

MASTER TOURISM

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Body modification and Employability in the Hotel Sector:
The Case Study of tattooed workers in mid-scale hotels,
cross Cultural research: France versus Spain

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“You never get a second chance to make a first impression.”

– **Will Rogers**

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

It is 2024, you are watching TV news with a debate on “*Tattoo: old-fashioned or trendy?*”. Presenters tackle why people get tattooed, whether or not they are against it, and their opinions. One of the journalists, Pierre Rondeau, with a very clear opinion, had speech about it, seen as radical. Indeed he stated: “*It's a distinctive sign of "beaufitude", it's very hard but I totally accept it, for me tattoos are a redhibitory thing. It's radical. If someone has a tattoo, I'm going to be prejudiced against them. I notice that these people have half as many higher education qualifications, they vote for Marine Le Pen and they earn less than 1,500 euros a month. That being the case, I think he's a "beauf". I say loud and clear that I despise people with tattoos*”.

Knowing that often it is said that the news is a reflection of society, it makes us believe that, indeed, tattoos are still not accepted and still stigmatised.

As a tattooed individual who is prominently visible, I have consistently struggled with significant concern regarding how people perceive me and if it will influence my future career. Each time I contemplate getting a new tattoo, my relatives inevitably put warnings about the potential difficulty in finding employment. This apprehension is particularly pertinent for me, given my aspirations to work in the hospitality industry. Upon receiving my first job offer within the industry and being successfully hired, I received a contract that explicitly stated, “We aim for clients to focus on you and not on your tattoos.” While visible tattoos were acceptable as long as they weren't offensive or hateful and not located on the face or neck (my ears had tattoos at that time), I found it necessary to reach out to my prospective manager for clarification. He informed me that he did not adhere to these rules. This revelation made me realise that the issue of visible tattoos might create challenges in my future professional experiences in France.

This story regarding my personal life and career prospects led to my idea of working on this subject that seems important in our current society. This was driven by the idea to redress power imbalances and to resist discrimination, marginalisation and oppression against tattooed workers.

The literature on employment discrimination has traditionally been focused on the challenges faced by groups such as racial and ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, or members of the LGBTQIA+ community. However, there is a notable grey area regarding biases that are difficult, if not impossible, to legislate against, such as those related to body weight, attractiveness, or body modifications. This phenomenon has been termed 'lookism' by Warhurst et al (2009).

Discussions with my supervisor led to the idea of conducting a cultural comparison between France and Spain regarding the employability of tattooed workers. The prospect of my internship in Spain fueled this interest. Our preliminary research suggested that Spain was more flexible than France in that customers were comfortable with the presence of tattooed workers, indicating a degree of normalisation in Spanish society, particularly in the hospitality industry.

Despite this apparent normalisation, discussions about tattooed workers and their employability continue in Spain. As a result, I believe that analysing the contrast between France and Spain could provide valuable insights, given the seemingly more positive perception of tattooed workers in Spain. While Spanish companies appear ahead of the curve in terms of inclusivity, their approach to integrating tattooed workers into the workforce is still evolving.

This idea led to two questions:

- To what extent do the perceptions of tattoos by both managers and customers influence recruitment strategy and practices in the hotel sector?
- To what extent does societal culture impact the employability of tattooed workers? Specifically, how do cultural attitudes towards tattoos influence hiring practices, career advancement, and workplace acceptance, and are there discernible differences across Spain and France cultural contexts?

The first part will cover the literature review and research. It will provide data and support papers. The first chapter will define and contextualise body modification in our occidental society, in a broad social context since data are missing in a centred cultural

context. The second will treat the issues raised in the hospitality industry and the data that could help to answer the issues raised.

The second part will review the problematisation, the theoretical framework and the hypotheses. The first chapter will acknowledge the problematisation, as well as, theories and notions that will help answer it that have not been mentioned yet. The second chapter will establish the hypotheses made while researching for the dissertation, which will be commented on in the future.

Ultimately, the last part will be the presentation of a methodology and a field of application, all of this with the analysis and limits of the study. The first chapter will cover the methodology and the field of application when it comes to the questions asked. The second chapter will cover the limits of my 1st-year dissertation, why they appeared and what will be the next steps.

PART I. LITERATURE REVIEW - FROM BODY MODIFICATIONS TO TATTOOED WORKERS

We see the human body as a given nature, we are born with it and is our link to the world around us. However, in reality, it is also a cultural product. When observing cultures around the world we can see how the human body has always been changed and re-shaped. In today's globalized world, the practice of body modification has permeated nearly every facet of human existence, from the ancient rituals of indigenous tribes to modern cities. Consider this: according to a recent survey, approximately 14% of adults in the European Union have a tattoo, and an estimated 225 million people worldwide have at least one tattoo (Gitux, 2013). Marking a significant cultural shift towards embracing individual expression through bodily adornment. When looking at the numbers on the Figure 1¹, in France 36% of the population is tattooed, against 42% in Spain (Institut de sondage Dalia, 2018).

Figure 1: Countries where tattoos are most popular



¹ Pascaline Boittiaux, Dalia Study, (May, 25 2018), Countries where tattoos are most popular, Statista, <https://fr.statista.com/infographie/13962/les-pays-ou-les-tatouages-sont-les-plus-populaires/>

When it comes to the Hospitality Industry, France employs around 900 000 people (Statista, 2024) and Spain more than 1 million in 2016 (Statista, 2024).

Seeing that tattoos around the world are more and more widespread and that the hospitality industry in both countries is prominent, linking the two seems interesting.

The pieces of information led to the questions stated before:

- To what extent do the perceptions of tattoos by both managers and customers influence recruitment strategy and practices in the hotel sector?
- To what extent does societal culture impact the employability of tattooed workers? Specifically, how do cultural attitudes towards tattoos influence hiring practices, career advancement, and workplace acceptance, and are there discernible differences across Spain and France cultural contexts?

To work on this thanks to the literature review, the first chapter will help us understand the body modification history, and the tattoo culture consistently evolving. It will also establish the perception of body modification and French and Spanish laws to introduce the second chapter.

Indeed, the second chapter will be on the tattooed workers in hospitality with an overview of the industry in both countries and the perceptions of workers by both managers and customers, to finish with its link to employability.

Chapter 1: Body Modifications in Society

In this first chapter, the foundational definitions and contextual framework surrounding body modification, with a particular focus on tattoo culture within Western societies, will be established. Beginning with an exploration of the historical context of body modification practices globally and the evolution of attitudes and perceptions towards these practices over time. Secondly, in the specialisation of tattoo culture, the signification of tattoos as a form of body modification and the persistent stigmas and biases that surround them. To finish, the analysis of the French and Spanish laws around tattoos at work will be introduced. This broad overview opens the way for a deeper examination of the challenges and implications of tattoo culture, particularly in relation to employability and professional identity in the next chapters. Moreover, because of the lack of data regarding this subject on France and Spain, this part will be centered globally, with studies for all around the world, which makes the social context generally more global rather than specific.

1.1. History of Body Modifications

Body modification, as defined by Dictionary.com², any method of making permanent changes to the body, including piercing, tattooing, subdermal implants, usually for aesthetic purposes or personal expression. These alterations, which include piercing, tattooing, and subdermal implants, serve as tangible expressions of individuality and are deeply ingrained in human history and culture. Initially, body modification primarily comprised scarification designs and body piercings, marking cultural rites of passage or tribal affiliations (Barker & Barker, 2002, p. 92). However, as societal norms evolved, so did the definition of body modification, expanding to include more radical alterations like tongue splitting, implants, and suspension, each representing a unique form of self-expression or defiance of conventional beauty standards (Barker & Barker, 2002, p. 92).

² Dictionary.com | Meanings & Definitions of English Words. (n.d.). Retrieved March 22, 2024, from <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/body-modification>

This concept transcends mere physical adornment, encompassing practices like hair dyeing, nail painting, and plastic surgery, all of which reflect a desire for self-enhancement or conformity to societal ideals. Selekman (2003) further distinguishes three concepts of body decoration:

- body painting, a transient form of body decoration;
- body adornment, which employs jewellery and other accessories for aesthetic enhancement;
- body modification involves enduring, often irreversible changes to one's physical form, encompassing tattoos, piercings, and other transformative procedures

Notably, these practices vary significantly across cultures, diverse beliefs, traditions, and values (Larkin, 2004). From nose piercing in Hinduism to neck elongation in select regions and henna tattooing in others, cultural manifestations of body modification abound, each bathed with unique symbolism and significance (Bendle, 2004).

Moreover, history offers examples of extreme body modification, such as foot-binding in ancient China and corseting in Western societies (Totten et al., 2009). These practices, though different in execution, share a common thread of imposing restrictive and often harmful standards of beauty, particularly upon women (Totten et al., 2009). While the overt physical manifestations of such practices may have disappeared in Western societies, contemporary society witnessed a new era of body modification, characterised by practices like cosmetic surgery, body piercing, tattooing, and tanning (Barker & Barker., 2002).

In recent years, the prevalence of body modification, particularly among younger generations, has surged, prompting a reevaluation of its societal implications (Totten et al., 2009). Industries such as hospitality, that adapt itself to cultural shifts and consumer preferences, must navigate the complexities of this phenomenon (Hopf, 2018). As attitudes towards body modification continue to evolve, it becomes imperative to consider

its potential impact on various aspects of society, from personal identity to professional interactions (Hopf, 2018).

