the first fifteen respondents from Mandarin Oriental Barcelona put more emphasis on the standards expected, while the others fifteen from W Barcelona focus on the experience lived.

Finally, the third question relates to the last objective "recognize the most important elements that determine luxury" based on the first one, which is "identifying the most recurrent luxury services and facilities from five star hotels". After selecting several from the Literature Review in order that guests and employees could rank them by importance given from 1 to 5 (see Appendix B – Questionnaire Results), the most recurring ones divided in areas are:

    a) Hotel Characteristics:

        (1) Location

    b) Public Areas

        (2) More than one elevator;

        (3) Fitness centre;

        (4) Spa;

    c) Services:

(5) Staff performance;

(6) Multilingual staff;

(7) Guest recognition;

(8) Complimentary internet;

d) Food and beverage:

(9) Breakfast offer;

(10) Room service;

e) Guest rooms:

(11) Bed comfort; and

(12) Bath and toiletry amenities.

4.2 Discussion

This dissertation brings together an in-depth study of the perception of luxury from the point of view of customers and employees in the hospitality industry, focused on two luxury hotels in Barcelona; Mandarin Oriental and W. Therefore, the aim of this study is to obtain a greater understanding on the differences of perception between the selected respondents and to analyse "How luxury is understood in luxury hotels in Barcelona, Spain, focusing on Mandarin Oriental and W". The data collected from all questionnaires has conceded the researcher the opportunity to obtain information from customers and employees within the industry and to supplement the study done in 2.1 Literature review.

This specific section of this dissertation will analytically interpret the results discussed in the previous chapter 4.1 Findings by comparing it with the literature review provided and further knowledge obtained from self-administered questionnaires conducted.

Regarding to the first objective of this study "Critically analyse the literature on luxury concept" and to initialise the interpretation of the results, curious similarities stood up when

comparing the Literature Review provided and the perceptions shared by the respondents. However, the questionnaires created the possibility to complement it with further knowledge.

Dubois, Laurent and Czellar (2001) found six characteristics of luxury which, according to the results, participants agreed on the following ones:

(1) excellent quality;

(2) very high price; and

(3) scarcity and uniqueness.

Moreover, Danziger (2005) highlighted the difficulty on defining this concept due to its wideness and dependence on every one's background, nevertheless, he was able to do a classification as well. In this study, although the large number of diverse answers, it was also possible to put them together by groups of similarity.

Focusing on the literature of what luxury hotels are, Danziger's dimensions of luxury (2005) were related to the hospitality field in order to support the explanation of a luxury hotel – which can be related with the answers gathered from the survey – referring to it as:

(1) a brand - meaning that luxury hotels symbolize a determined brand with specific services and features that are perceived by guests as the best quality. Agreeing with Danziger, most of respondents also referred to it as a place with the best quality –;

(2) luxe product features – with relation to the first one, luxury hotels have specific attributes that make them different and as respondents affirm, these type of properties are unique and different from other hotels –;

(3) non-necessities – as what luxury hotels provide are more than just services to cover not only basic needs. In concert with this, respondents also refer to it as the place that exceeds customer needs or expectations, that goes the extra mile –; and

(4) and the power to pursue your passions – what makes people's life more comfortable, fulfilling and enjoyable are also concepts seen among respondents' definitions of luxury hotels as they refer to experiences and feeling important.

In order to answer the second objective stated for this study – "Identify the most recurrent luxury services and facilities from five star hotels" – standards criteria from different organisations were collected as means for hotels to determine the quality of their services (Mei, Dean and White, 1999). Even though service quality is a very complex network of different components that researchers still try to identify through the years (Mok, Sparks and Kadampully, 2001) and after collecting several policies or rules from associations that state luxury requirements, it can be said that the most important dimensions where customers expect to receive the best satisfaction are:

(1) services;

(2) facilities; and

(3) guest rooms.

These rules are not only set by associations in the industry of hospitality; local governments also have their own. It can be said that depending on the cultural, environmental and economic contexts in which the systems are embedded (World Tourism Organization, 2015), each hotel might have to follow specific procedures. On the other hand, companies and brands have their own standards of service quality but they would keep this information internally.

A big list of different brands in the hotel industry compose the luxury segment and, to proceed with the second objective, they have been identified; demonstrating that Mandarin Oriental and W hotels in Barcelona are part of it. It is true to say that each of them presents a different culture and values, however, they don't differ that much on the services they offer but on how they do so, being one of the most important elements – the way how employees deliver satisfaction (Crick and Spencer, 2011) – eager to vary.

Finally, and as mentioned before, the last two objectives of this research had as purpose creating knowledge of the idea that people staying and working at these two different hotel brands have about luxury and the importance they give to the specific standards chosen from the most recurrent ones listed in the Literature Review. Surveys affirmed the different ideas exist from luxury and that depending on everybody's background and experience, the importance given to the specific services, facilities and elements in guest's rooms change.

5. CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Conclusions

To conclude, from the results it can be said that the objectives stated in the introduction of this study, which aimed to analyse the term luxury in the hospitality industry and evaluate how it is understood, have been achieved through taking into consideration the Literature Review and Findings obtained after collecting data.

Regarding the first objective, through the analysis of literature prior to the case, the author can confirm that luxury is not possible to be defined in a single description as it depends on who is giving you the answer; his or her background, his or her experience, his or her expectations are elements that influence somebody's idea of this concept. Therefore, it can be stated that luxury is a very subjective interpretation weather if it is a good or a service.

Luxury hotels are determined by the quality of the services and facilities within it, which have to meet specific criteria. As reflected from the second objective, the different criteria gathered from the literature analysis allowed to identify that depending on the different associations who determine those standards, these might vary. However, there are specific elements that constantly appear.

In addition, luxury services and facilities vary depending not only on the associations but also on hotels and its brands or company standards to follow. Giving path to the third objective, many luxury brands exist in the hospitality industry and it can be said from previous literature analysis that they differ from each other as the case of Mandarin Oriental and W.

After analysing these two properties in the city of Barcelona in order to answer to the two last objectives which relate to the verification of the ones above, from the information gathered from respondents the author can confirm that differences exist between five star hotels not only depending on the concept of luxury they set but also on their target. As mentioned before, both hotels provide luxury services and facilities in different ways but people also perceives luxury according to their ideas so, the importance they give to services and facilities changes on each.

Lastly, it is important to mention that it has been of advantage for the researcher to prove that luxury is ambiguous and that, when talking in the frames of hospitality, it is hard to understand what customers expect about this range of service quality because of their previous idea of it.

5.2 Limitations and recommendations for further research

The limitations with the current study are primarily related to the scope of the research. Due to the high number of luxury properties in the city of Barcelona and the lack of time to pursue the research, this study canvassed the views of guests and employees in only two of these hotels.

However, although the sample size is not large, particular attention was paid to several important attributes; including location, services and facilitates. In addition, the findings are restricted to Barcelona guests and employees, and might not be possible to generalise the results to other contexts.

Finally, the study focused on the luxury hotel sector, and the findings might not therefore be applicable to other services in the tourism and hospitality industry as a whole.

Further research could be applied to complement the study provided. This paper provides with a general overall of the perception that guests and employees have of luxury in two specific luxury hotels in Barcelona – Mandarin Oriental and W. However, a study of guests and employees of other luxury hotels in Barcelona could provide with further research and additional information to this study.

Moreover, this paper focuses on the services and facilities that allow hotels to be in the category of luxury and the importance given from a guest and employee perspective. In fact, analysing different perspectives from other hotels in the city could provide with further insights regarding the opinion or idea in relation to the topic being studied.

This study has provided the author with right tools and knowledge to be able to provide the industry with recommendation with respect to this topic. The understanding of what a luxury

hotel is and the importance given to certain services or facilities in these type of properties depends on the background and experience of every person, however similarities exist in term of expectations. With this being said, it is important that the hospitality industry understands the society expectations and adjusts to their needs so that luxury hotels focus on the elements they give more importance to. Many hotel companies are creating different brands in order to fulfil different needs and expectations and each of them has a different concept even if they are all in the rank of five stars. As life goes on, different people with unique interests will emerge and hotels will have to adapt to their needs.

5.3 Self-reflection

After working in the two hotels in Barcelona – Mandarin Oriental and W – it was brought to my attention the fact that both luxury hotels provide different services and experiences to their guests as they focus on their concept. Moreover, my experience in working in different departments has given me the opportunity to see and understand the needs of different guests, as such the ones being identified throughout this paper. I was thought on how different people have distinct needs or expectations and noticed those demands usually change according to the background and the life experience people carry along. Moreover, being a student of hospitality management and specialising myself on luxury hotels I would like to further understand what are guests looking for when going to these hotels. With this being said, understanding the different ideas and perceptions within luxury hotels has been chosen as my dissertation topic.

This study has allowed me to develop more insights on the knowledge I have acquired with my working experience. The project was planned and structured in a manner the reader will be able to understand the different luxury definitions, luxury hotels brands, the recurrent services in luxury hotels and the importance given by employees in Mandarin Oriental and W Barcelona hotels.

Due to time and school limitations, I could not get myself into more hotels and conduct more surveys in order to have a wider insight of luxury hotels. However, specifying in these two was enough to compare how two luxury hotels with different concepts contrast.

Finally, I have structured my life in order to work and develop the study properly, even though this dissertation was completed throughout the academic semester. This dissertation took nearly 4 months to be completed which demonstrates the effort inserted throughout the semester when balancing this study with other on-going project in school.

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7. APPENDICES

7.1 Appendix A – Questionnaire

How luxury is understood in 5* hotels in Barcelona

*Obligatory

The aim of this survey is to evaluate how customers and employees from luxury hotels understand this concept, focusing in the area of Barcelona, specially two different hotels; Mandarin Oriental and W.

1. Please write three words you consider that define the term "luxury". *

How luxury is understood in 5* hotels in Barcelona

The aim of this survey is to evaluate how customers and employees from luxury hotels understand this concept, focusing in the area of Barcelona, specially two different hotels; Mandarin Oriental and W.

2. How would you describe a luxury hotel? *

---

3. Could you rate the following elements by the importance you give to them at a luxury hotel?

(Being 1 no importance and 5 indispensable services).

Hotel characteristics

• Location *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Modern architecture *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

3. Could you rate the following elements by the importance you give to them at a luxury hotel?

(Being 1 no importance and 5 indispensable services).

Hotel characteristics

• Location *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Modern architecture *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Contemporary interior design *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Hotel dimensions *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Lounge in lobby *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

Public Areas

• More than one elevator *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Fitness centre *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Spa *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Indoor pool *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Outdoor pool *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Retail shop *

	1	2	3	4	5
No important	○	○	○	○	○

• Business centre *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

Services

• Front desk overstaffed *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Staff performance *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Multilingual staff *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Guest recognition *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Concierge *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Luggage service (bell boy) *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Luggage room *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Parking *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not Important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Valet parking *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Complimentary Internet *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Wake up call *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Meeting rooms *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Transfer *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

Food and Beverage

• Breakfast offer *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Room service 24h *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Many dining options *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Michelin star restaurants *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

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• Bar *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Rooftop bar terrace *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

Guest rooms

• Bed comfort *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• More than one pillow per person *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Bath tub *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• More than one set of towels per person *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Bath and toiletry amenities *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Hairdryer *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Bathrobe *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Slippers *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Desk *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Big wardrobe *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Full length mirror

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Smart TV *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• iPad as a room remote control *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

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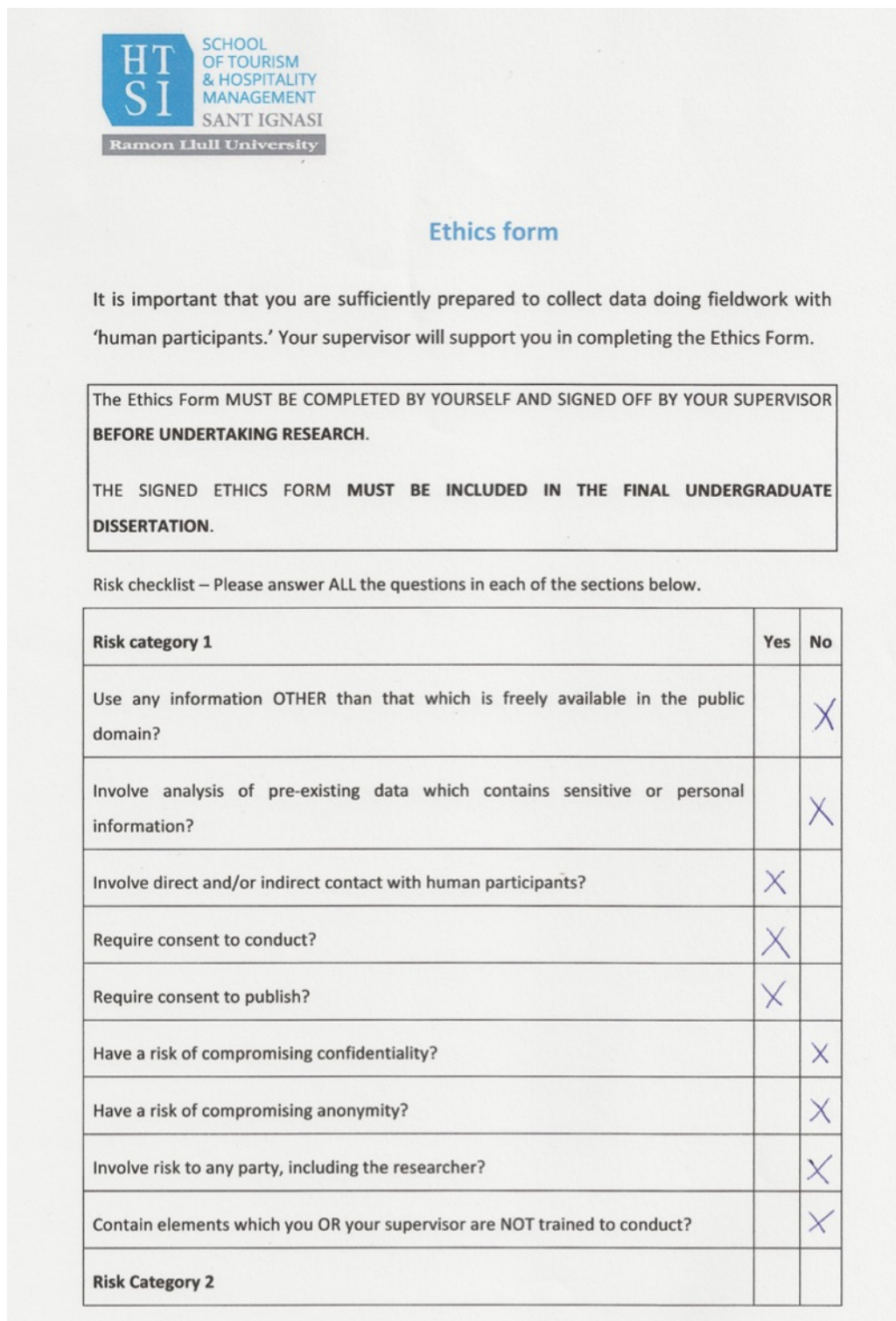
• Telephone with external line *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Radio *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Minibar *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Safe *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Blinds *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	○	○	○	○	○	Indispensable

• Adjustable AC *

	1	2	3	4	5

Link available for respondents to access:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScWbl3GRr4KgnfNHqUs4dC8UFmFCkJgm3N5Jxc-h891XeHd_A/viewform?usp=sf_link

7.2 Appendix B – Ethics Form

Ethics form

It is important that you are sufficiently prepared to collect data doing fieldwork with 'human participants.' Your supervisor will support you in completing the Ethics Form.