Body modification, encompassing procedures such as tattooing and piercing, has historically functioned as an outward manifestation of personal identity and cultural legacy. These customs, which have their roots in human history and tradition, have changed over time to reflect shifting social norms and aesthetic standards. A continuum of self-expression and cultural meaning may be seen in the range of body alteration practices, from modern cosmetic treatments to ancient scarification rituals. Gaining knowledge of this rich past helps one better understand the complexity of one's own identity and the views of society. The way that ideas towards body alteration are changing in the modern day calls for a reexamination of how it affects social dynamics and shapes individuality.

1.2. Tattoo Culture and Representation Around The World

1.2.1. Tattoo History

The term *tattoo* traces its etymology back to the Tahitian word *tatu*, as described by Greif et al. (1999). This word means an indelible mark or figure engraved onto the body through the insertion of pigment beneath the skin or by producing scars. Such permanent body art has a history as intricate as the designs themselves, spanning millennia across diverse cultures.

One of the earliest glimpses into the practice of tattooing emerges with the discovery of Ötzi the Iceman, who lived approximately 5,000 years ago. Ötzi's mummified remains, found in the Ötzi Valley of the Alps, bore crude line and dot tattoos, suggesting a blend of adornment, spirituality, and healing, evidenced by their placement along acupuncture points.

In ancient Egypt, during the construction of the pyramids in the 3rd and 4th dynasties, tattoos became prevalent among both men and women. As Egypt engaged in trade with neighbouring regions like Greece, Persia, and Arabia, the allure of tattoos spread, influencing others to adopt this form of body modification.

The tradition of tattooing also found its way to Japan, courtesy of western-Asian nomads known as the Ainu, around 2,000 B.C. By 297 A.D., the Japanese had embraced tattooing primarily for adornment, favouring intricate designs that often covered the entire body, a trend later associated with the Yakuza mafia (Richie, 1973).

Across Europe, the Celts adopted tattooing, particularly in regions like Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, around 1200 to 400 B.C. Greek and Roman societies later followed suit, albeit initially associating tattoos with marking criminals and slaves before transitioning to self-adornment (Paine, 1979).

By 1 A.D., tattoos had evolved to symbolise diverse meanings, ranging from social status to spiritual beliefs and even enhancing one's strength in battle. This multifaceted significance further expanded when Polynesians introduced highly spiritual tattooing practices around 15 A.D., inspiring Captain James Cook to popularise the term *tattoo* during his voyages to the South Pacific in 1769 (Paine, 1979).

European military personnel, including British and French officers, further spread the popularity of tattoos in the 1700s after encounters with Polynesian cultures (Ebensten, 1953).

In the mid-nineteenth century, Western tattooing operated beyond the artistic institutions, yielding designs characterised by crude imagery and conventional symbols of death, animals, pinup-style women, and military motifs. These tattoos were popular among young working-class men, who often adorned themselves with disparate, badge-like designs (Sanders et al., 2008).

Tattooing also gained interest among the European aristocracy and American upper class in the late nineteenth century, marking a period where it became fashionable. Accounts from Harmsworth's Magazine in the late 1800s portrayed tattooing among royalty as a curious trend, aligning them with the exoticism attributed to indigenous peoples (Sanders et al., 2006).

By the mid-twentieth century, tattooing had acquired a deviant reputation in the public consciousness, despite its earlier acceptance by elites. Middle-class perceptions viewed tattooing as a decorative practice associated with unskilled and unhygienic practitioners operating in urban slums (Sanders et al., 2008).

However, the latter part of the twentieth century witnessed a resurgence of interest in tattooing, termed the *Tattoo Renaissance* by Rubin (1988). This comeback was created by two significant factors: a shift towards indigenous cultural inspirations among tattooists and the acceptance of tattoo art within mainstream artistic circles (DeMello, 2000). Cultural institutions like the Guggenheim Museum in New York also played a pivotal role in legitimising tattoo art (Halnon et al., 2006). Consequently, the clientele of tattoo parlours diversified, with the tattoo sector becoming one of the fastest-growing service industries by the 1990s (Kjeldgaard et al., 2005).

This mainstreaming of tattoo art further accelerated with the proliferation of tattoos among celebrities, their prominent use in advertising, and increased media visibility (Kjeldgaard et al., 2005; Kosut, 2006; Larsen, 2014).

First-time tattoo artists who present their work as "art" and identify as "artists" have gained popularity. The medium is starting to get notice from the greater creative community. As tattoos appear in galleries and museums and are discussed critically by academics and critics of the traditional art world, tattooing is becoming more and more accepted (Sanders et al., 2008). In addition to being incorporated into the lucrative world of popular culture, in the latter part of the twentieth century tattooing also became more firmly situated in the world of "serious" art. (Sanders et al., 2008)

Although tattoos are already common in every social class, younger generations are more likely to have them (Ozanne et al., 2019)

A lot of people who have tattoos "*see it as an art, collect it as an art, and wear it as an art.*" (Ozanne et al., 2019)

As a result, tattoos have become popular and tattooees' identities are increasingly transnational, spanning age, class, and ethnicity (Kjeldgaard et al., 2005).

Thus, tattooing has come a long way from its modest beginnings as a subcultural activity to become a widely recognised form of artistic expression and self-expression that crosses social and cultural boundaries and represents a historical, spiritual, and cultural world that changes with each new era.

1.2.2. Tattoo Cultural Field

On the other hand, tattoos were traditionally seen as a sign of social deviance in Western society and were typically connected to working class, blue-collars, bikers, prisoners, punks (Kosut, 2006). Getting tattooed was seen as a subversive, countercultural act, and people who were inked as a result were frequently stigmatised. (Larsen, 2014)

The reasons people get tattoos are varied and include a range of societal, cultural, and personal aspects. Watson (1998) identified four key motivations for getting a tattoo:

- "the tattoo connects the person getting tattooed to significant others who have similar tattoos;
- having the tattoo makes this person unique by differentiating himself from the untattooed mainstream;
- the tattoo symbolises self-control in that person's life;
- the tattoo has aesthetic value as art of decoration of the person's body".

Expanding on this framework, there are nine main reasons why people get tattoos: commemoration, expressing emotions within oneself, bonding with other people, rebellion, impulse, addiction, cover-up of previous tattoos, identity formation, and fashion. Of course, these are not the only explanations. Wohlrab et al. (2007) assert further possible reasons.

They add additional causes, such as group affiliations, sexual motivations, physical endurance, spiritual and religious reasons, and, eventually, no obvious reason (Mironski, 2019).

Within the cultural milieu of tattoo art, tattoos serve as symbolic resources for identity construction and self-expression (Ferguson, 1998). They function as tangible markers of personal narratives, life events, and rites of passage, offering individuals a means to assert agency and navigate the complexities of contemporary identity politics (Atkinson, 2004). In the postmodern context, characterised by fluidity and fragmentation, tattoos hold particular appeal as permanent anchors in the mutable landscape of selfhood, offering stability in uncertainty (Kjeldgaard et al., 2005). However, the interpretation and evolution of tattoo meanings remain fluid and subject to multiple readings, challenging notions of permanence and coherence in identity construction (Larsen, 2014).

Tattoos' course from societal exclusion to widespread acceptance highlights the complex interactions between customs, culture, and individual identity that influence how we see body alteration. Moving on to how people view tattoos today, it is clear that even though they are accepted by most people, those who get tattoos nevertheless struggle with the persistent societal stigma associated with body art (Larsen, 2014).

1.3. Perception of Body Modifications in Society - Adapted in the Tattoo

Field

Body modifications have long been associated with stigma, prejudice, and discrimination in society, which frequently portrays those who choose to decorate their bodies in unconventional ways as outcasts or rebels. These societal attitudes take many different forms when it comes to tattoos, influencing both people who have them and people who see them. From discussions about cultural appropriation to historical connotations with deviance, the tattoo industry is a microcosm of broader society beliefs

regarding individual identity and self-expression. In this investigation, we explore the complex ways that people view tattoos, looking at the stigmas, stereotypes and prejudices that keep influencing how tattooed people are perceived and understood in today's society

Being tattooed is a very social act. How the tattooed person identifies themselves influences their decision to get a tattoo. According to Goffman (1961), a tattoo becomes a part of the wearer's personal identification kit. Those in contact with the person then utilise the tattoo to categorise the person into a specific social category that shapes interactions (Solomon, 1983). Nonetheless, the psychological drivers of body alteration practices are still being explored in relation to risky or deviant behaviours, which adds to the academic literature's perception that body changes can be both normal and deviant (Sanders et al., 2008).

Tattooing continues to be regarded as a marginalised practice because, even if it has become more commercialised, Patterson and Schroeder (2010) contend that it is still perceived as a social marking that, if not inscribed on the bodies of deviants, then constitutes a deviant practice on the bodies of individuals. According to research by Degelman & Price (2002), people with tattoos are often thought to be less handsome, compassionate, bright, athletic, driven, giving, religious, and honest than people without tattoos.

These prejudices and stereotypes have led to the stigmatisation of people with tattoos in society and the spread of false beliefs about their personalities and skills.

1.3.1. Stereotypes

One common cognitive process that is crucial in forming people's views and opinions in society is stereotyping. According to the Cambridge Dictionary³, stereotypes themselves may not always be associated with negativity, in contrast to stigma, which is intrinsically harmful and frequently results from them. As mental short cuts, stereotypes help people quickly develop judgements about other people and simplify complicated

³ Dictionary.cambridge.org | Meanings & Definitions of English Words. (n.d.). Retrieved March 22, 2024, from <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/stereotype>

social information. This cognitive process makes it easier to classify people according to visible attributes, like tattoos, which allows for fast assessments of their personalities and attributes (Goffman, 1963).