The Ethics Form MUST BE COMPLETED BY YOURSELF AND SIGNED OFF BY YOUR SUPERVISOR **BEFORE UNDERTAKING RESEARCH**.

THE SIGNED ETHICS FORM **MUST BE INCLUDED IN THE FINAL UNDERGRADUATE DISSERTATION**.

Risk checklist – Please answer ALL the questions in each of the sections below.

Risk category 1	Yes	No
Use any information OTHER than that which is freely available in the public domain?		X
Involve analysis of pre-existing data which contains sensitive or personal information?		X
Involve direct and/or indirect contact with human participants?	X	
Require consent to conduct?	X	
Require consent to publish?	X	
Have a risk of compromising confidentiality?		X
Have a risk of compromising anonymity?		X
Involve risk to any party, including the researcher?		X
Contain elements which you OR your supervisor are NOT trained to conduct?		X
Risk Category 2		

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Require informed consent OTHER than that which is straightforward to obtain to conduct the research?		✗
Require informed consent OTHER than that which is straightforward to obtain to publish the research?		✗
Require information to be collected and/or provided OTHER that that which is straightforward to obtain?		✗
Risk category 3		
Involve participants who are particularly vulnerable?		✗
Involve participants who are unable to give informed consent?		✗
Involve data collection taking place BEFORE consent form is given?		✗
Involve any deliberate cover data collection?		✗
Involve risk to the researcher or participants beyond that experienced in everyday life?		✗
Cause (or could cause) physical or psychological negative consequences?		✗
Use intrusive or invasive procedures?		✗
Include a financial incentive to participate in the research?		✗

IF APPLICABLE:

List agreed actions with your tutor to be taken to address issues raised in questions Risk Category 2:

…………………

Student Declaration: I confirm that I will undertake the Undergraduate Dissertation as detailed above. I understand that I must abide by the terms of this approval and that I

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may not make any substantial amendments to the Undergraduate Dissertation without further approval.

Name: Anna Caballo **Signed:** ▓▓▓▓▓ **Date:** 4/04/17

Agreement from the supervisor of the student:

Name: Gisela Danmigue **Signed** ▓▓▓▓▓ **Date:** 19/4/17

Risk Category 1: If you answered NO to all the questions, your study is classified as Risk Category 1. In this case:

- The supervisor can give immediate approval for undertaking the field work for the Undergraduate Dissertation.
- A copy of this signed Form MUST be included in the Undergraduate Dissertation.

Risk Category 2: If you answered YES only to questions in Risk Category 1 and/or 2, your study is classified as Risk Category 2. In this case:

- You must meet with your supervisor and clarify how the issues encountered are going to be dealt with before taking off with the field work.
- Once clarified, the actions taken must be stated in the Form. Then the supervisor can guarantee approval for the field work for the Undergraduate Dissertation.
- A copy of this signed Form MUST be included in the Undergraduate Dissertation.

Risk Category 3: If you answered YES to questions included in Risk Category 3, your study is classified as Risk Category 3. In this case:

- You must discuss with your supervisor how to re-direct the research and data collection thesis to avoid risks mentioned in Category 3.
- You must complete the Ethical Form again until Risk Category 1 or 2 is obtained.
- A copy of this signed Form MUST be included in the Undergraduate Dissertation.

A copy of this signed form MUST be included in the Undergraduate Dissertation.

7.3 Appendix C – Information and Consent Form

How luxury is understood in 5* hotels in Barcelona

Thank you for agreeing to spend 5 minutes answering the questionnaire regarding your perception of luxury. Before
you decide whether to take part in this research, please take the time to read this information. If you have any questions or queries please do not hesitate to contact the researcher.

This research is being conducted as part of a dissertation project for a student of HTSI Shool of Tourism and Hospitality Management. The purpose of the research is to understand how luxury is understood in 5 star hotels in Barcelona.
You have been chosen to participate as you are or have been a customer or employee at Mandarin Oriental or W hotels in Barcelona.

The information you give in the questionnaire will be used in the dissertation project and later research publications. Your personal data will be kept strictly confidential. All participants of this research study will remain anonymous, and information that could lead to the identification of individuals will be concealed within the final report.
After you have submitted the questionnaire, if you have any problems with the information you have provided, you may contact the researcher who will delete your information and it will not be used in the research.

Researcher details: anna.caballos@aluhtsi.url.edu

*Obligatorio

Consent *

○ I agree to proceed with the questionnaire.

7.4 Appendix D – Questionnaire Results

Q1: Please write three words you consider that define the term "luxury".		
Hotel A:	██████████████	
	P1:	Quality, special, unique
	P2:	Class, standards, design
	P3:	Detail, uniqueness, expensive
	P5:	Exclusive, selected, premium
	P7:	Exclusivity, uniqueness, perfection
	P8:	Exclusiveness, comfort, tailor-made
	P9:	Outstanding, service, level
	P12:	Exclusivity, premium service, distinction
	P13:	Exclusive, services, excellence
	P18:	Uniqueness, exclusiveness, high quality
	P20:	Exclusive, exceptional service, beyond expectations
	P21:	Exclusive, outstanding, comfort
	P23:	Quality, exclusive, exceptional
	P27:	High-class, high-standards, excellence
	P30:	Excellence, high price, refinement
Hotel B:	████████	
	P4:	Unexpected, personalization, escape
	P6:	Service, space, location

	P10:	Exclusivity, sophistication, unique
	P11:	Comfort, quality, service
	P14:	Personalized, experience, service
	P15:	Unique, exclusive, time
	P16:	Attention, exclusivity, personalization
	P17:	Exclusivity, design, personal service
	P19:	Service, experience, product itself
	P22:	Exclusive, personalized, warm
	P24:	Unique, different, high-quality
	P25:	Comfort, experience, exclusivity
	P26:	Detail, care, experience
	P28:	Quality, different, extraordinary
	P29:	Comfort, glamour, pleasure

Q2: How would you describe a luxury hotel?		
Hotel A:	██████████████	
	P1:	Must have high standards of quality and employees always try to exceed guests' expectations. It is an exclusive and not everyone can afford it.
	P2:	A hotel with excellence all around, specially rooms and f&b service.
	P3:	Exceptional service in a unique setting for discerning clients.
	P4:	A hotel with a series of selected and well differentiated services of another that does not have 5 -or more- stars.

	P5:	It has a unique proposal with excellent service and facilities.
	P6:	5 star service with personalized attention, offering the extra-mile and anticipating what customers expect.
	P7:	Hotels with exclusive service.
	P8:	Hotels with character, facilities and service of high level and distinction.
	P9:	A place where customers should feel special.
	P10:	A hotel that provides luxurious accommodation experience to a guest.
	P11:	That hotel that cover my needs above my expectations.
	P12:	A place that makes people feel different, unique and special. A place with high quality and service standards.
	P13:	It is a hotel where you can find the best services with high quality, with a human treatment and usually with a great customer experience.
	P14:	A place where you feel like home with the best services available.
	P15:	A hotel with excellent and exclusive services and personalized treatment.
Hotel B:	▮▮▮▮▮▮	
	P16:	An establishment where I feel at home because of the premises and the human touch.
	P17:	A hotel with a great hospitality and services.
	P18:	An oasis of perfect services.
	P19:	A place where you can enjoy all the services to have an unforgettable stay.
	P20:	Luxury is the personalization of service you can give and that emotional connection with the guest.
	P21:	A client oriented hotel, full of services and that never has "no" as an answer.

		P22:	Not only a place that has luxurious elements but also a personalized service that offers what the guest is really looking for, even if they did not think they where looking for it, surprising them and achieving more than they expected.
		P23:	A hotel with excellent atmosphere.
		P24:	A place with the best service where you can have the most experience and a flagship building.
		P25:	A luxury hotel has basics in place and the best service. Staff is guest-focused and anticipate their needs - wow guests.
		P26:	A luxury hotel is that one that provides you with something different than just another hotel, it has to stand out and create an unforgettable experience. It has to have high quality all around.
		P27:	A place that combines everything a client needs within a building, being services and products delivered expected to be of high quality and excellence
		P28:	The place where I can have the best experience and that makes me feel VIP at all level and all the time.
		P29:	A luxury hotel has high level of service and the best quality everywhere.
		P30:	A hotel that exceeds in expectations and quality of service.

Q3: Could you rate the following elements by the importance you give to them at a luxury hotel? (Being 1 no importance and 5 indispensable). *(Total of answers)*

Hotel A: ████████████	**Hotel B:** ██████

Hotel Characteristics

Location:

Modern architecture:

Contemporary interior design:
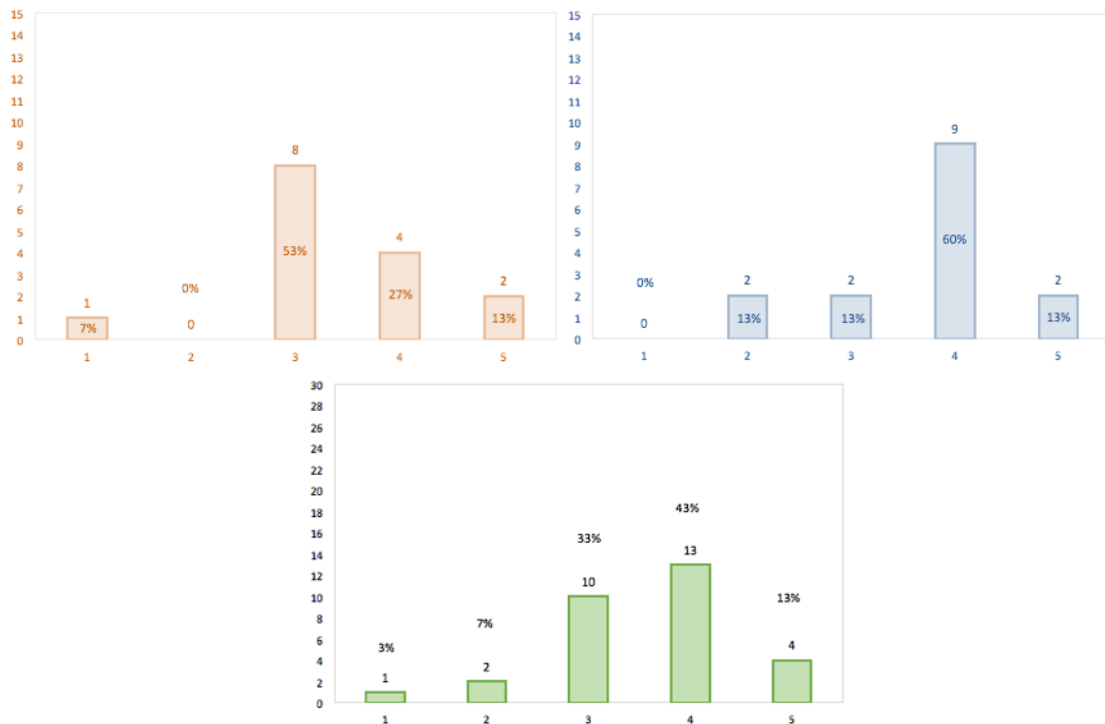
Hotel dimensions:

Lounge in lobby:
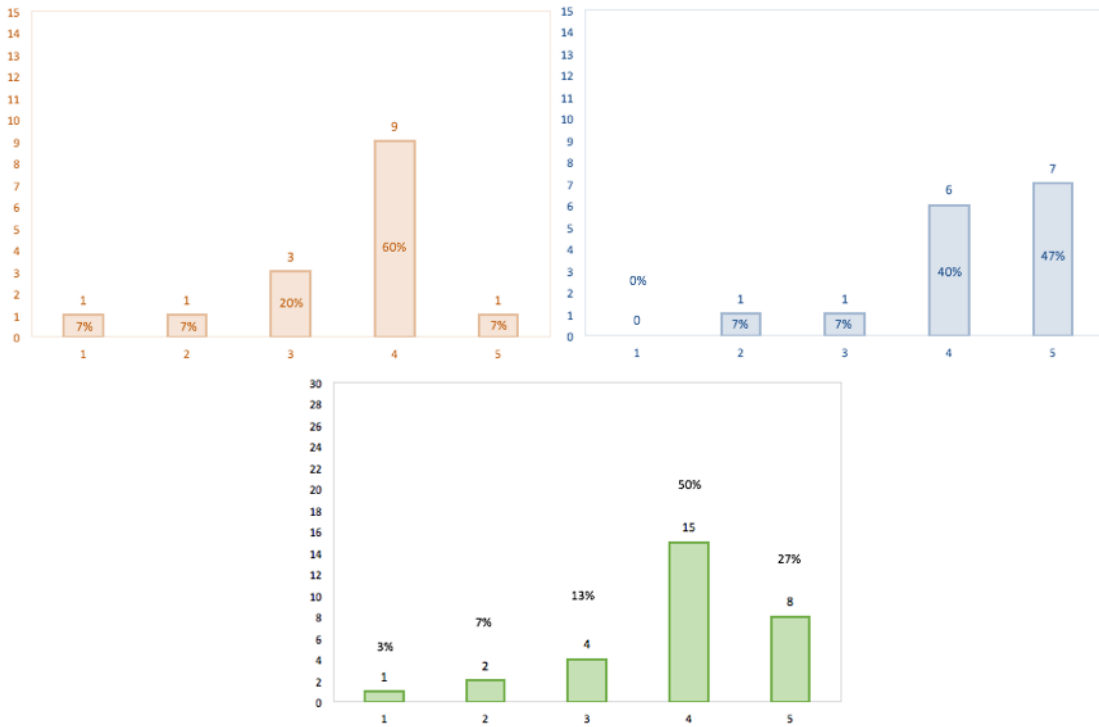
Public Areas

More than one elevator:
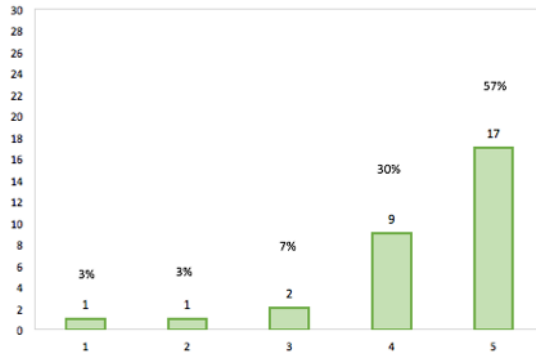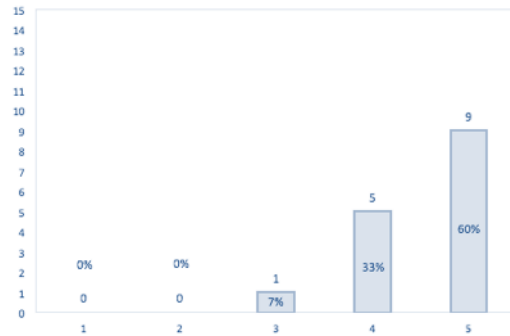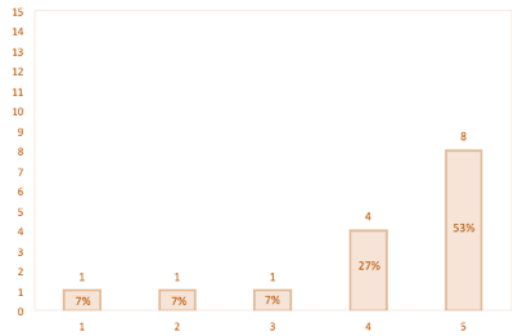
Fitness centre:
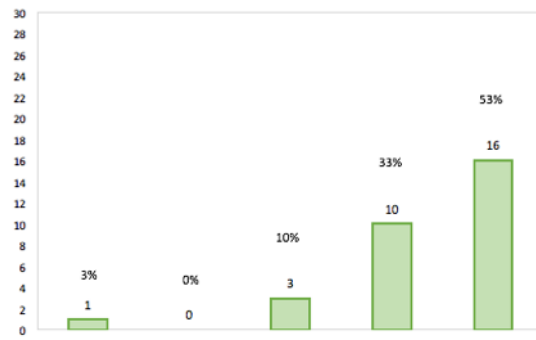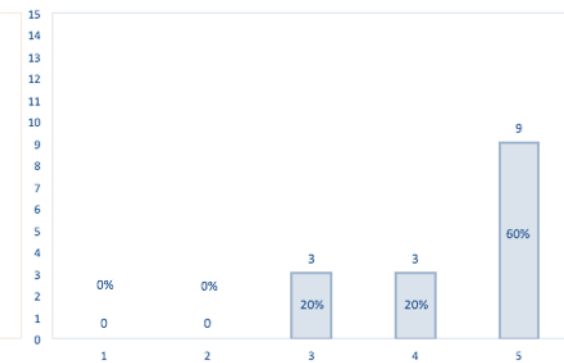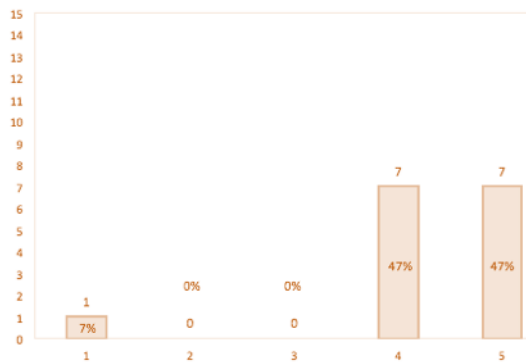
Spa:
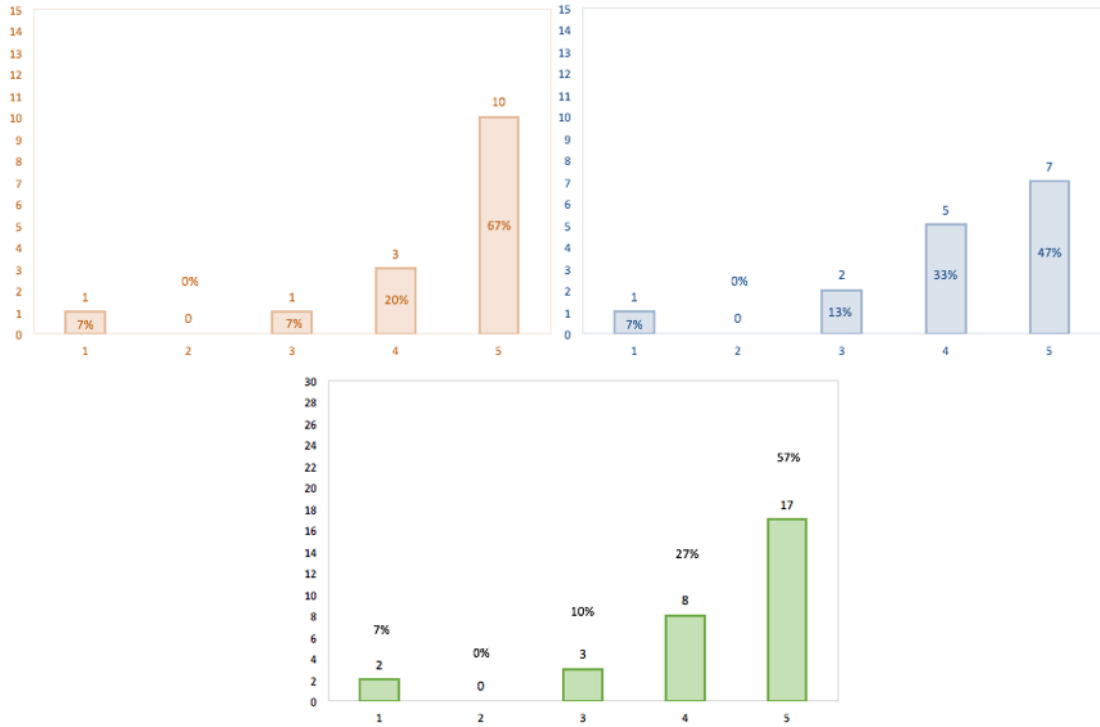
Indoor pool:
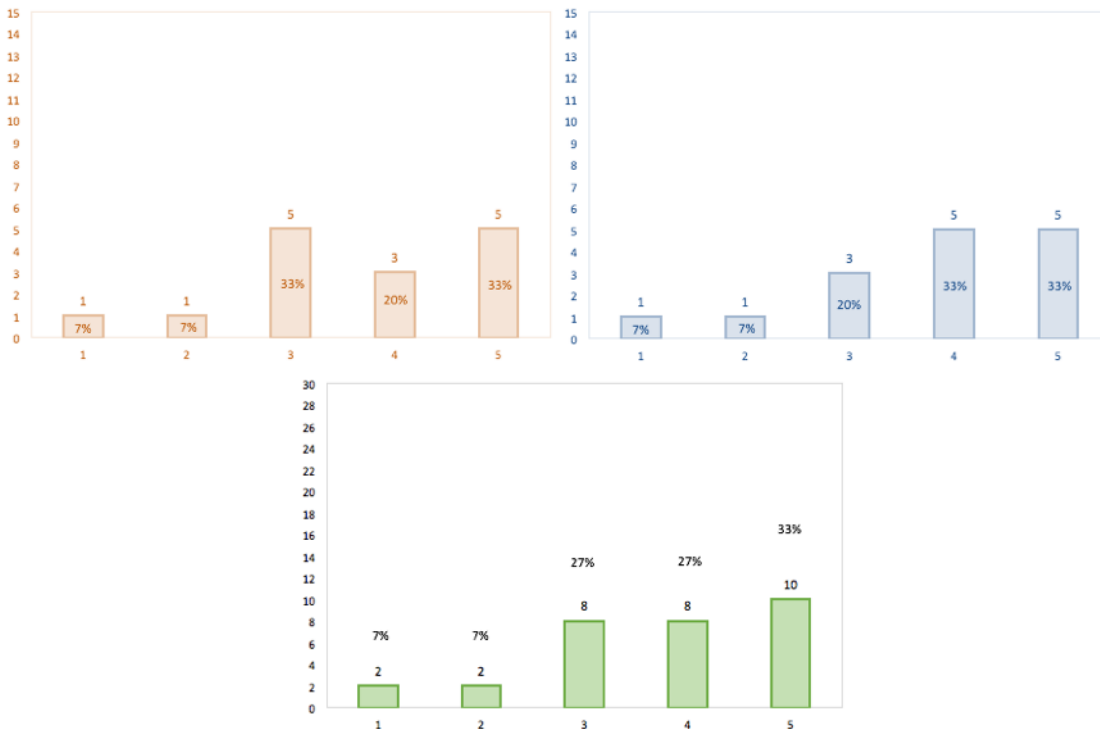
Outdoor pool:

Retail shop:

Business Centre:

Services

Front desk overstaffed:
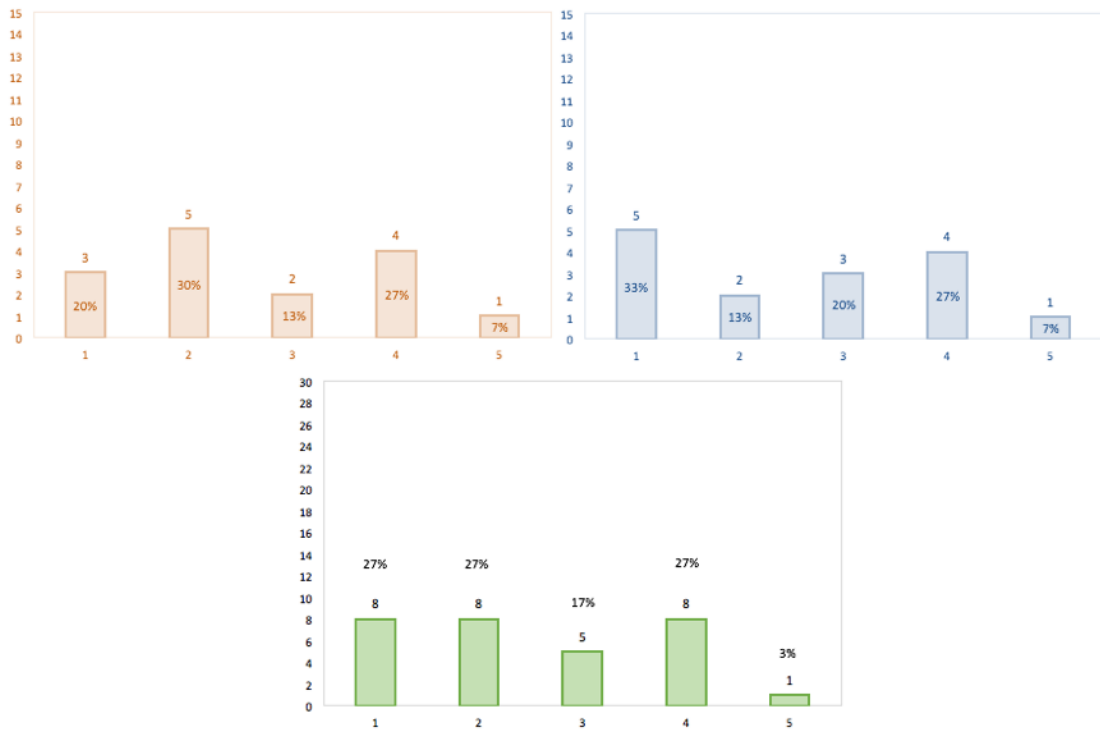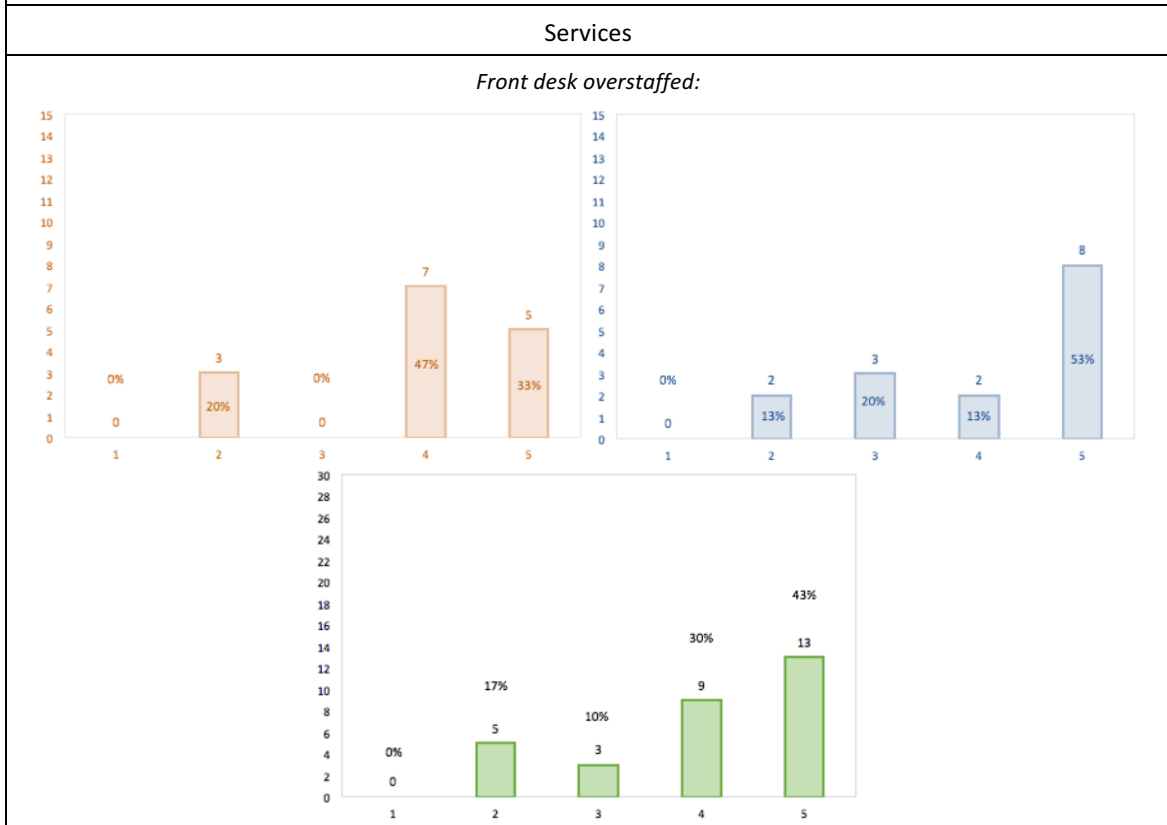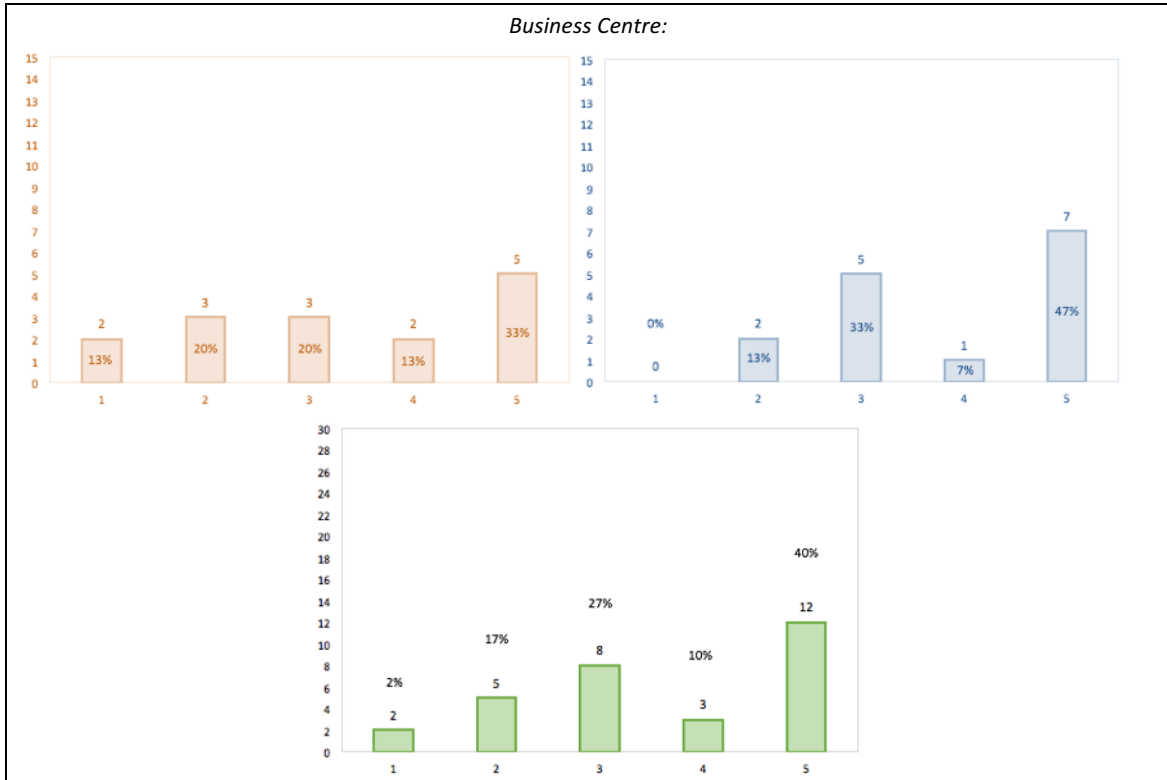
Staff performance:
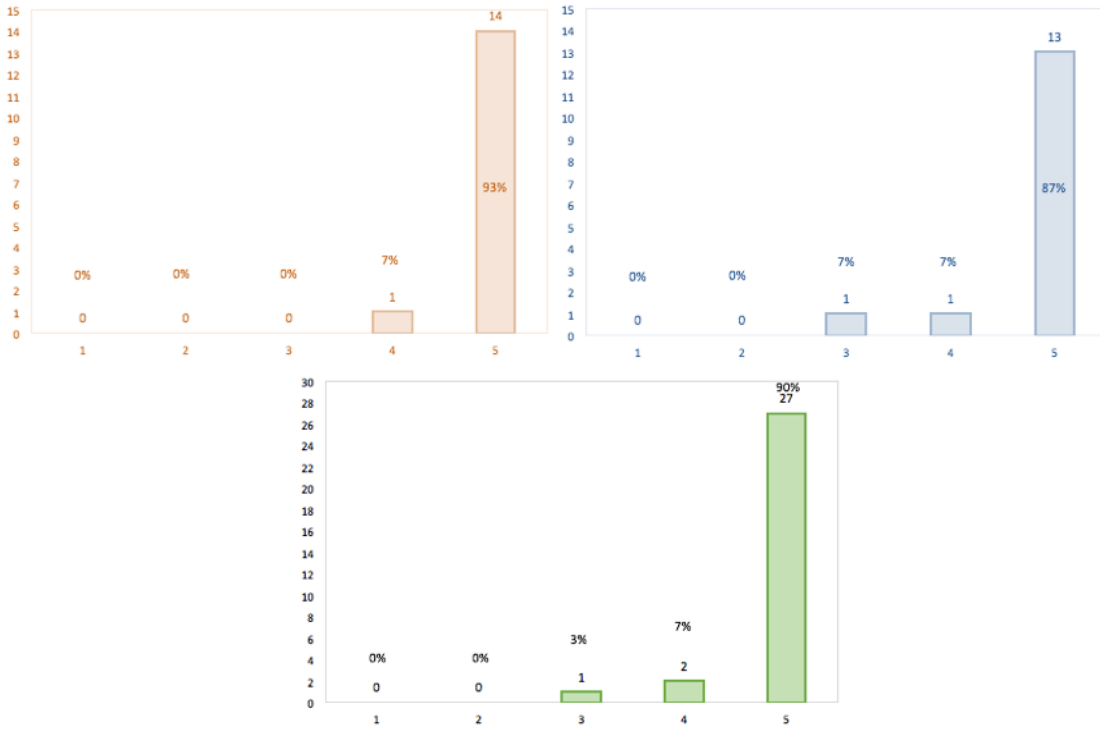
Multilingual staff:
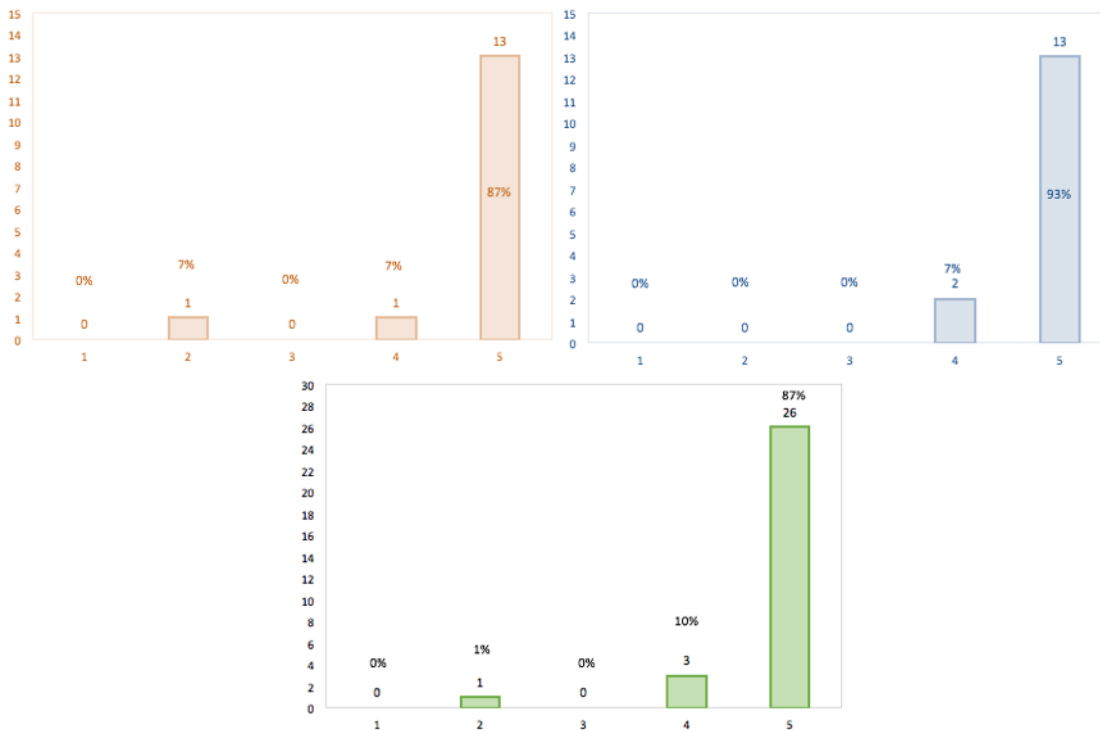
Guest recognition:
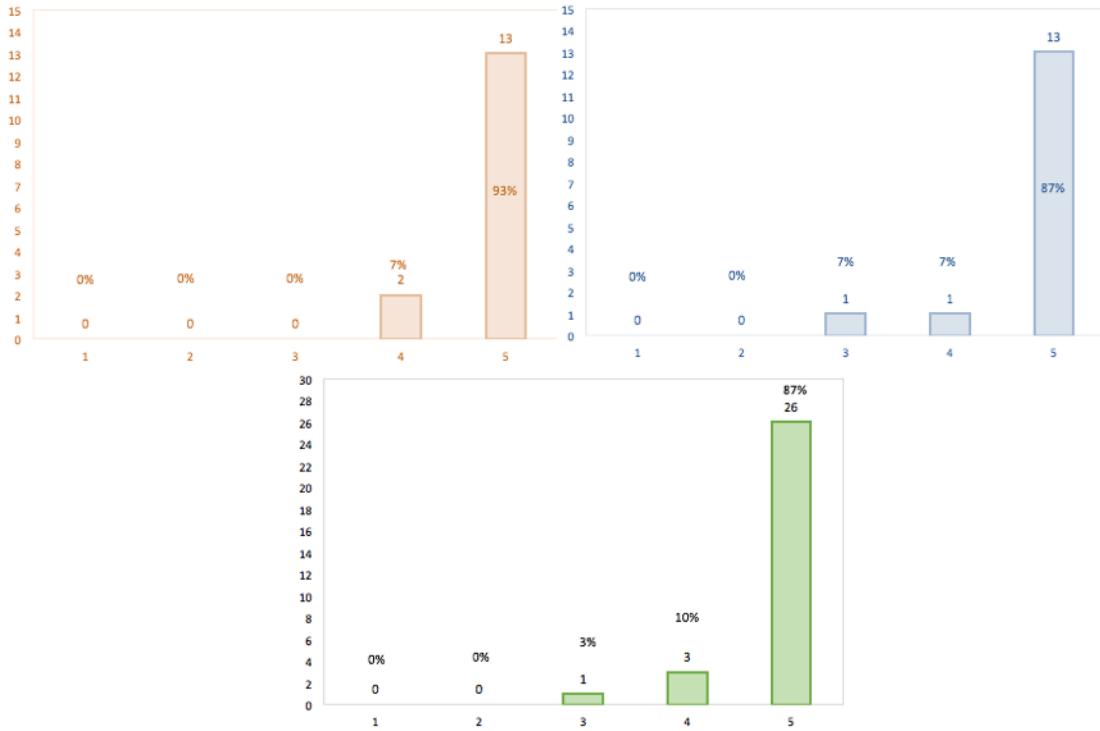
Concierge:
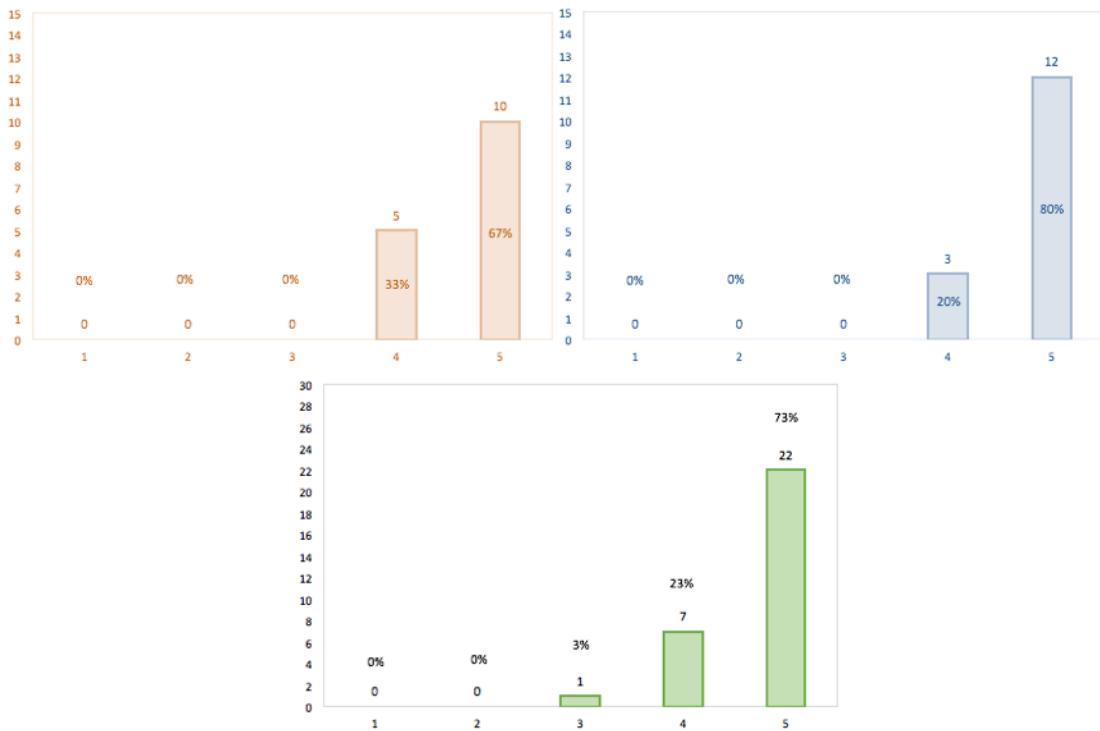
Luggage service (bell boy):