Despite the growing acceptance of body art, tattoos in Western societies have historically been associated with unfavourable stereotypes. Studies reveal that people with tattoos frequently face judgments about their intelligence, dependability, and other aspects of their personalities (Broussard et al., 2017). Once triggered, these stereotypes have the power to affect both conscious and unconscious actions, influencing how people interact and perceive different social circumstances (Wheeler & Petty, 2001).

Furthermore, misconceptions about tattoos draw attention to the larger cultural trend that links moral character to outward appearance (Patterson et al., 2010). These connections strengthen preexisting prejudices and stigmatising attitudes about people with tattoos and help to maintain unfavourable views and biases against them (Larsen, 2014). Therefore, preconceptions not only help people avoid social situations by acting as cognitive shortcuts, but they also play a part in the marginalisation and prejudice that people who have tattoos experience.

Because stereotypes serve to highlight stigmas, they usually emerge after a stereotype has gained widespread acceptance.

1.3.2. Stigmatisation

According to Goffman (1963), a stigma is an attribute that is seen as "deeply disconcerting," reducing a person "from a whole and usual person to a tainted, discounted one." According to Yang et al. (2007), stigma arises in a context rather than within a person and is based on the norms that person finds themselves subject to.

It looms large over many facets of the human identity, even the deeply private process of getting tattooed. Tattoos have historically carried a stigma in Western cultures (Larsen et al., 2014).

As a result, stigma has entered our vocabulary to refer to a physical mark that symbolises shame or disgrace, a "mark of infamy" (Jones, 2000). The term *stigma* is then derived from the ancient Greek word *stizein*, meaning tattoo (Tews, 2020). Determined efforts by prominent members of the tattoo subculture to recast tattooing as a respectable and legitimate mode of artistic and personal expression, tattoos frequently continue to symbolise the wearer's apparent alienation from society norms and social networks, so maintaining the long-lasting stigma attached to body art (Sanders, 2008).

This stigma is closely linked to cultural standards, and people have to decide the extent of the norms they conform to (Henry & Caldwell, 2006). For instance, body modifications from tribal communities outside of Western culture may be met with curiosity or admiration, but because of prevailing cultural norms and associations, similar modifications on Western individuals may cause discomfort or disapproval (Patterson & Schroeder, 2010). In reaction to this stigma, people adopt coping mechanisms or tactics for empowerment, which are shaped by the acceptance of social norms and expectations (Shih, 2004). While empowerment techniques concentrate on understanding the social environment and generating positive outcomes, coping strategies aim to prevent negative outcomes. Because tattooing is viewed as a characterological stigma, people with tattoos are often seen as accountable for their status, making the penalties imposed by "normals" seem entirely reasonable. Instead of intentionally creating beneficial contacts, these people would then typically turn to coping mechanisms as a means of preserving their identities. (Shih, 2004)

The stigma associated with tattoos has become more nuanced and varied over time. The stigma associated with getting a tattoo has evolved through the years, no longer being limited to a single aspect of the phenomenon. Both in-group and out-group members may impose these dimensions, which could include getting a tattoo, the aesthetic of a tattoo, or the degree of commitment to tattoo culture (Larsen, 2014). According to Argo and Main (2008), participants in research on the stigma associated with tattoos have expressed a desire to distance themselves from others who have tattoos or specific tattoo styles. This suggests that stigma is managed through group dynamics. Furthermore, the interpretation of tattoos has grown more complex due to influences from context, the

individual's personal knowledge, narrative explanations, and aesthetic value (Larsen, 2014).

The stigma attached to having tattoos tends to rise as people have more, which presents difficulties for persons with multiple tattoos (Totten et al., 2009). According to research, people with tattoos, especially women with several, may be subject to more negative comments about their looks and way of life (Swami & Furnham, 2007). Thus, the changing face of stigma associated with tattoos emphasises how crucial it is to take into account both personal characteristics and social dynamics while comprehending and interpreting body art in modern culture (Henle, 2021).

1.3.3. Deviances

A fundamental idea in sociology, deviance, describes acts or behaviours that go against accepted cultural norms in a community (Nickerson, 2024). Since deviance is defined in relation to sociocultural standards, which change over time and among countries, it is intrinsically subjective (Sanders et al., 2008). Moreover, deviance is a dynamic term that is susceptible to shift due to shifting power dynamics and societal norms (Sanders et al., 2008). Deviance is dynamic, which emphasises its complexity and the influence of societal forces in determining what action is deemed acceptable or unacceptable.

According to Sanders (2008), there is another viewpoint on deviance that emphasises its rarity, arguing that actions considered abnormal are relatively rare and appealing only to a small portion of the population. The values/harm model, where deviant behaviours are assumed to be undesirable and connected to negative qualities, overlaps with this statistical orientation (Sanders et al., 2008). But changing social contexts cast doubt on conventional ideas of deviance, especially when it comes to "de-deviantisation" of behaviours like body alteration and tattoos (Sanders et al., 2008). These acts are seen as less unusual or rebellious as they grow more common and socially acceptable, demonstrating the impact of social dynamics on the perception of deviance.

The labelling viewpoint sheds light on how deviance is socially constructed, highlighting how labels from society define and reinforce deviant behaviour (Sanders et al., 2008). Deviance arises through social processes of stigmatisation and branding rather than being inherent in the action itself (Sanders et al., 2008). This viewpoint emphasises how deviance is situational, with the same behaviour being seen differently depending on the social setting (Larsen, 2014). As an illustration of how social norms and perceptions influence how deviant activity is labelled, tattoos may be seen as harmless in some contexts but as indicators of deviation in others (Larsen, 2014).

Additionally, studies have looked into the possible connections between deviant behaviour and tattoos and mental health (Dillingh, 2016). Research has indicated associations between tattoos and aggressive behaviours, substance abuse, sensation-seeking behaviour, and even criminal predisposition (Stim et al., 2006). These findings highlight the complex nature of tattoo stigma and its consequences for both individual behaviour and societal attitudes. They also add to a larger understanding of how tattoos may be viewed in relation to deviance and social norms.

1.3.4. Prejudices

According to several researchers, prejudice is defined as unfavourable assessments, attitudes, or actions against people or groups because of membership in that group (Crandall et al., 2002). Negative prejudice frequently results from cognitive stereotyping, in which preexisting notions connected to particular groups mould people's subjective opinions about other people (Devine, 1989). According to Allport (1979), prejudice has a negative effect on intergroup relations and is further defined as hostility that arises from inaccurate and rigid generalisations. This term is expanded to include any behaviour, attitude, or feeling that suggests hatred or hostility against a certain group. These conceptions are in line with Goffman's research on stigma, which examines how people who are stigmatised deal with societal bias and maintain their identities (Goffman, 1963).

Prejudice frequently takes the form of discriminatory attitudes or actions against people who have tattoos because of cultural prejudices and stereotypes in the setting of tattoo culture (Sanders et al., 2008). People who get tattoos may be stigmatised and discriminated against by others who have unfavourable opinions of them and see them as signs of nonconformity or deviance (Sanders et al., 2008). According to Larsen et al. (2014), tattoos are often associated with criminal activity, rebellious behaviour, or a lack of professionalism. This bias may be strengthened by these cultural standards. As a result of the prejudice and discrimination they face, people with tattoos may have difficulties in a variety of social contexts, such as the workplace or interpersonal relationships (Larsen et al., 2014).

Furthermore, reducing the harmful impacts of stigma and maintaining one's social identity are common techniques used in the management of prejudice associated to tattoos (Larsen, 2014). Understanding how tattooed people deal with societal preconceptions by hiding or downplaying their tattoos in specific situations makes Goffman's idea of identity more pertinent (Goffman, 1963; Larsen, 2014).

1.4. French and Spanish Laws: Discrimination in the Workplace

It is important to compare and contrast the legal frameworks of France and Spain as we go more into the legal frameworks around job discrimination, specifically with regard to individuals who have tattoos. Even while people view tattoos as more and more personal manifestations of who they are, there is still discussion about whether or not they are appropriate in professional settings. Both France and Spain struggle to maintain the values of individual autonomy and nondiscrimination while providing fair treatment for those with tattoos. We can better understand the rights and obligations of workers with tattoos by looking at the legal systems in these nations, especially in sectors like hospitality where appearance is often crucial.

1.4.1. France

The French Labour Code (Code du travail) and the French Penal Code (Code pénal) serve as the groundwork for France's legal framework with regard to workplace discrimination. The French Labour Code's Article L1132-1⁴ acts as a guardian against discrimination by outlawing treatment differences on the basis of race, gender, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or political views. Ensuring that workers receive equitable treatment independent of their fundamental traits, this legal framework serves as the cornerstone of the safeguards offered to them.

Though these rules provide strong defences against discrimination based on unchangeable characteristics, like race or gender, there is a conspicuous lack of legislation that specifically addresses discrimination based only on tattoos. As a symbol of self-expression, tattoos frequently blur the distinction between personal style and professionalism. As a result, the law on tattoos in the workplace is still ambiguous and open to interpretation

While without specifically addressing tattoos, Article L1132-1⁴ of the French Labour Code broadens its protective scope to include physical appearance. In this context, tattoos hold a prominent position as an integral aspect of a person's physical appearance. The legislation acknowledges tattoos as essential components of human identification and protects against unwarranted interference with an employee's right to bodily autonomy and freedom of expression.