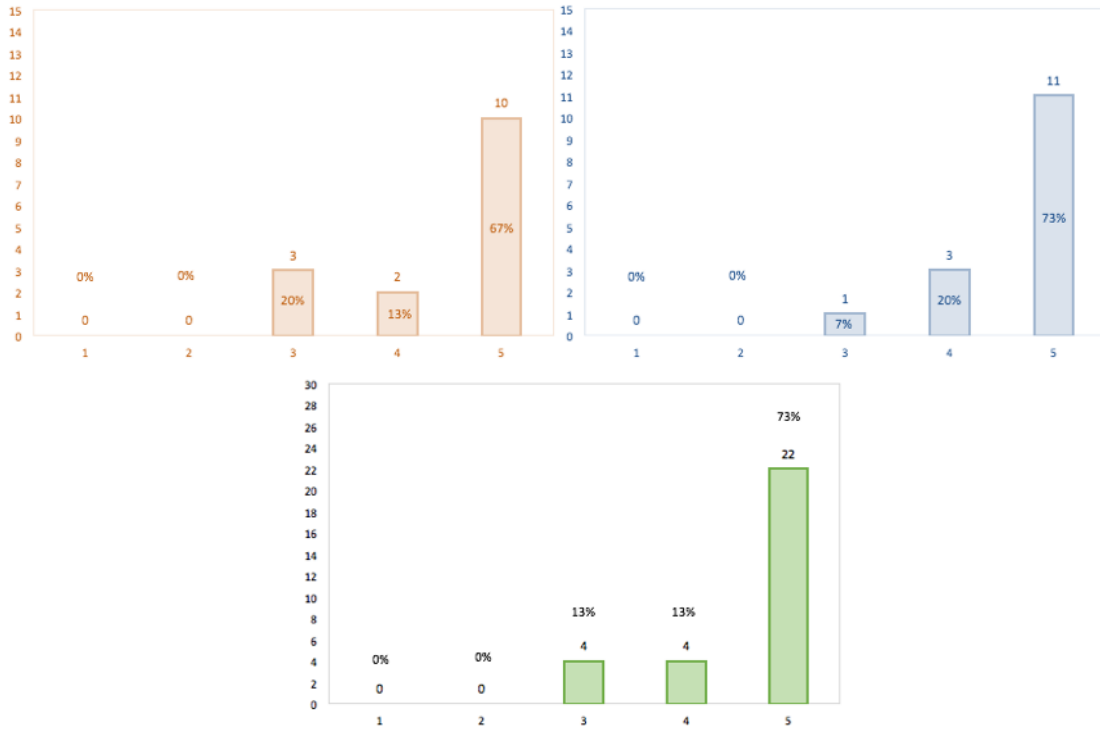
Luggage room:
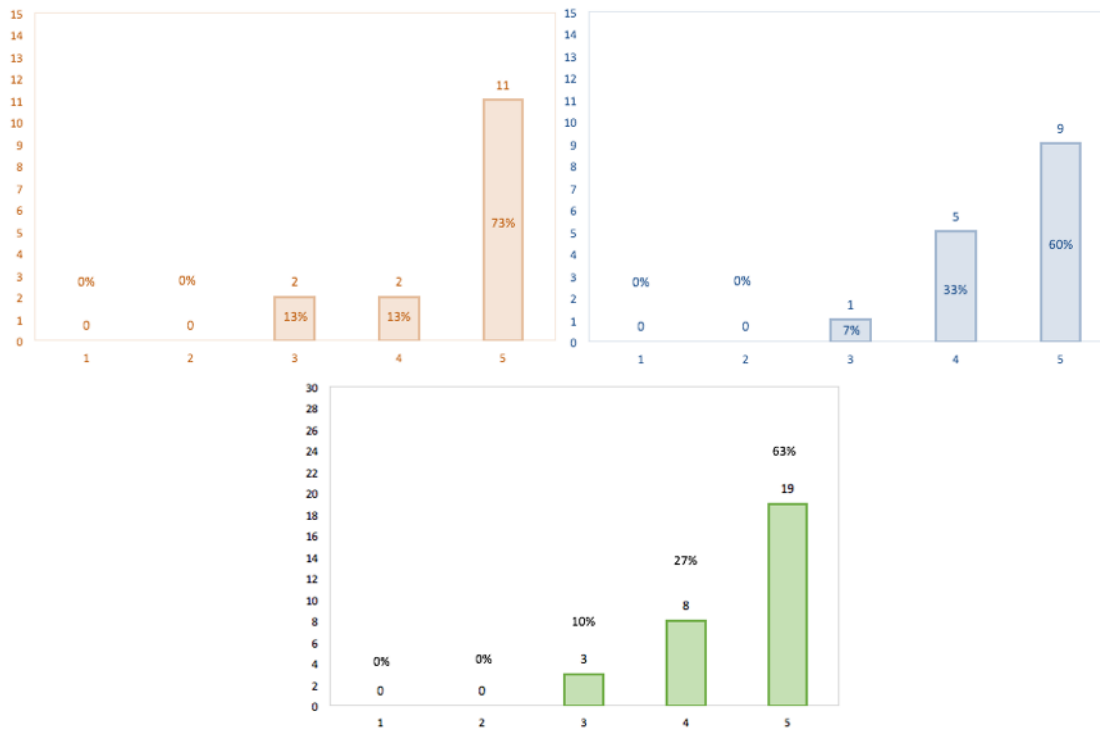
Parking:
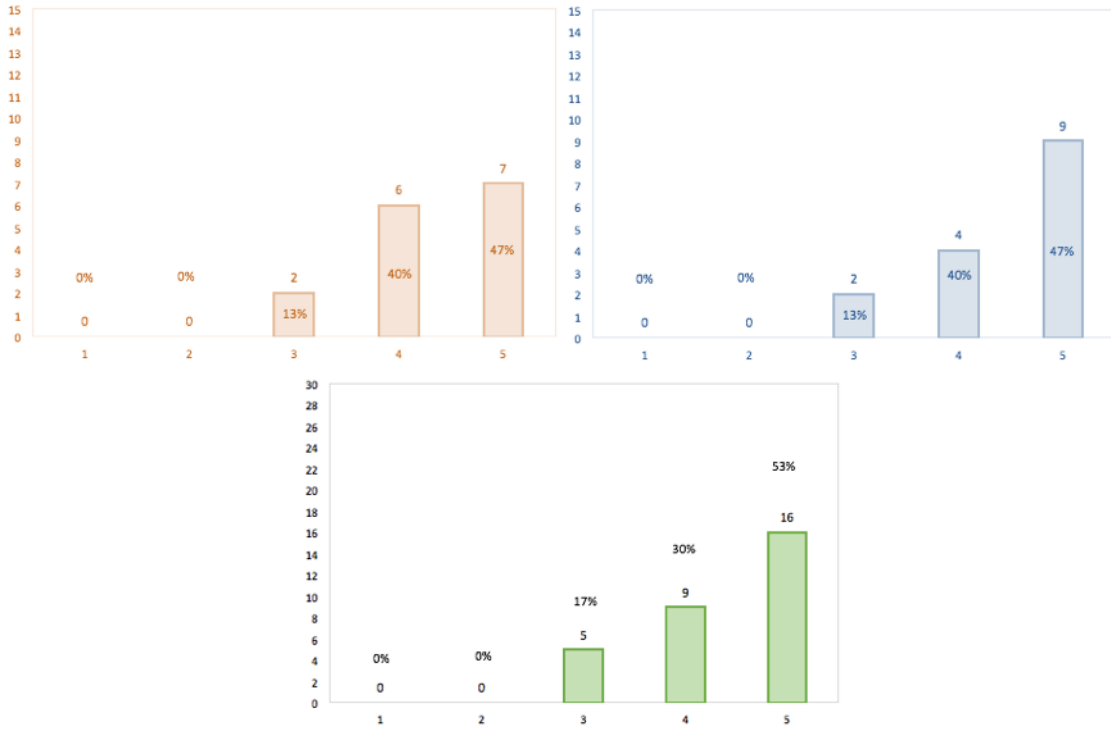
Valet parking:
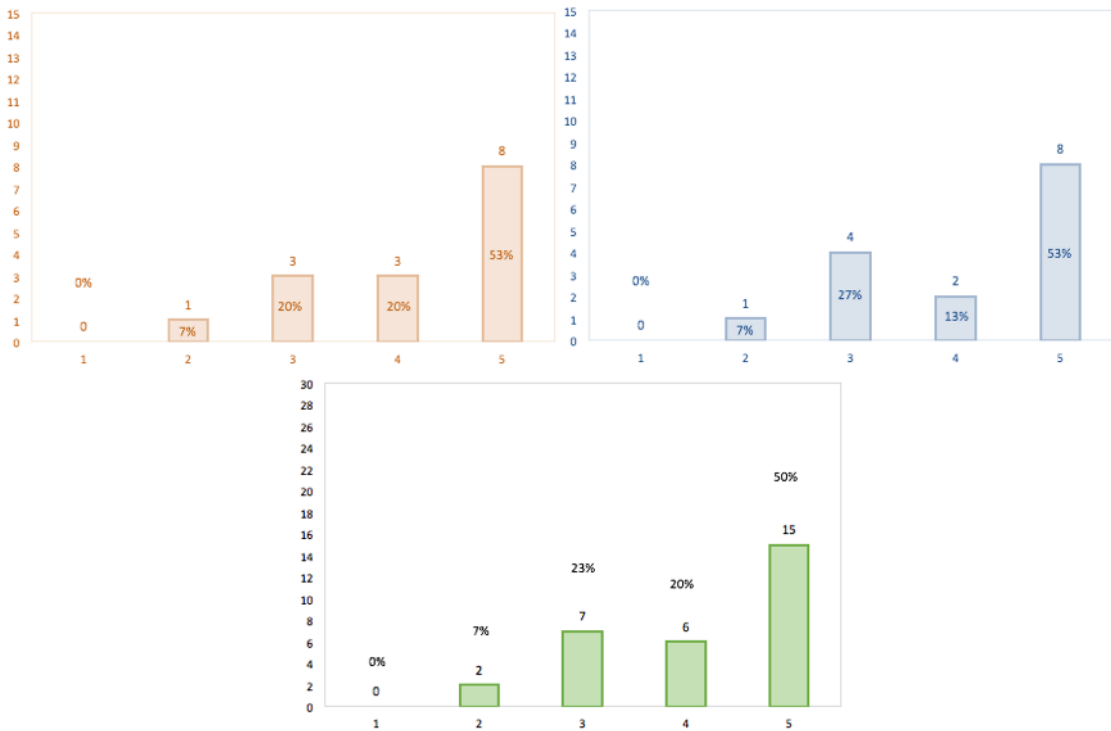
Complimentary internet:
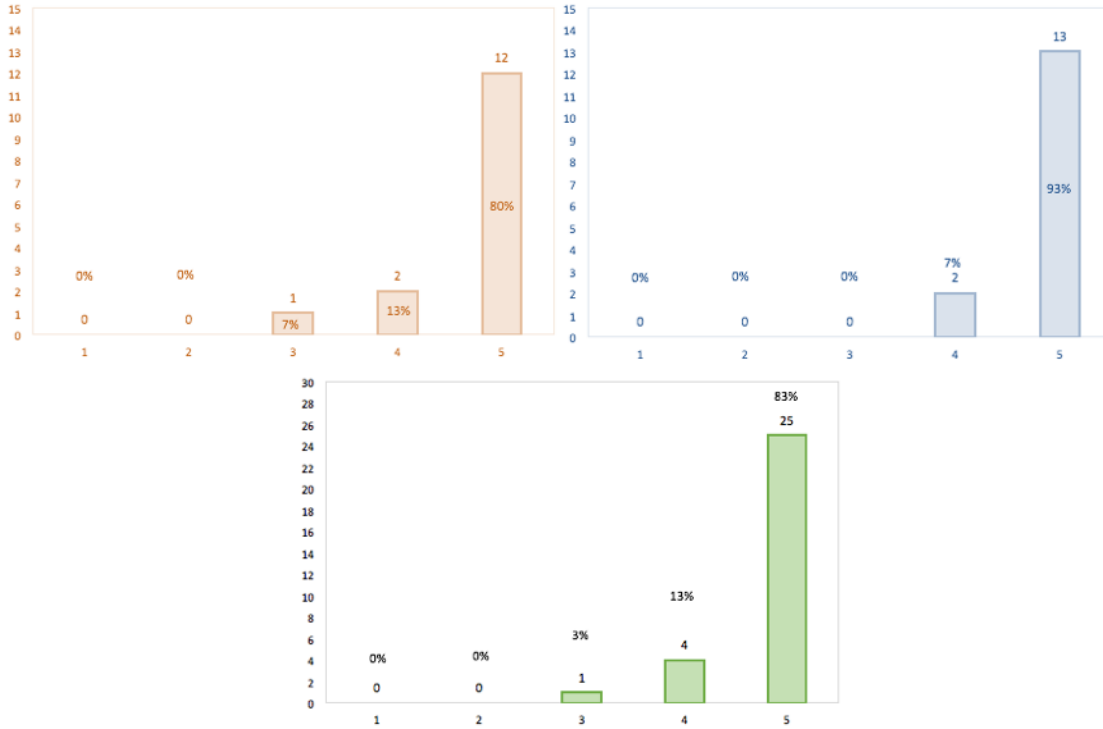
Wake up call:
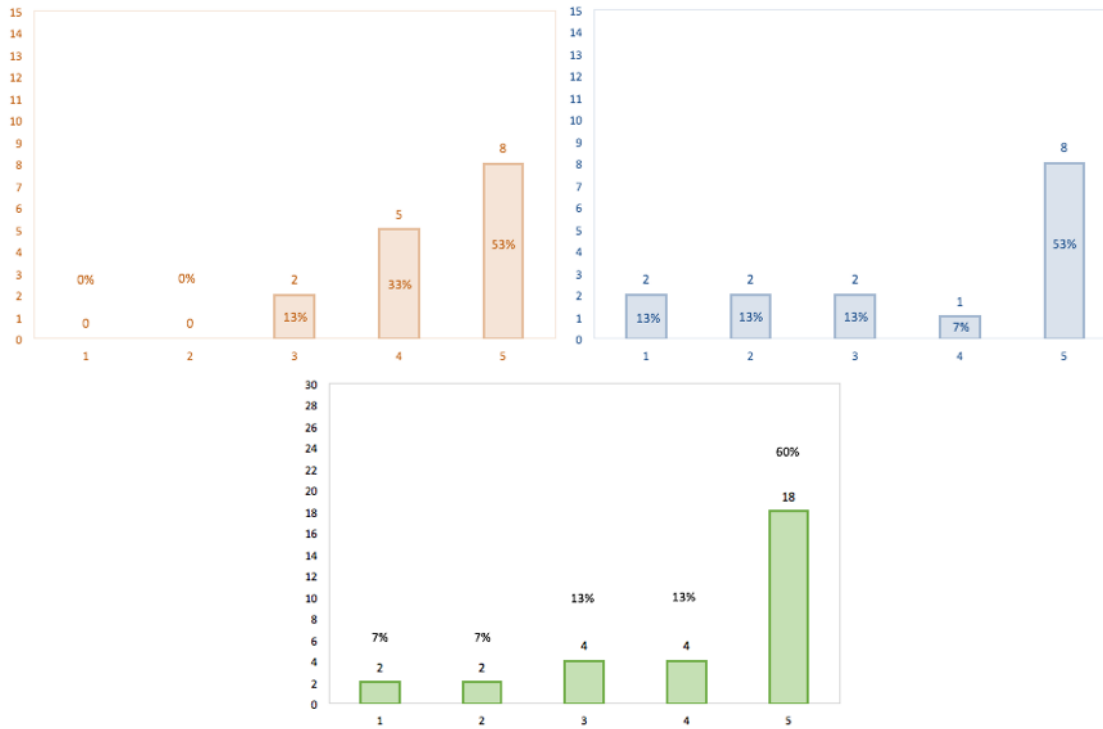
Meeting rooms:
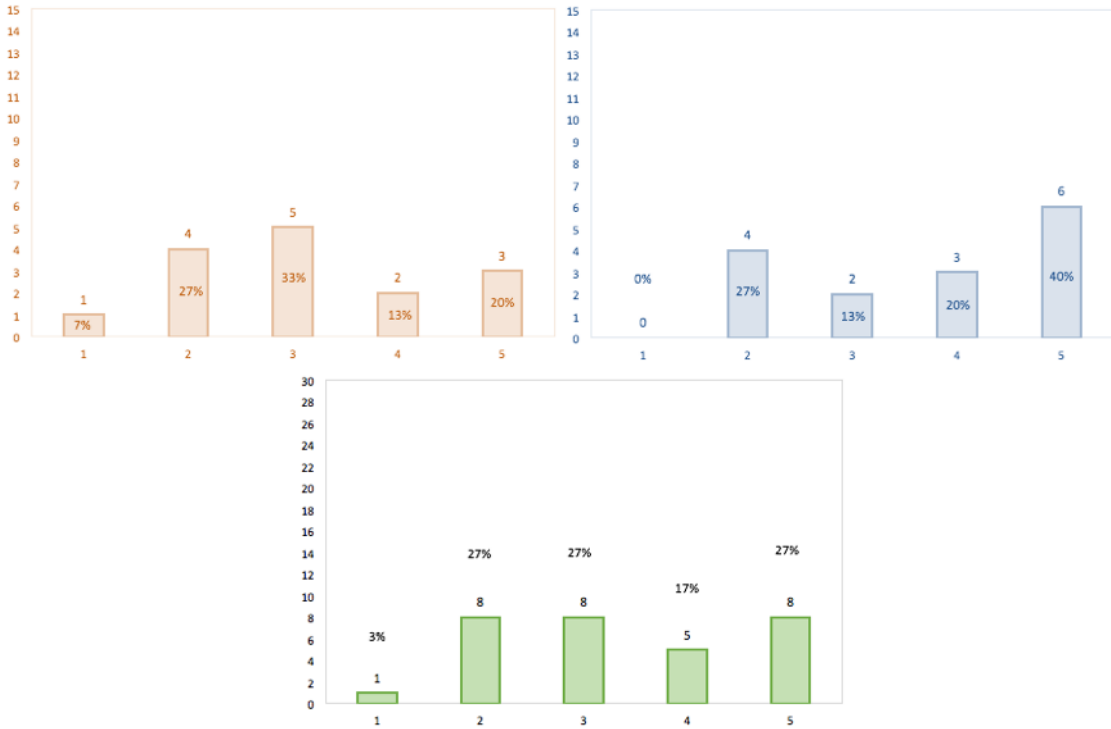
Transfer:
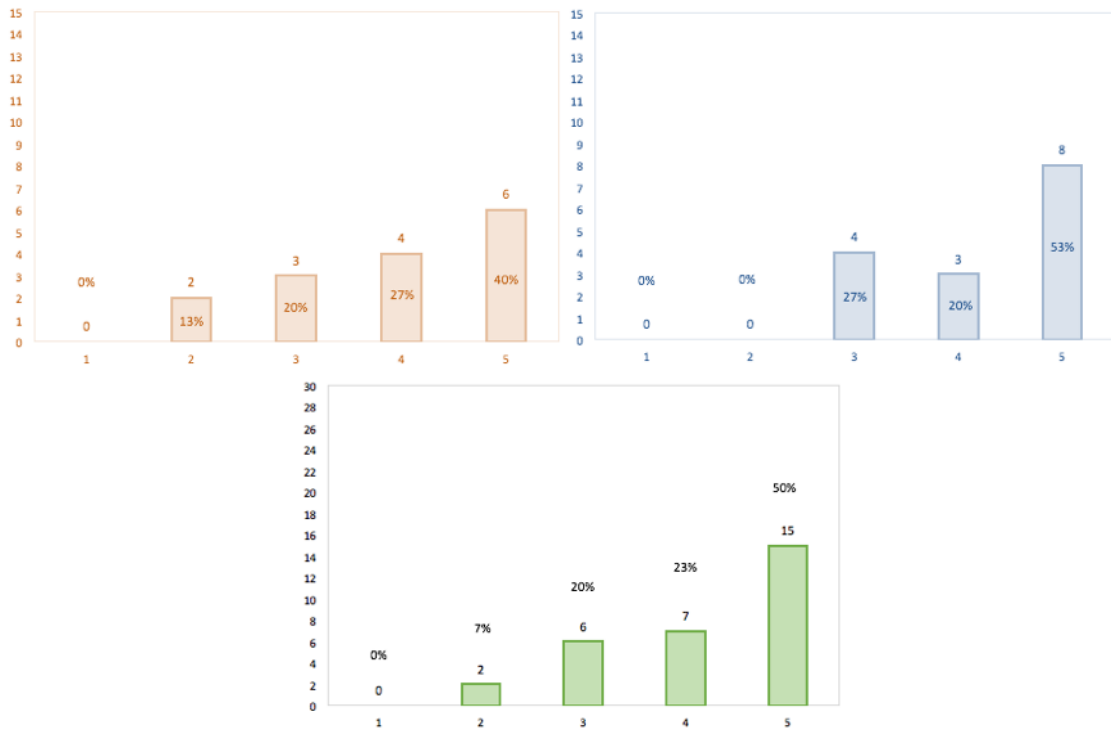
Food and beverage

Breakfast offer:

Room service 24h:
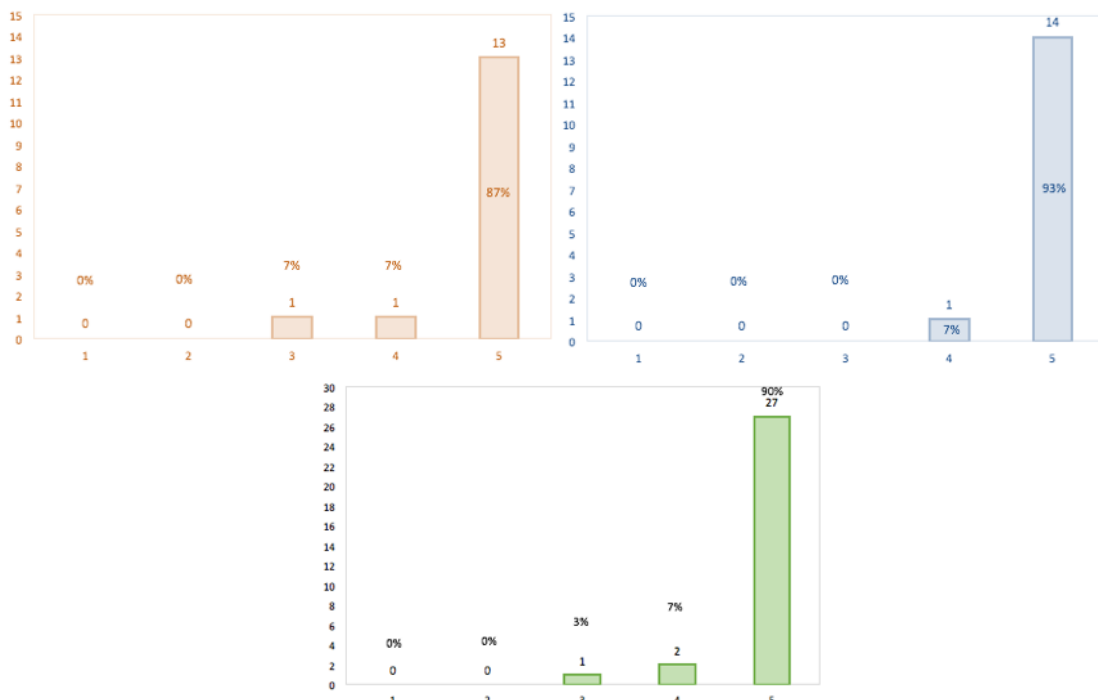
Many dining options:
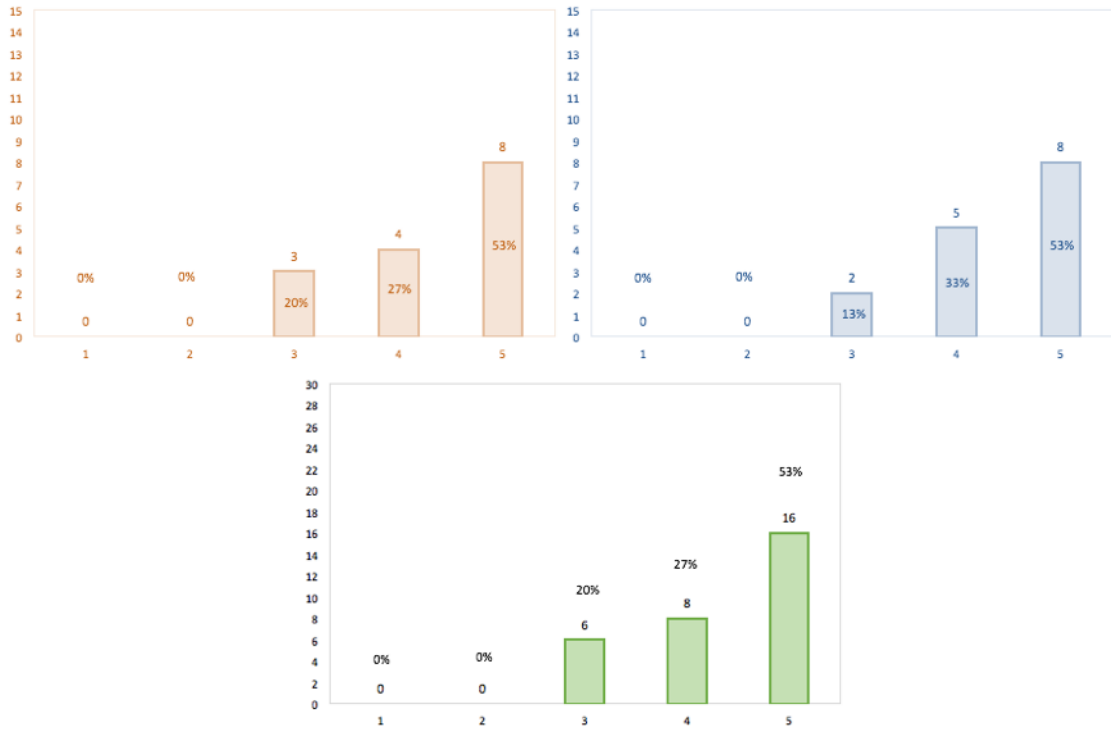
Michelin star restaurants:
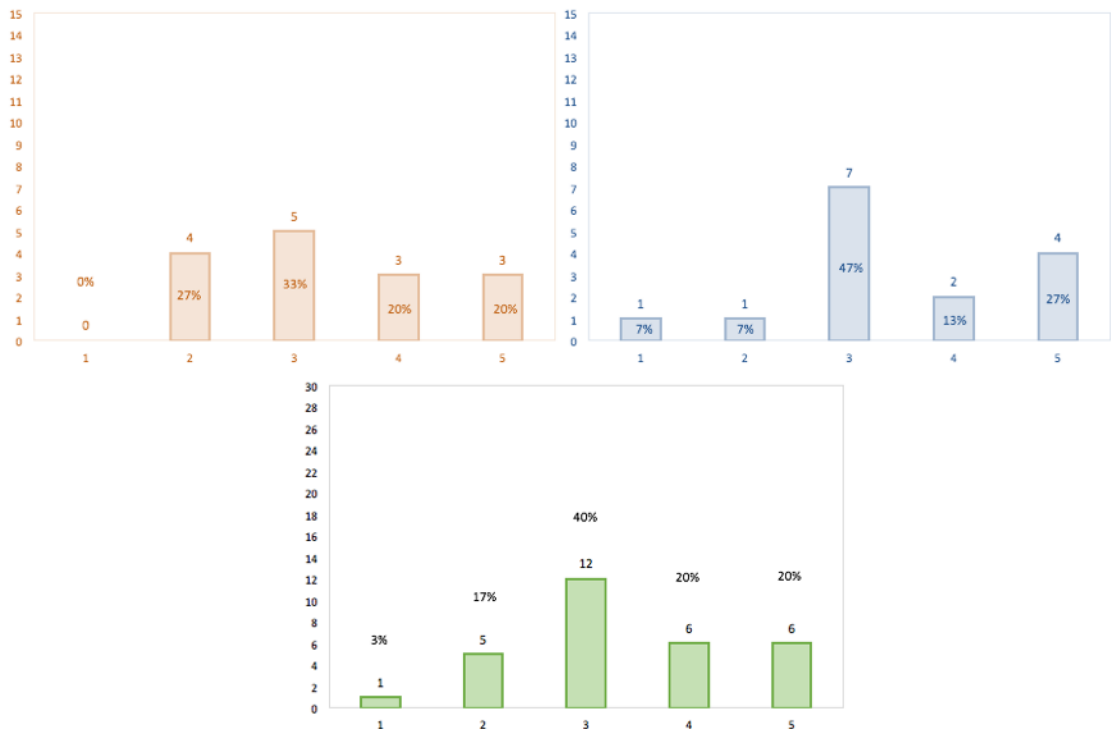
Bar:
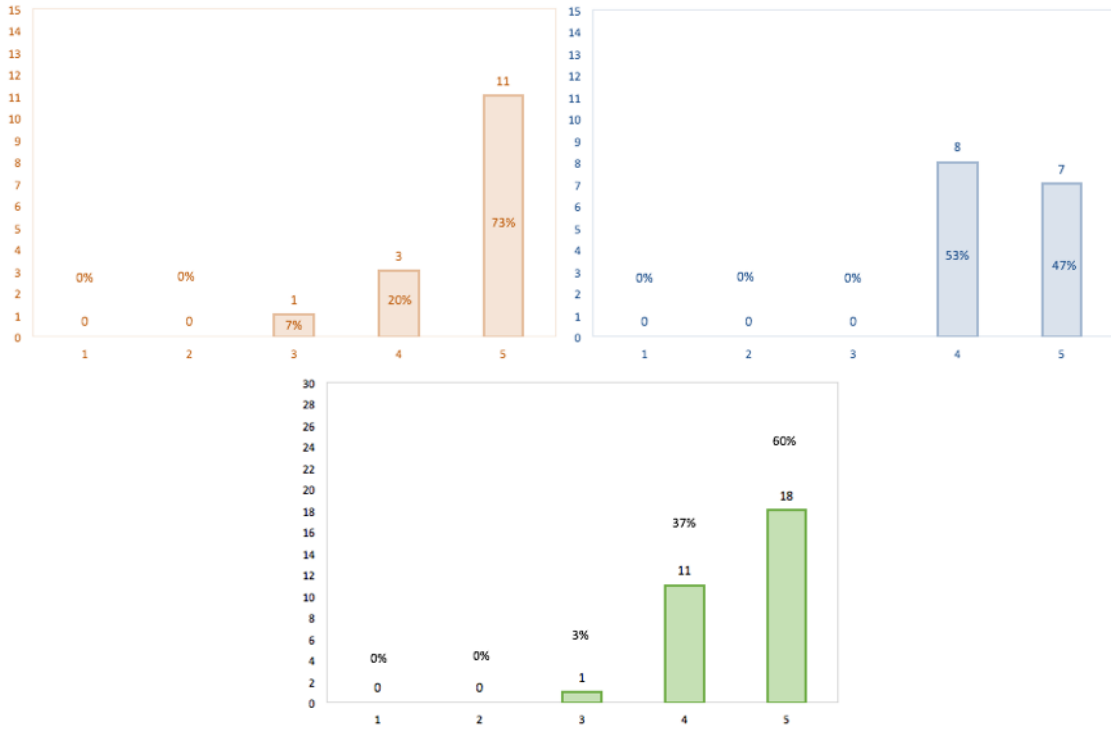
Rooftop bar terrace:
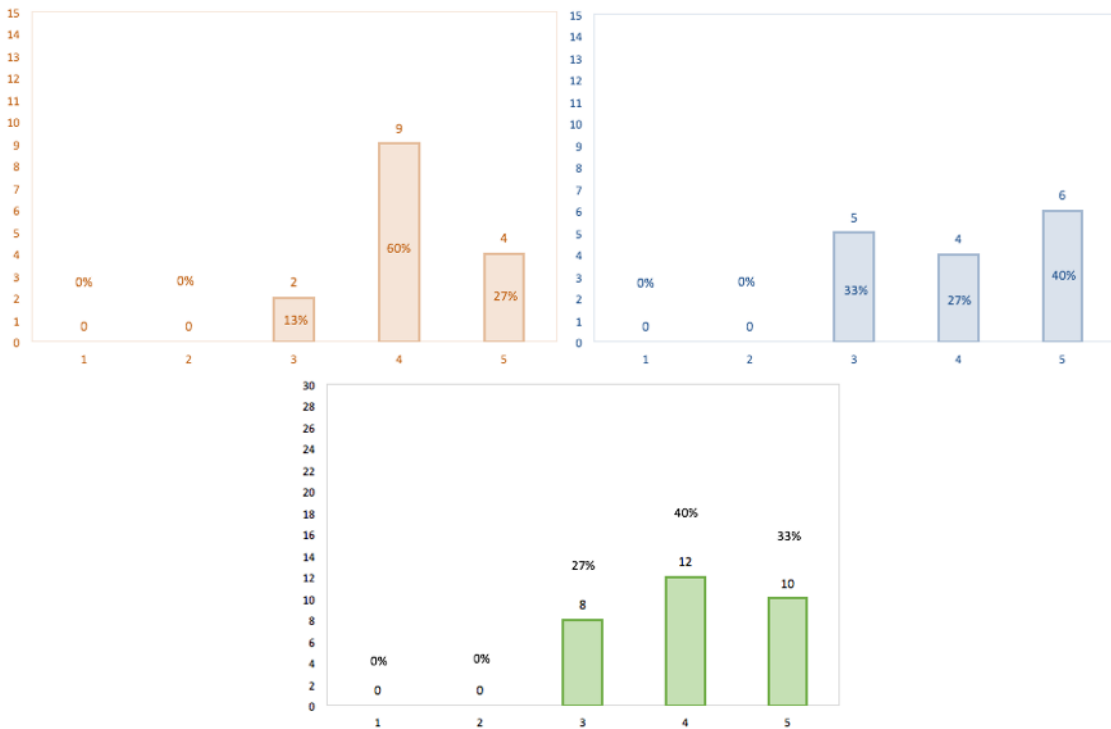
Guest Rooms