Furthermore, the French Labour Code's Article L1121-1⁵ establishes safeguards against unjustified intrusions on an individual's liberties and rights. This clause protects employee autonomy from capricious limitations, highlighting the significance of justification and proportionality in any employer-imposed limitations. Employers are advised not to

⁴ Article L1132-1, Code du Travail, 2017, Legifrance.gouv
https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/codes/article_lc/LEGIARTI000033957410

⁵ Article L1121-1, Code du Travail, 2008, Legifrance.gouv
https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/codes/article_lc/LEGIARTI000006900785#:~:text=Nul%20ne%20peut%20apporter%20aux,ni%20proportionn%C3%A9es%20au%20but%20recherch%C3%A9.

overreach and are reminded that tattoo policies should be in line with reasonable company goals and employees' fundamental rights.

Employers must do a careful balancing act when managing the conflict between workplace regulations and individual liberties. Employers may set dress codes or appearance standards, but they must use caution when implementing them to prevent discrimination based on protected traits. Such regulations also have to follow more general anti-discrimination legislation so that all employees are treated fairly.

Spain

Similar to France, Spain's legal system firmly forbids discrimination on a number of grounds in the workplace. The cornerstone of the rights provided to employees is the Spanish Constitution's Article 14⁶, which upholds the ideals of equality and non-discrimination. Nevertheless, similar to the situation in France, Spanish law noticeably lacks any explicit statute that addresses discrimination based just on tattoos.

As a symbol of individuality, tattoos have a difficult place in Spanish working culture. Their acceptance can differ greatly depending on the specific circumstances of each instance, industry norms, and company regulations. Even though most people view tattoos as a form of self-expression, how they are viewed in professional settings is still determined by prevailing organisational norms and cultural views.

In Spain, employers have the power to implement appearance standards and dress requirements that may limit how visible employees' tattoos are. To ensure that these policies are reasonable and non-discriminatory, strict guidelines must be followed while exercising this power. It is crucial to apply consistency to prevent arbitrary discrimination based on protected traits.

⁶ Artículo 14, Constitución Española, 1978, Agencia Estatal Boletín Oficial del Estado <https://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-1978-31229#:~:text=19%3A%20%23a14%5D-.Art%C3%ADculo%2014.o%20circunstancia%20personal%20o%20social>.

The Workers' Statute (Estatuto de los Trabajadores)⁷, a labour law in Spain, covers a variety of topics about employment, including measures that deal with harassment and discrimination in the workplace.

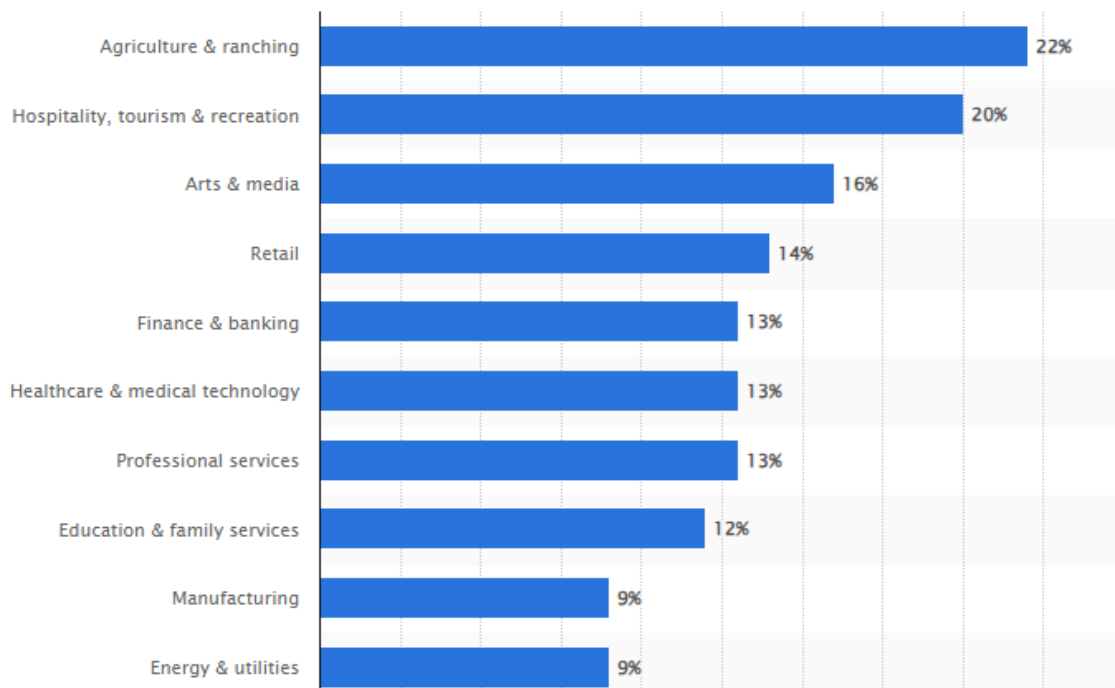
As a conclusion for this chapter, many data helped base the following study on social contexts. First with the history and culture of tattoos that are rich around the world, then with the perception of tattoos, that are still stereotyped and stigmatised in Western cultures. However, we saw that the French and Spanish Laws prohibit work discrimination. But, does banning discrimination at work in law lead to a change in perception of tattoos or their acceptance?

⁷ Artículo 4.2.c, Estatuto de los Trabajadores, 2015, Agencia Estatal Boletín Oficial del Estado <https://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-2023-17168>

Chapter 2: Tattooed Workers in Hospitality

As seen in the first chapter, body modification and especially tattoos, are an important part of different cultures and have been growing in popularity in recent years. The study here covers tattooed workers in hospitality, which is what the second will be about. As seen in Figure 2⁸ representing the share of Americans with a tattoo by occupation in 2013; the hospitality, tourism and recreation activity appear in the second place with 20% of workers tattooed.

Figure 2: Do you have a tattoo?



The last part of the first chapter helped us understand where France and Spain are standing legally regarding tattoos at work. Laws prohibit discrimination at work but the management side can still impose guidelines as long as they are global and not for one individual only.

Knowing that in American studies 20% of hospitality workers possess tattoos and that the European Law prohibit work discrimination, where do our work stand? Tattooed

⁸ Statista Research Department, (June 01, 2013), Do you have a tattoo?, Share of Americans with a tattoo - by occupation 2013, Statista <https://www.statista.com/statistics/259588/share-of-americans-with-a-tattoo-by-occupation/>

individuals are still stereotyped but the laws forbid discrimination in the workplace, so what is finally actually happening in the workplace?

This is where the second chapter appears, to help define the place of tattooed workers in the hospitality industry and find whether or not our first question can be an interesting question that needs to be answered: To what extent do the perceptions of tattoos by both managers and customers influence recruitment strategy and practices in the hotel sector?

Firstly, we will start by introducing the hospitality industry in both France and Spain to fully understand in which context the work is taking place. Moreover, we will tackle the classification of employment, indeed, the hospitality industry is a place where a lot of different kinds of jobs are intertwined with different perspectives and expectations. Then, we will see how the hospitality industry shapes itself regarding marketing and the different representations. To link the research on tattooed employees and the hospitality industry, the perceptions of tattooed workers by both managers and customers will be analysed. Finally, the impact of all of those on employability is to be treated.

Just like in the first chapter, because of the lack of data on this subject in France and Spain, the chapter will be studied globally with studies undertaken all around the world, which makes our social context global and not specific to both countries.

2.1. Hospitality Industry

In order to place our study in a more specific context, first understanding the hospitality industry in France and Spain is essential. It will help us get a hang of the context to link the global research on tattooed workers in hospitality with the industry in both countries.

First thanks to an analysis of the hospitality industry in Spain and France and then the classification of employment in the context of hospitality.

2.1.1. Hospitality Industry in France and Spain

When it comes to the Hospitality Industry, France employs around 900 000 people (Statista, 2024) and Spain more than 1 million in 2016 (Statista, 2024).

The French park consists of 17,405 hotels for a total of 651,944 rooms⁹. 47% in the mid-range (3 stars) and, 33% in the entry-level (1 and 2 stars). They generate an annual turnover of €21 billion per year (180,000 jobs) or 75% of that of the market tourist accommodation sector. In terms of investment, the hotel sector accounts for 21% of the total tourism sector and 37% for the commercial tourist accommodation sector alone. These figures are those before the health crisis. The Spanish parks consists of 12,256 hotels.¹⁰

The Spanish hospitality industry employed in 2021 according to the Figure 3, 127,39 thousands people, when the French hospitality industry employ around 168,628 thousands people according to IBIS World.

On the Spanish side, the industry is still lacking workforce since the Covid-19 crisis, and because of the low wages for a job seen as tough. This problem is also happening in France and all throughout Europe, as the high turnover and lack of workforce is global.