Bed comfort:
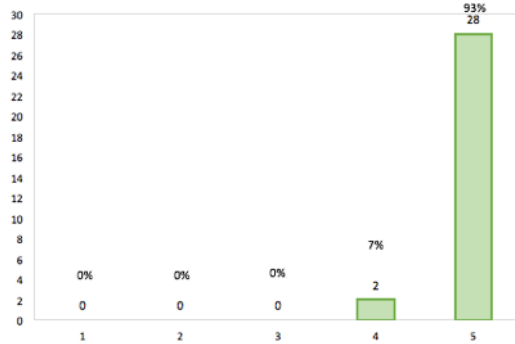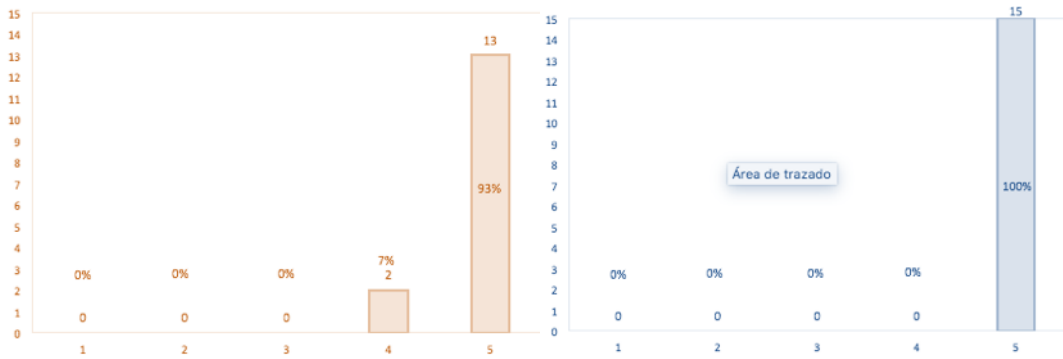
More than one pillow per person:
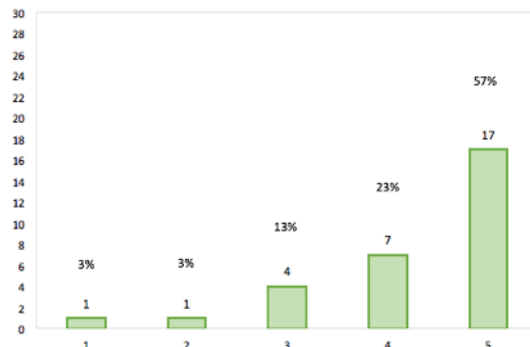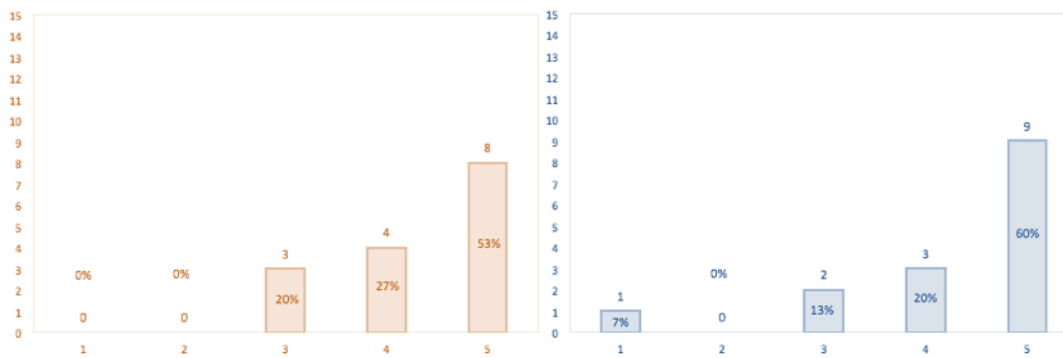
Bath tub:
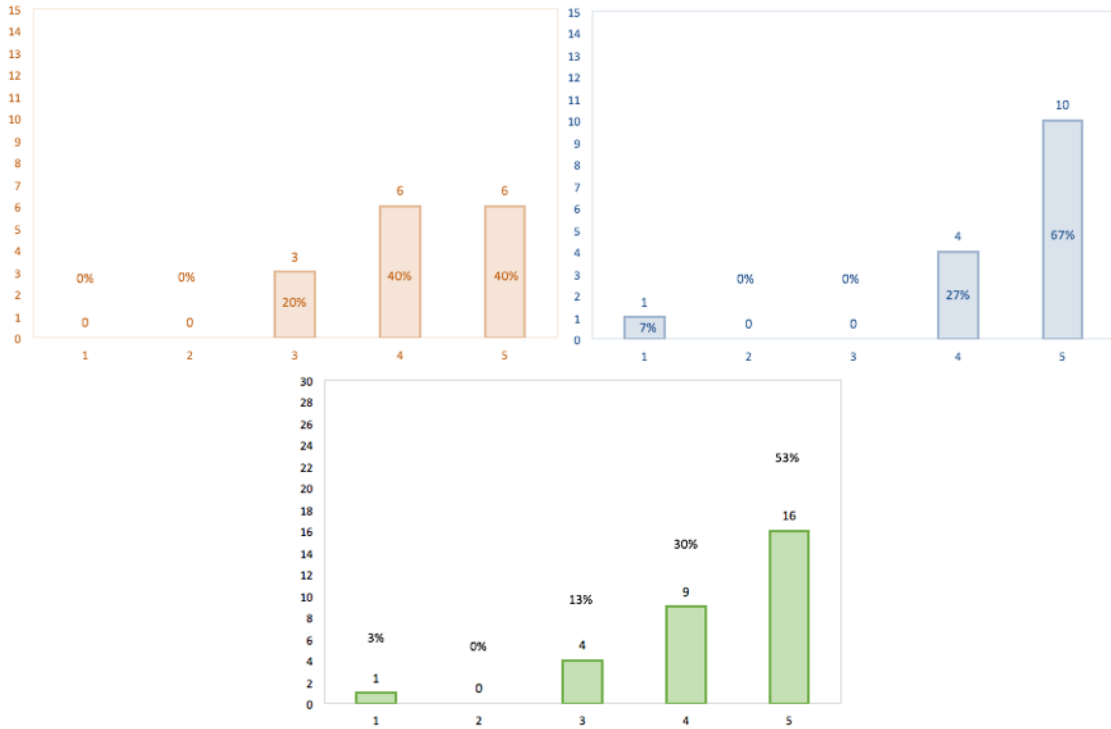
More than one set of towels per person:

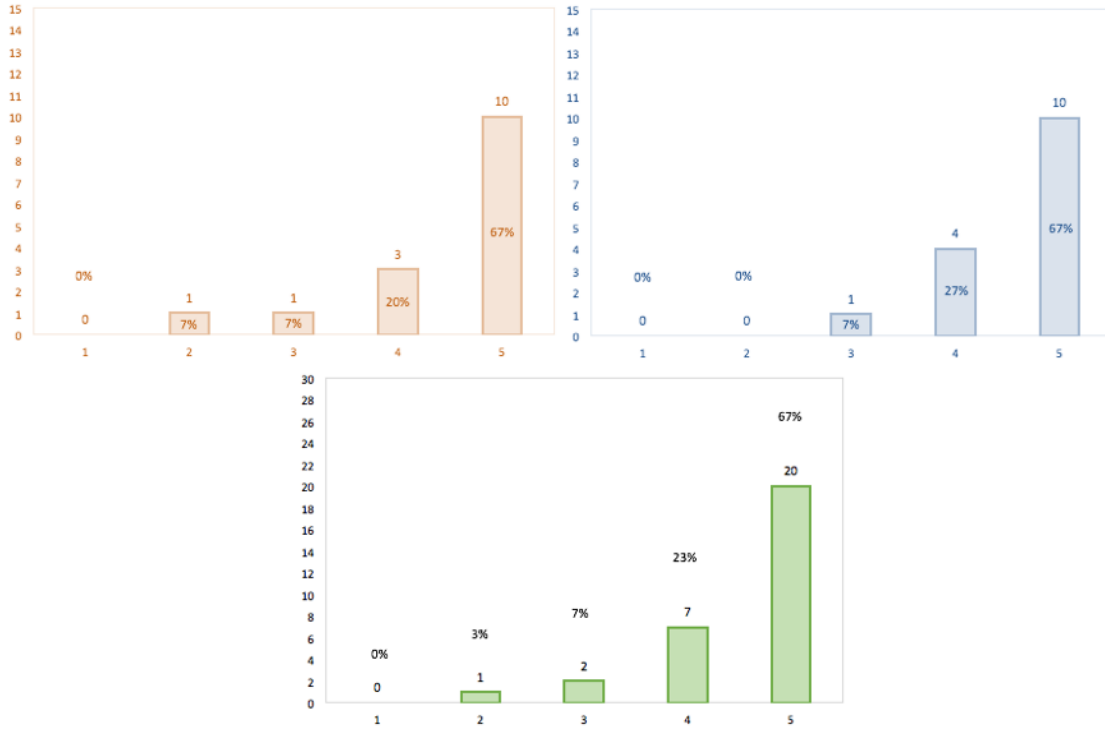### Bath and toiletry amenities:
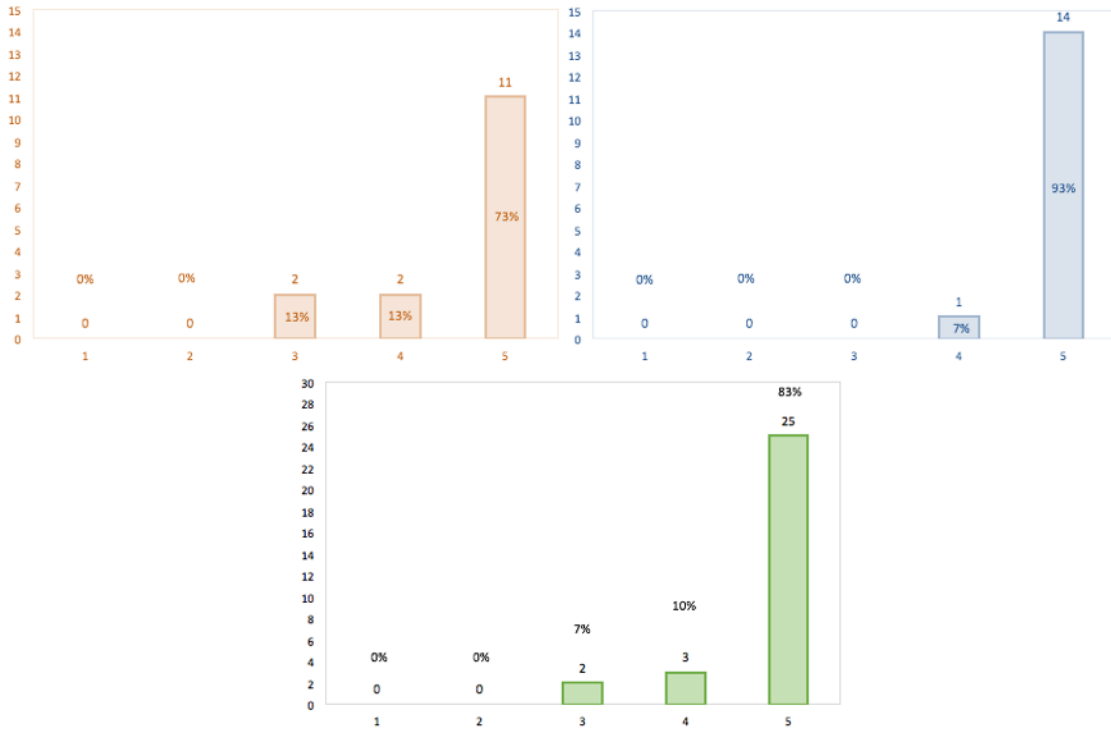
Hairdryer:
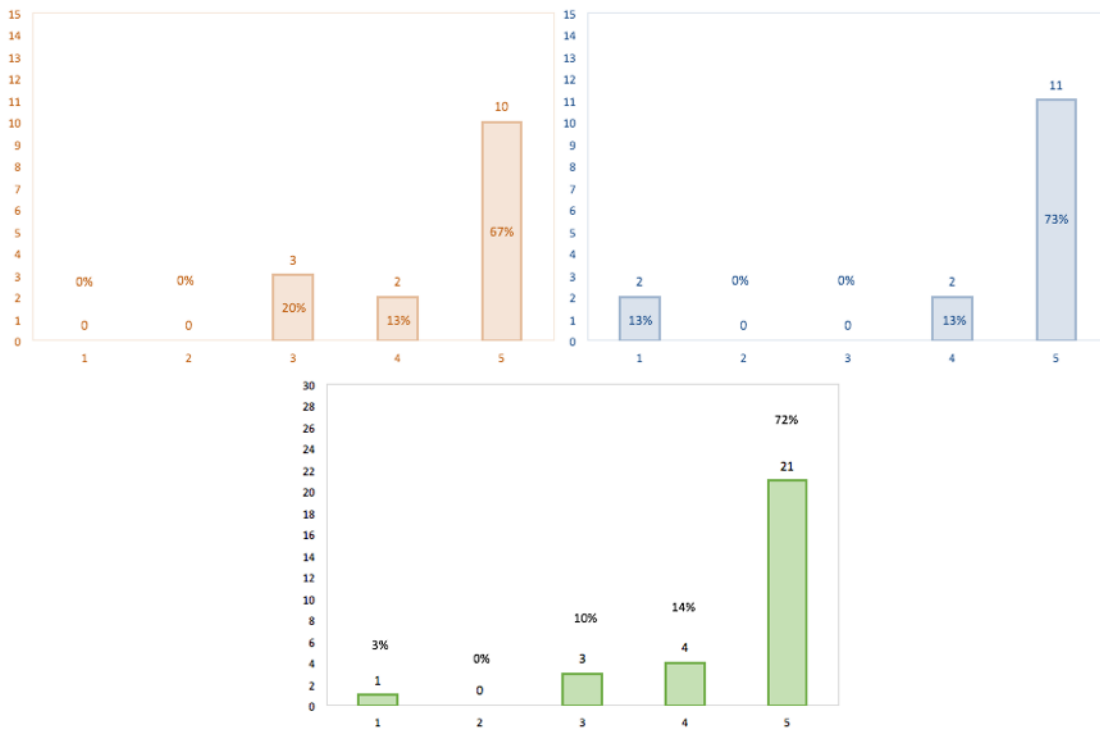
Bathrobe:
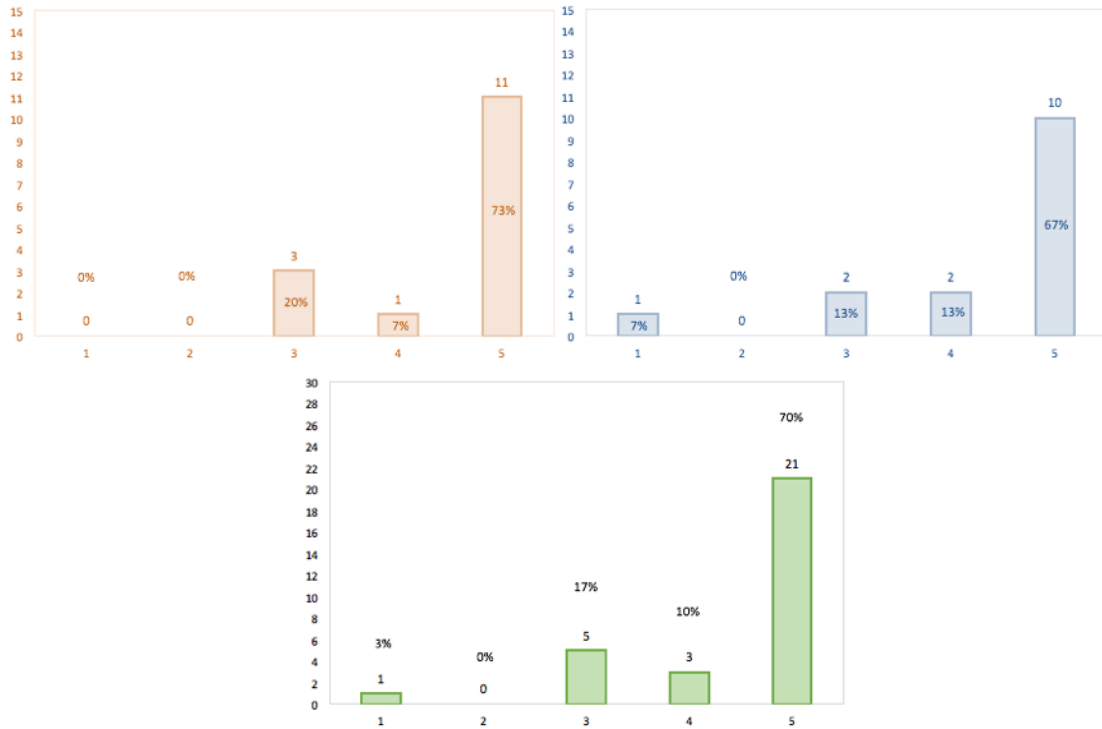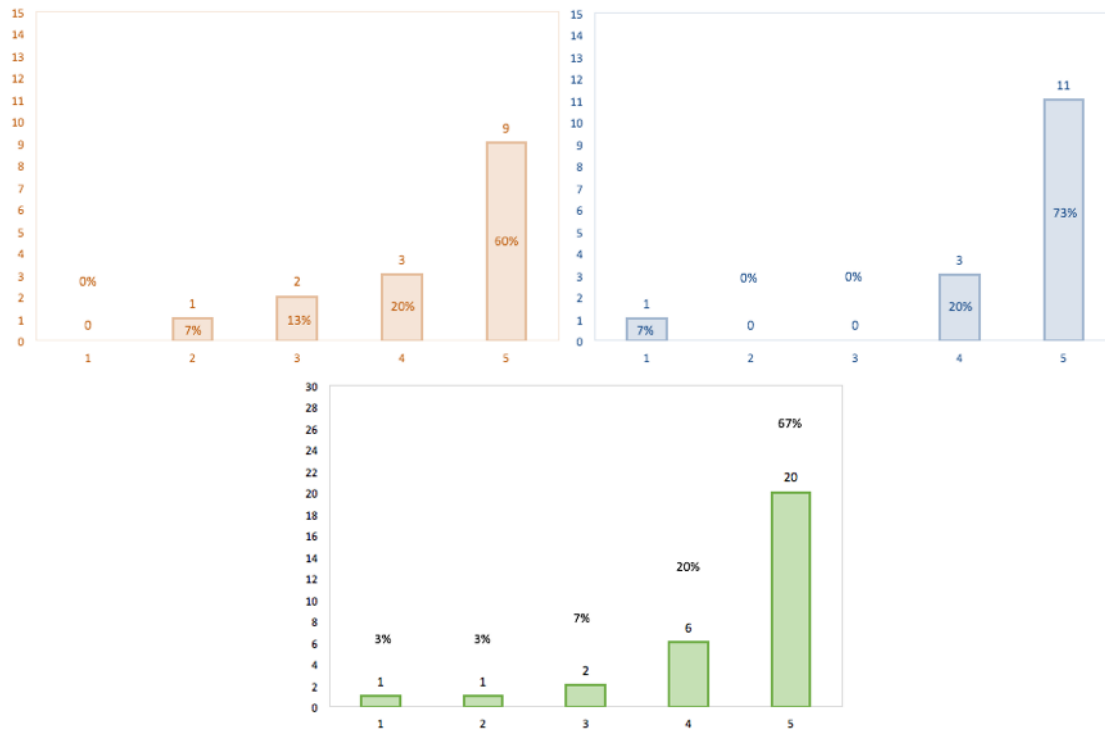