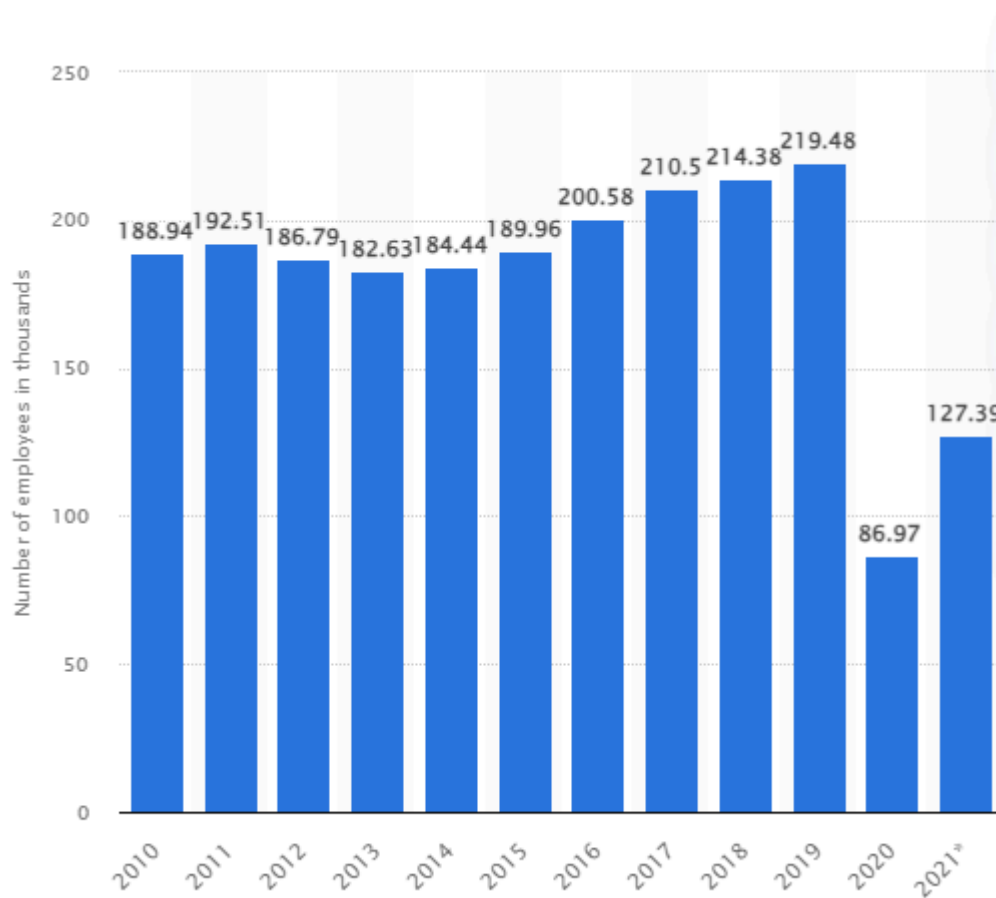
This part will help us understand the following research on, how the managers can change this outcome by modifying their hiring methods.

⁹ Entreprise gouv

<https://www.entreprises.gouv.fr/fr/tourisme/conseils-strategie/hotellerie-hotels-de-tourisme-et-auberges-collectives#:~:text=En%20termes%20d'investissement%2C%20l.d'avant%20la%20crise%20sanitaire.>

¹⁰ National Statistic Institute, CEIC, (2024), <https://www.ceicdata.com/en/spain/hotel-statistics/number-of-hotels>

Figure 3¹¹: Number of employees in hotels and hostels in Spain from 2010 to 2021



2.1.2. Classification of Employment

Within the hospitality sector, job classifications come in a variety of colours, each signifying unique functions and perspectives.

The scope of work in the fast-paced hospitality industry goes well beyond the conventional divisions between blue-collar and white-collar jobs. A varied panel of talents and responsibilities is essential to the sector, spanning from the cooks to the front offices. We'll talk about the complexities associated with employment in the hospitality industry.

¹¹ Ana M. López, Number of employees in hotels and hostels in Spain from 2010 to 2021, (March 9, 2022), Statista <https://www.statista.com/statistics/773136/annual-number-of-employees-in-hotels-in-spain/>

Blue-collar jobs¹² are those that include manual labour and hands-on experience, and they are typically performed in factories, warehouses, construction sites, or outdoor environments. These vocations usually entail using tools or equipment and are typified by duties like operating machinery, assembling things, or conducting physical labour. Worker types in the hospitality sector that fall into this category include kitchen, cleaning, and maintenance personnel.

White-collar occupations¹², which are characterised by the formal, button-down office dress of professionals, are found in the hospitality industry's administration and management domains. These employees, who work behind desks, handle the complexities of finance, strategic planning, and guest relations. But as the sector develops, the line separating white-collar and blue-collar work gets more blurred.

Roles in purple-collar work¹³ are growing to close the gap. In these hybrid roles, workers traverse an environment where manual labour and administrative duties collide, displaying a flexible skill set appropriate for the diverse demands of the hospitality industry.

Meanwhile, the classification is further complicated by pink-collar employment¹⁴, which is frequently linked to caregiving and other historically female-dominated service roles. These jobs reflect structural biases in the sector and are marked by lower compensation and less job security despite demanding a high level of experience and skill. The receptionist job has long been seen as a pink-collar one.

The way these collars interact in the hospitality sector highlights how complex occupational classification is. When all employees interact directly with clients, professionalism is seen as more than just a person's clothes or title. Research on how visible tattoos affect consumer views is beginning to show that societal biases and changing cultural norms, in addition to historic distinctions, can influence the hospitality

¹² Jack Kelly (October 26, 2023), What Is The Difference Between Blue-Collar And White-Collar Jobs?, Forbes, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jackkelly/2023/10/26/what-is-the-difference-between-blue-collar-and-white-collar-workers/?sh=4fc787c258e0>

¹³ What Is a Purple-Collar Job?, (March 26, 2022), ZIPPIA, <https://www.zippia.com/answers/what-is-a-purple-collar-job/>

¹⁴ Remone Robinson, Pink Collar Jobs, Eddy, <https://eddy.com/hr-encyclopedia/pink-collar-jobs/>

industry. According to Dean (2010), consumers thought that visible tattoos were improper in white-collar employment but more acceptable in blue-collar jobs. Ultimately, the true measure of a worker's worth lies not in the colour of their collar, but in the environment or type of hospitality they are in.

2.2. Shaping of the Service and Hospitality Industry

As previously observed, the hospitality sector in Europe, particularly in France and Spain, plays a pivotal role in the economic prosperity of these nations. Despite undergoing ongoing transformations, it remains a multifaceted industry with diverse job roles. The hospitality sector is intricately intertwined with the service industry, where employees are dedicated to catering to customer needs and frequently engage in interpersonal interactions. Today, the prevalence of tattoos among employees is higher than ever, particularly notable within the hospitality sector, which boasts one of the most tattooed workforces, as indicated by Statista's 2013 data and further elucidated by Tews (2020).

We will explore the evolution of this industry through various lenses, including the concept of servicescape, as well as the notions of aesthetic labour and branded labour.

Servicescape

For companies providing intangible services, such as restaurants, the servicescape is an essential component. It serves as the first point of contact for clients, influencing their opinions and expectations before they ever enter. The term *servicescape*, first introduced in the early 1980s by Booms and Bitner (1981), refers to both the physical setting in which services are provided and the material components that support service interactions. This idea was further developed by Bitner, who emphasised how it affects perception and service performance. Essentially, companies create the servicescape—a carefully planned setting—to improve customer satisfaction and shape consumer behaviour.

The servicescape's importance comes from its capacity to leave a lasting impact on clients. Everything adds to the overall ambience and atmosphere, from the lighting and

décor to the layout and design. Kim et al. (2021) highlights that frontline employees' appearance is an outward manifestation of the company's brand. Businesses must make an investment in the way their workforce is presented because customers frequently rely their decisions on how they look. Although some may contend that appearances are superficial and that what matters most is what is hidden, the truth is that first impressions are greatly influenced by one's outer appearance. Many times, a customer's decision to interact or not is based just on appearance.

In addition, companies can use the servicescape as a strategic instrument to communicate their own brand identity and set themselves apart from rivals. Businesses may create a memorable and engaging experience for customers by carefully selecting the surroundings to match their brand values and personality. This includes more than simply the tangible components of the setting; it includes all of the senses, including sounds, smells, and even the staff's actions. Every component is specifically chosen to arouse particular feelings in clients and elicit the intended reaction (Kim et al., 2021)

The servicescape is, at its core, a dynamic and complex idea that transcends simple aesthetics. Businesses use it as a strategic tool to shape consumer attitudes, affect behaviour, and improve customer satisfaction in general. Businesses may design environments that not only meet but also surpass consumer expectations by comprehending the fundamentals of servicescape design and how it affects client interactions. (Kim et al., 2021)

2.2.1. Aesthetic Labour

The hospitality sector has a reputation for taking grooming standards very seriously, seeing them as essential to maintaining the company's professional image and presenting professionalism (Swanger, 2006). This focus on appearance is related to the idea of aesthetic labour, which goes beyond physical appeal to include the work, discipline, and

management needed to represent the ideals and characteristics of an organisation (Tsauro & Tang, 2013).

The hospitality industry is known for placing a strong emphasis on standards of grooming, considering them critical to maintaining a company's professional image and demonstrating professionalism (Swanger, 2006). This focus on appearance is related to the idea of aesthetic labour, which goes beyond physical attractiveness to encompass the work, discipline, and management required to represent the ideals and characteristics of the organisation (Tsauro & Tang, 2013).

According to Warhurst et al. (2000), the provision of embodied capacities and traits held by workers is referred to as aesthetic labour. This groundbreaking research established the foundation for managers to leverage workers' physical characteristics and appearance to improve the customer experience, especially in interactive service sectors (Warhurst and Nickson, 2007). The theoretical roots of aesthetic labour can be traced back to the work on micro-sociology of Goffman (1959) and wider literature on impression management (Timming, 2017). Using this as a starting point, Tsauro and Tang (2013) defined aesthetic labour as the work, control, and management necessary to reflect the capacities and traits that organisations desire for interactive service work.

This term, which was adapted for the hospitality sector because of its heavy reliance on aesthetic labour, highlights how important employees' physical appearance is in influencing the opinions and experiences of customers (Tsauro and Tang, 2013). Studies show that appearance frequently has a greater impact on a job than hard skills in sectors like hospitality, highlighting the painstaking attention to detail front-line staff must demonstrate to present a professional image (Warhurst et al., 2000).

To obtain a competitive edge in the market, hotels understand the strategic value of utilising aesthetic labour (Warhurst et al., 2000). Hotels strive to positively impact clients' impressions by having staff members who look consistent with the company's brand (Hopf, 2018).

Yet, there are still issues with aesthetic labour, especially when it comes to body modifications like tattoos and piercings. Employers may prohibit visible tattoos out of

concern that they may take away from the communicated brand image and make the institution less appealing to some customers (Timming, 2017). Businesses may see body art as a way for employees to express themselves, but others see it as a threat to their brand identity and reputation (Brallier et al., 2011).

Furthermore, aesthetic labour touches on more general problems of bias and discrimination in the workplace, going beyond outward appearances. People who do not conform to traditional norms of appearance may find it difficult to obtain jobs (Timming, 2017). This includes prejudices against those who have obvious tattoos or other body modifications, underscoring the intricate relationships between appearance, professionalism, and career progression in the hospitality sector.

Although aesthetic labour is still a vital component of the hospitality sector, it is difficult to put into practice. In this fast-paced industry, employers and employees must constantly weigh the need for a professional corporate image against respect for individual expression and diversity (Nickson et al., 2001)

2.2.2. Branded Labour

While the sociological discipline of aesthetic labour concentrates on the importance of employee appearance in the production process, branded labour looks at employee appearance in the consuming process and emphasises how consumers view front-line personnel. This strategy emphasises how important personnel appearance is in portraying an organisation's brand to customers. Understanding how physical surroundings and employee appearance contribute to the entire consumer experience was made possible by Bitner's fundamental study on servicescape (Bitner, 1992). The premise that employee appearance is important in influencing consumer impressions and encouraging consumption has been supported by later research (King and Grace, 2009).

The notion of employee "representativeness," which relates to how much consumers can relate to and build connections with front-line staff, is a crucial component of branded labour (Avery et al., 2012). According to research, customers are more likely to be satisfied and form bonds with a company when they believe that its personnel are a reflection of themselves or its ideal brand image (Timming, 2017).

But as attitudes regarding body art change in society as tattoos and piercings proliferate, concerns about how conventional grooming standards align with modern consumer preferences emerge (Elzweig & Peebles, 2011). Given the changing demographics and preferences of its clientele, the hospitality sector—which is renowned for its conservative views on staff appearance—may want to reevaluate its position on visible tattoos and piercings (Timming, 2017). Although in the past demanding grooming standards were expected, organisations may need to modify their policies to account for the evolving expectations of customers and employees regarding appearance.

2.3. Perception of Tattooed Workers

When seeing how hospitality shapes itself with marketing strategies linked to appearances, it is now important to see how tattooed workers are perceived in the service/hospitality industry.

In order to link the research to the starting question, the analysis will be on both managers' and customers' perceptions.

2.3.1. Managers' Perception of Tattooed Workers

Various factors, such as consumer preferences and societal preconceptions, impact managers' attitudes toward personnel with tattoos in the hospitality business. Managers consider the extent and attributes of body art, including genre, placement, size, and numbers. They may link specific tattoos to negative attributes or potentially dangerous meanings (Jones et al., 1984). For instance, people's suitability for particular roles may be

affected by tattoos that are viewed as tribal or masculine, as opposed to those that are viewed as cute or feminine (Henle, 2021).

Managers' hiring decisions are frequently impacted by consumer perceptions of tattooed staff and broader societal judgements (Wood, 2023). Despite their skills, companies may be reluctant to hire people with tattoos due to worries about potentially dangerous associations or unfavourable client perceptions (Timming, 2015). Additionally, managers in the service-oriented industry are sensitive to the preferences and tastes of their customers, which influences their choices on the appearance of front-line staff (Chia, 2023).

Hiring managers' and recruiters' prejudices and preconceptions may be the source of discrimination during the recruiting and selection process (Davison & Burke, 2000). It is possible to reduce discrimination and benefit underrepresented and minority groups by using strategies such as virtue ethics-based recruiting and selection processes (Chia, 2023). Organisations can foster diversity and lessen prejudice in the hiring and performance management processes by emphasising the identification of qualities pertinent to the job position rather than conforming to preconceived assumptions of an ideal worker (Chia, 2023).

Nonetheless, studies indicate that supervisors in the hospitality sector might be reluctant to hire people with tattoos. According to Bekhor's (1995) research, a sizable percentage of respondents from the hospitality industry said they would be reluctant or would refuse to hire someone who had visible tattoos. This resistance was especially evident in industries like retail, beauty, hospitality, and offices, where it was extremely difficult for people with tattoos to get work (Bekhor, 1995). Even with the potential advantages of diversity and inclusion, customer preferences and societal conventions continue to shape managers' opinions towards employees with tattoos in the hospitality sector.

2.3.2. Customers' Perception of Tattooed Workers

The characteristics of service quality including, reliability, assurance, responsiveness, empathy, and tangibles, described by Wilson et al. (2016) have a significant impact on how customers view employees with tattoos. Customers' expectations about service providers' consistency, reliability, professionalism, empathy, and outward attractiveness are reflected in these dimensions, in that order. The ability of workers with tattoos to achieve these expectations is the basis for their evaluation, and their tattoos may influence perceptions in various ways.

Although tattoos can be viewed as a means of personal expression, French et al. (2016) contend that obvious tattoos may obstruct productive interactions with customers. They imply that some customers may be intimidated or offended by tattoos, which could negatively impact how well a firm is viewed for its services. This emphasises how crucial it is to take into account client preferences and possible reactions to tattoos when providing services.

Apart from the issues raised by customers over visible tattoos, Wood (2023) emphasises the importance of customer service perception in determining the success of a firm as a whole. Unfavourable opinions about tattooed employees may affect consumers' general evaluations of the quality of services and affect their choice to do business with a specific company. Therefore, to stay competitive and ensure customer happiness, businesses must address any potential obstacles to excellent customer experiences related to tattooed workers.

Perceived Competence

In the service sector, perceived competence has a big impact on client satisfaction (Gao and Mattila, 2014). It serves as a lens through which clients assess workers' self-assurance, efficacy, and general capacity. These views are influenced by a number of outside variables, including clothes, physical attractiveness, and even body weight.

Notably, tattoos—which are frequently regarded as a form of self-expression—have drawn notice due to their capacity to affect how competent an employee is perceived by clients (Dean, 2010).

Although prior research has indicated that tattoos negatively affect interpersonal perceptions, there haven't been any empirical studies that specifically look at how tattoos affect perceived competence (Ozanne, 2018). It is impossible to overestimate the importance of personnel appearance in the servicescape, especially as an implicit indicator of service quality (Bebko et al., 2006). Customers' sense of service quality is shaped by this factor, which is intimately linked to their expectations and serves as a comparison between expectations and actual performance (Parasuraman et al., 1985).

Potential clients frequently view an employee's appearance as a crucial indicator of their level of skill (Dean, 2016). Theories in behavioural science shed light on how observers deduce dispositional traits from external appearances (Gosling et al., 2002). Research has indicated that elements such as physical appearance and suitability of clothes can have a major impact on how well people perceive the quality of service in a variety of industries, including restaurants (Luoh and Tsaur, 2009).

It is interesting to note that according to the similarity-attraction theory, people who have tattoos might think better of service providers who also have tattoos (Dolliver, 2003). This tendency is consistent with the idea of cognitive consistency, according to which people make an effort to keep their beliefs and self-concept in balance (Dean, 2016). However, the stigma associated with tattoos endures, in part because of customer preferences influencing managerial conservatism (Erickson et al., 2000).

Customers are crucial in maintaining stereotypes, especially those about tattoos, which affect how employees perceive their coworkers and the dynamics of the workplace (Ozanne, 2019).

Continuity Theory

Atchley (1989) developed the Continuity Theory, which provides a thorough framework for comprehending how people age and move through different periods of life. The key principle of continuity theory is that people tend to retain internal and exterior structures that are consistent over time. Internal structures include characteristics of the person that don't change over time, like personality traits, beliefs, and values. On the other hand, social roles, connections, and pursuits that support the maintenance of a stable lifestyle and self-concept are referred to as external structures.

Maddox (1987) argues that continuity in behaviours, activities, and relationships is typical among older persons, indicating an ageing inclination for stability and familiarity. According to this idea, people take advantage of techniques based on their existing internal and external structures as well as prior experiences to maintain their feeling of continuity and identity.

Continuity Theory provides insights into consumer behaviour and how older persons could approach decision-making processes, especially when it comes to cultural norms and values. In his exploration of this idea in relation to tattoos, Dean (2016) raises the possibility that older customers could be influenced by the cultural beliefs that were common in their childhood. According to Atchley (1989), people frequently try to maintain the cultural customs and meanings they were raised with, which shapes their views and preferences as they get older. Visible tattoos may be viewed by older customers as inappropriate or inconsistent with their established norms because they may have grown up at a period when tattoos were less frequent and associated with negative connotations. Dean (2016)

Image Congruence

Figure 4: Conceptual Framework of Image Congruence

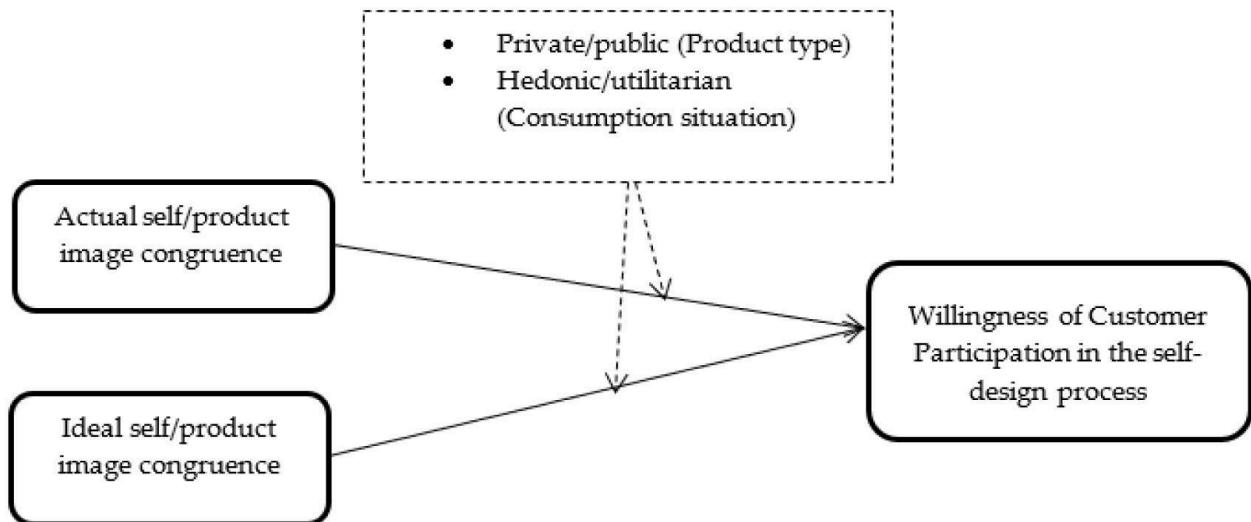


Figure 4¹⁵ illustrates the idea of image congruence, which is a basic concept in consumer behaviour. It states that people are more likely to choose companies that are consistent with their ideal selves or self-image (Graeff, 1996). According to this theory, customers have preconceived notions about how service providers should look like, and whether or not visible tattoos are seen as appropriate depends on the kind of service provided (Birdwell, 1968). For example, obvious tattoos on an auto mechanic might be seen as okay since the person has previously interacted with other tattooed mechanics, but on a dentist, it might look inappropriate because the person has never interacted with other tattooed dental professionals (Dean, 2016).

Studies show that consumers' opinions of visible tattoos, especially concerning their acceptability, are significantly influenced by image congruence (Dean, 2016). Because of cognitive consistency and a desire to see themselves favourably, respondents who have tattoos tend to have more positive opinions of those who have them (Dean, 2016). On the other hand, those without tattoos could view those who have them as different from them and have negative preconceptions about them (Dean, 2016).

¹⁵ Baojun Yu, (August 06, 2020), How to Better Motivate Customers to Participate in the Self-Design Process: A Conceptual Model in Underlying Self-Congruence Mechanism, *Frontiers*
<https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/psychology/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.01995/full>

In addition, the way society views tattoos can also affect how consumers behave. Research indicates that people may become hostile to those who have particular kinds of tattoos or be less likely to buy from sellers who have tattoos. While Arndt et al. (2016) emphasise the contextual nature of customer perceptions towards body art, which frequently trend towards negative or neutral sentiments in working contexts, Larsen et al. (2014) underline the persistent stigma linked to body art from the consumer's perspective.

Visible tattoos have a substantial effect on labour market results as well, since employer and consumer perceptions of inked people affect employment prospects and earning potential (French, 2016). Although some places of employment welcome tattoos as part of company culture, questions over their appropriateness and their effects on profitability and brand image continue (Wood, 2023). The acceptance of visible tattoos on employees can vary depending on a number of factors, including the type, size, and position of the tattoos as well as the distinctive characteristics of each customer (Wood, 2023).

Customers of today expect real, unscripted customer service (Solomon, 2015). Even with exceptional customer service, if your company's customer service delivery style comes out as inauthentic or scripted, you will not be able to connect with modern consumers. Consumers increasingly seek out real, authentic consumer experiences across all age groups, especially the significant Millennial demographic. Additionally, they are quick to dismiss and criticise anything that they feel is fake, insincere, or unauthentic in the service experience (Solomon, 2015)

In recent years, the Ritz-Carlton has loosened its rules for employee grooming and attire, often permitting visible tattoos. Ritz-Carlton's recently announced goal to make each location noticeably unique from the others are component of the brand's changes.

2.4. Impact on Employability

In today's labour market, employability is a complex term shaped by a number of variables, such as one's physical appearance and societal perceptions. Aesthetic standards are frequently important in recruiting and retention procedures, especially in businesses like hospitality and customer service that prioritise in-person interactions (Efthymiou, 2018). However, because body art is often connected with stigma and perceived unprofessionalism, people with tattoos often feel that they are at a disadvantage when applying for jobs (Atkinson, 2002; Armstrong, 1991).

These worries are supported by empirical research, which shows that employers discriminate against candidates who have noticeable tattoos (Timming et al., 2017). For instance, research indicates that after looking through resumes and images, restaurant managers are more likely to hire candidates without tattoos than those with them (Brallier et al., 2011). In a similar vein, people with tattoos are frequently considered less employable than people without them, regardless of whether the position requires interacting with customers (Timming et al., 2017).

Depending on the visibility and size of the tattoos, there seems to be a range of employer discrimination towards people with tattoos. Large, prominent tattoos are more likely to cause prejudice and stigma in employment settings (Jones et al., 1984). Furthermore, views can be influenced by an individual's tattoo number; a large number of tattoos are linked to more unfavourable assessments and possible discrimination (Tews & Stafford, 2019).

Additionally, a tattoo's visibility and content have a significant impact on employability outcomes. It is possible that hiring supervisors who are millennials will view light tattoo content more favourably than dark tattoo content (Tews et al., 2020). Nevertheless, regardless of their content, extreme or offensive tattoos are likely to make individuals less employable (Timming, 2017).

Nonetheless, opinions on tattoos at work are not always unfavourable. Employees with tattoos may be seen favourably by those in service businesses that seek to project a sense of energy and edge, which enhances the company's reputation (Timming, 2017). However, hiring decisions are frequently made by managers based more on expected consumer perceptions than just candidate qualifications (Efthymiou, 2018). As a result, while tattoos may improve employability in some situations, hiring decisions may be influenced by worries about customer impression and brand image (Efthymiou, 2018).

Tattooed people's employability is affected by a variety of intricately intertwined elements, such as customer expectations, employer attitudes, societal conventions, and the type of work. While in some situations having a tattoo may improve one's employment, worries about professionalism and brand image can result in prejudice against tattooed people, especially those who have many or highly visible tattoos. In order to navigate the difficulties of tattoo acceptance in the workplace, both employers and job seekers must have a thorough understanding of these relationships (Timming, 2017).

As previously observed, tattoos have a substantial impact on employability and have been the subject of much research in the literature. Early studies revealed that many people believed that employers and customers discriminated against people who had tattoos (Frieze et al., 1990). Recent research, however, questions this notion by analysing the true connection between tattoos and outcomes in the employment market.

Researchers French et al. (2016) and Dillingh et al. (2016) carried out extensive studies on how tattoos affect employment and income. Contrary to predictions, after adjusting for a number of variables like lifestyle choices and human capital, their findings showed no significant negative link between tattoos and labour market outcomes. These findings indicate an imbalance between perception and reality regarding tattoo-related prejudice in the workplace, despite a prevalent belief in perceived discrimination (French, 2018).

Furthermore, no significant "tattoo effect" has been observed regarding employment or earnings across a variety of indicators, such as the quantity and visibility of tattoos. This

result goes contrary to other research (Arndt and Glassman, 2012; Brallier et al., 2011; Timming et al., 2017) that highlights the perceived discrimination against people with tattoos. According to French (2018), people's perceptions of social realities may be obscured by inaccurate stereotypes, which could be the cause of the disparity between perceived and actual discrimination.

The possible concealing of the impacts of prejudice inside particular industries or types of workplaces provides another explanation for this disconnect. According to Dean (2010), there is a higher prevalence of tattoos in blue-collar jobs compared to white-collar jobs, which may complicate the examination of pay and employment effects. Further complicating the analysis of labour market statistics is the possibility that consumer views towards tattoos may affect specific businesses differently (Arndt et al., 2016).

Moreover, the growing acceptance of tattoos in society may have contributed to a decline in the frequency of prejudice against them over time. There may be a decrease in discriminatory behaviour when tattoos become more popular and cultural views towards them become more tolerant (Polidoro, 2014). However, there is still uncertainty over whether tattoos are acceptable in the workplace. While some sectors encourage body art, others forbid it, depending on a range of variables like the state of the labour market and the preferences of specific managers (Efthymiou, 2023).

Even though various researchers come to different conclusions about how tattoos affect workers' employability, we know that hiring practices in the hospitality industry frequently rely on informal decision-making, which opens the door to subjective assessments based on personal preferences for certain types of tattoos (Efthymiou, 2018). This confirms other studies that show how informal hiring practices are common in industries like hospitality, where selection is mostly done through informal conversations and interviews (Warhurst & Nickson, 2007). Due to this informality, employers can possibly discriminate against applicants by screening them based only on social and aesthetic qualities. (Efthymiou, 2018).

There is a persistent labour shortage in the tourist sector, especially in European nations (Sherman, 2007; Joppe, 2012). The shortage is made worse by an increase in visitor arrivals and is caused by a number of factors, including seasonality, poor wages, and little prospects for advancement (CAN, 2017). Because of the labour shortage, job searchers who have visible tattoos may find chances more easily accessible, particularly if their appearance complements the company's visual branding (Efthymiou, 2018).

However, it takes careful planning to navigate the job market with noticeable tattoos. Different organisations may have different policies on body art, which could result in discriminatory behaviours (Elzweig & Peeples, 2011). However, promoting inclusivity is still crucial, and businesses should encourage diversity and match their recruitment tactics with relationship marketing (Timming, 2017). For those who have tattoos, career planning becomes even more important because, to maximise their work prospects, they must take industry-specific norms and personal branding into account (Efthymiou, 2023).

Despite requests for changes to employment policies addressing tattoos (Timming et al., 2017), difficulties continue. Evident tattoos could still be a problem, affecting job advancement and hiring decisions (Wood, 2023). Given the persistent stigma attached to body art, many tattooed people hide their tattoos during interviews out of fear of facing discrimination (Wood, 2023). Going into the future, HR managers might have to take a more nuanced stance, taking into account unique cases instead of enforcing general rules against tattoos (Wood, 2023).

To conclude this second chapter, we have seen all the data collected on both tattoos as a global effect, and the tattoos anchored in the hospitality industry. Thanks to the data collected in the literature review we still need a deeper understanding of the identity and prejudices of tattooed persons. This will allow further analysis of the issues treated in this first part, thanks to the construction of a theoretical framework, and finally the proposal of a methodology and field of application.

PART II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES - DEFINING CONCEPTS AND NOTIONS

How much do managers' and guests' opinions on tattoos affect recruitment strategies and processes in the hospitality industry? The first part of this issue took a lot of reading; the second portion will expand on the findings and create a context. The second section of this dissertation, which is dedicated to the theoretical framework and the hypotheses, will provide this context.

The theoretical framework is required in order to draw attention to specific ideas and concepts. In fact, the framework will be helpful in organising the research. Furthermore, despite the fact that the first section of this dissertation, which had a lot of data, gave justifications for the understanding of the topic, other theories or models can be added.

Therefore, the focus of this next section will be on examining their theories and models. Ultimately, a lot of the problems raised in this final section raised questions about a few of the topics. Thus, those questions lead to hypotheses that must be verified in the different stages of the dissertation project for the next year.

Chapter 1. Concepts and Notions - A Theoretical Framework

There will be two different theories and models explained in this part, Those models are closely linked to the one discussed in the first part but they are not directly mentioned, they appeared here as a framework for the study. The theories of psychology and sociology will help frame the work and understand deeper our subject. Those are going to help the psychology around tattoos as well as there prejudices.

1.1. Social Identity Theory

The Social Identity Theory (SIT), which Tajfel and Turner first presented in the late 1970s, put light on how people view themselves and other people in social circumstances by illuminating the complex relationship between personal identity and group membership (Tajfel, 1978). Essentially, SIT argues that people's perceptions of themselves are mostly shaped by the social groups they belong to, like sports teams, ethnic groups, or occupations (Tajfel, 1978). This theory emphasises how social identities have a significant influence on how people behave and develop attitudes, especially when it comes to in-group and out-group dynamics.

The fundamental concept of SIT is that when people feel a deep emotional connection to their groups, their social identities become essential elements of their self-concepts (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). In addition to promoting a feeling of cohesion and belonging, group affiliation also helps people develop a stronger sense of direction and purpose (Hewstone et al., 2002). Furthermore, people's self-esteem is frequently boosted by belonging to a group since they take pride in the accomplishments and favourable reputation of their group (Tajfel, 1978).

Within-group assimilation and forms of intergroup prejudice are two of the major processes that the theory outlines and clarifies as the mechanics behind intergroup behaviours (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). While intergroup prejudice takes the shape of favouritism towards one's own group and sometimes negative assessments of out-groups,

within-group assimilation involves pressures to adhere to the norms of the in-group (Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

The stages that people go through when navigating their social identities are also explained by SIT. Social categorization is the first step in this process; people use conspicuous characteristics to put themselves and other people into distinct social groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Following this, social identity develops, in which people use the standards of their groups to define acceptable behaviour and form strong emotional bonds with others who belong to them (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). In conclusion, social comparison takes place when people compare their groups against others, frequently displaying prejudice towards their own group (Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

Within the framework of social identity theory, in-groups and out-groups are crucial in influencing people's attitudes and actions. People automatically have a positive perception of their in-group and are indifferent or negative towards their out-group, which helps them feel better about themselves (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Intergroup conflicts and prejudices can be fuelled by the desire for positive distinctiveness, which drives people to view their in-group as positively different or distinct from relevant out-groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

Furthermore, SIT has implications for a number of areas, such as organisational conduct, intergroup disagreements, and efforts to reduce prejudice (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Understanding the mechanisms behind out-group prejudices and in-group favouritism allows for the design of interventions that promote intergroup cooperation and understanding, which reduces conflict and strengthens social cohesion (Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

The Social Identity Theory's idea of in-groups and out-groups highlights that workers in the hospitality sector who have tattoos are part of an in-group that is separate from those who do not. Because of their common tattoo culture, they might form bonds of loyalty and identity, and they might see non-tattooed employees as members of the outside group. The same work on the other side, in-group can be the non-tattooed, and the out-group the tattooed workers. Their relationships at work, behaviour, and attitudes are

influenced by this social classification. When comparing their group with that of non-tattooed workers, tattooed workers may feel that they are more unique or authentic, which boosts their self-esteem because of their in-group status. Additionally, their attitude and relationships with customers might be influenced by their commitment to tattoo culture norms, such as originality and nonconformity. However, this unique identification may also contribute to discrimination or intergroup disputes between customers and non-tattooed employees, as well as between tattooed workers and non-tattooed workers, which could negatively affect workplace dynamics and consumer satisfaction in the hospitality sector.

1.2. Stereotype Content Model

A framework for understanding the characteristics along which people and groups are viewed in social cognition is offered by the stereotype content model (SCM). According to this concept, there are two basic dimensions: perceived competence, which includes qualities like assertiveness and capability, and perceived warmth, which includes qualities like friendliness and trustworthiness. The SCM asserts that these characteristics are essential in forming emotional prejudices, stereotypes, and discriminatory behaviours that follow. (Fiske, 2018)

Stereotypes about warmth and competence in the SCM emerge from perceived social structure, which is defined by elements like status and cooperation. Consequently, these preconceptions impact affective biases including pride, sympathy, disdain, and jealousy. Ultimately, prejudice can take many forms, both active and passive, as a result of these emotional responses. With important practical consequences, Fiske's (2018) complete theory exposes the systematic material and dynamics of stereotypes.

Cuddy et al. (2004) elaborate on the SCM further, describing how stereotyped groups are assessed according to the competence and warmth dimensions. Here, the research by Bergsieker in Figure 5¹⁶ supports this. Certain groups can be viewed as

¹⁶ Bergsieker Leslie, Constantine, & Fiske (2012), Warmth and competence stereotypes. Common stereotypes, mostly based on socioeconomic status and age, are shared across many countries. Other stereotypes vary by country; persistent stereotypes in the United States, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0963721417738825>

having low levels of competence and warmth (homeless individuals), high levels of both (White middle-class people), low levels of competence but high levels of warmth (older people), or high levels of competence but low levels of warmth (professional women). Groups are either discriminated against or favoured depending on where they fall on these dimensions. People who are seen as having high competence are more likely to get attention and support, whereas people who are seen as having high warmth might get help, protecting them from harm. On the other hand, stigmatised groups that score poorly on both dimensions are more likely to face discrimination and social exclusion.

Figure 5: Warmth and competence stereotypes.

	Low Competence (Capability, Assertiveness)	High Competence (Capability, Assertiveness)
High Warmth (Friendliness, Trustworthiness)	Common: Elderly, Disabled, Children United States: Italians, Irish Emotions Evoked: Pity, Sympathy	Common: Citizens, Middle Class, Defaults United States: Americans, Canadians, Christians Emotions Evoked: Pride, Admiration
Low Warmth (Friendliness, Trustworthiness)	Common: Poor, Homeless, Immigrants United States: Latinos, Africans, Muslims Emotions Evoked: Disgust, Contempt	Common: Rich, Professional, Technical Experts United States: Asians, Jews, British, Germans Emotions Evoked: Envy, Jealousy

Henle (2021) expands on this approach by using the SCM in the context