Slippers:
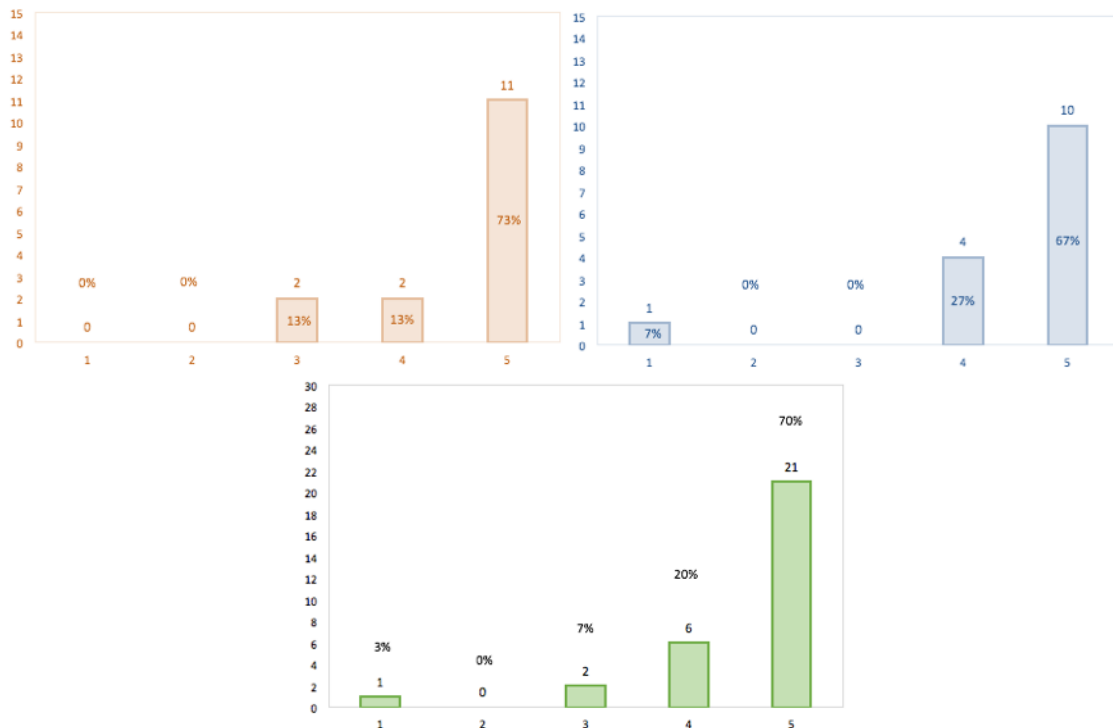
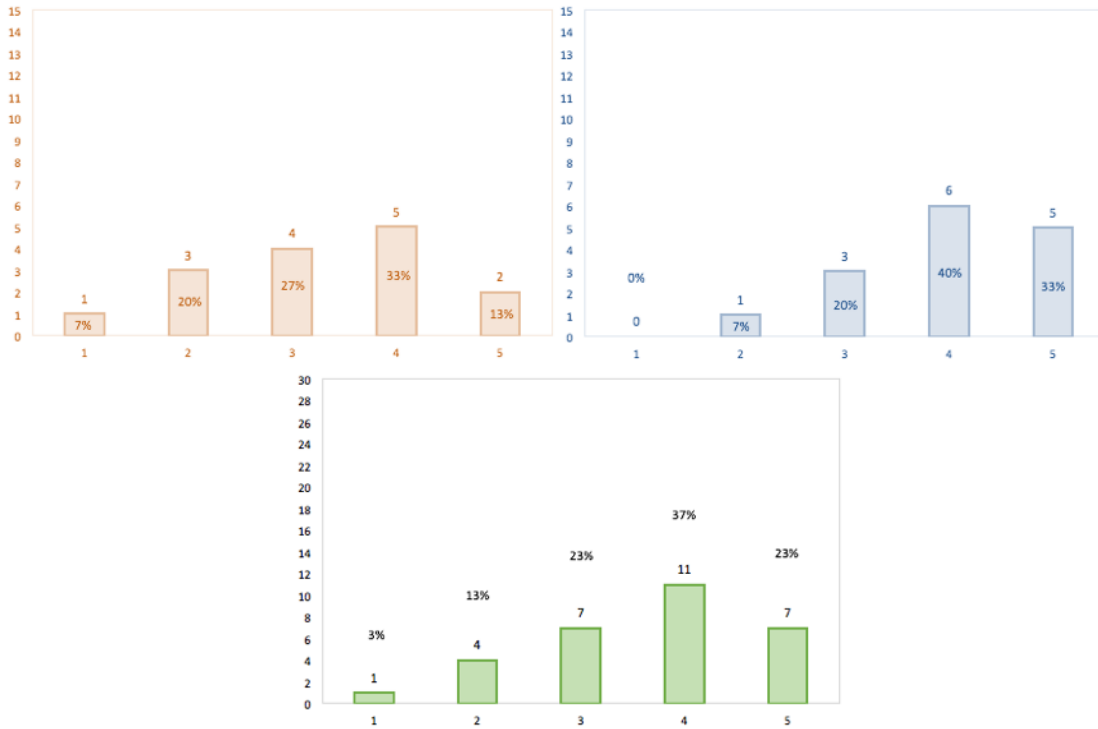*Desk:*
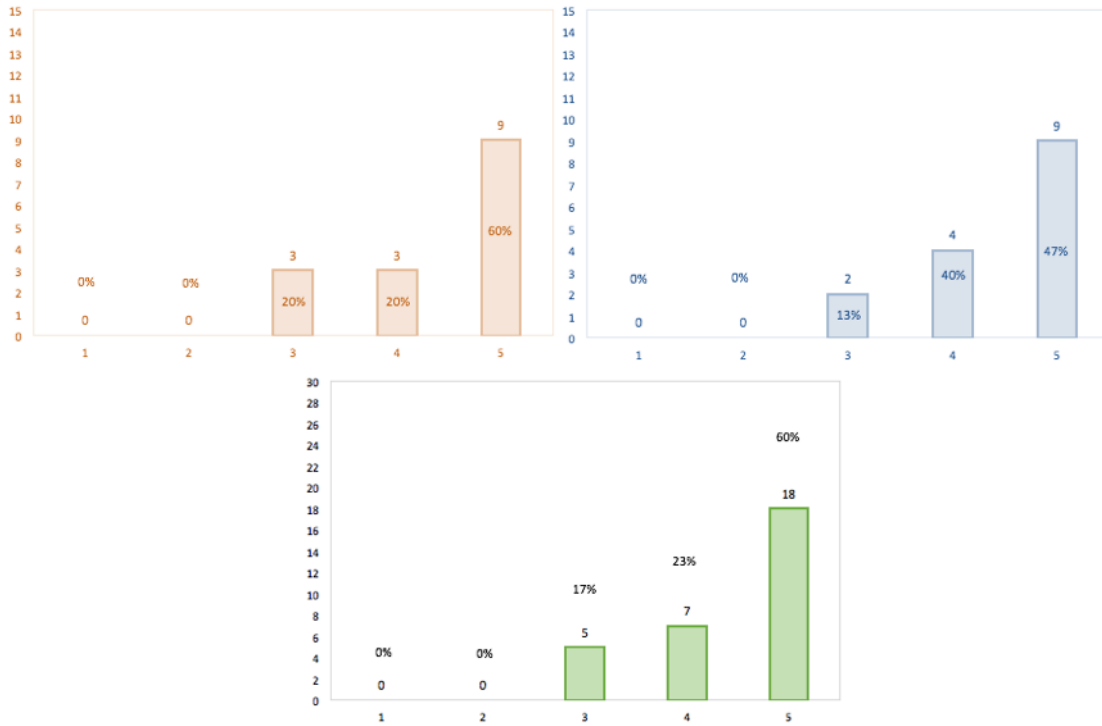
Big wardrobe:
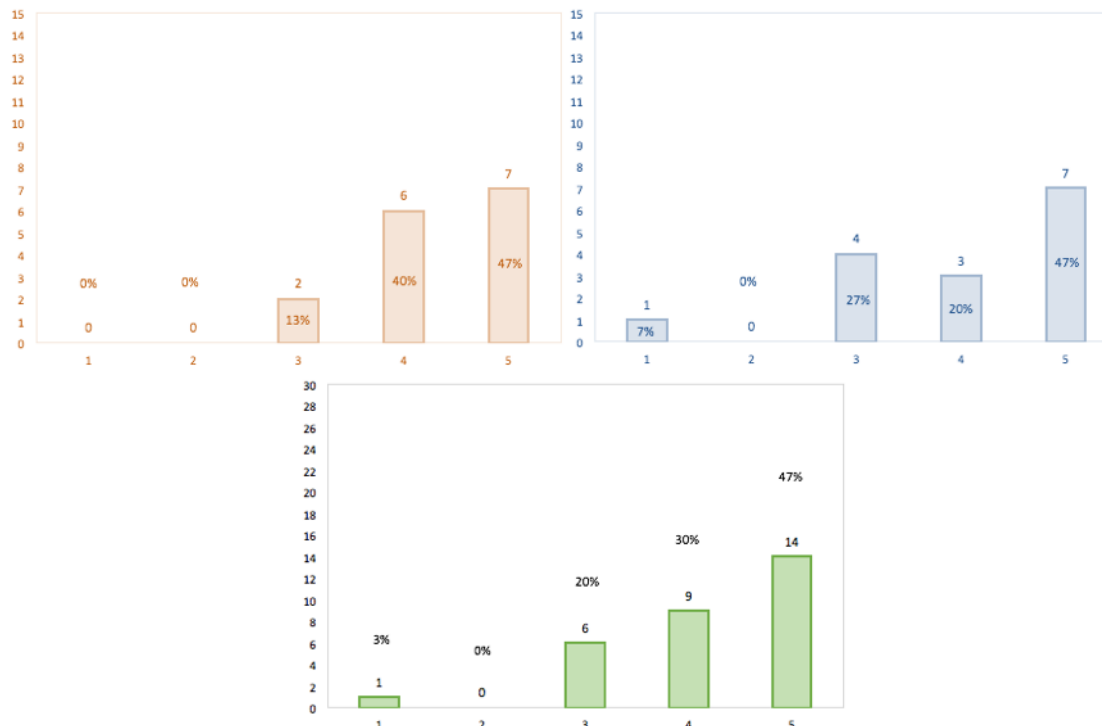
Full length mirror:

Smart TV:

iPad as a room remote control:

Telephone with external line:

Radio:

Minibar:

Safe:

Blinds:

Adjustable AC: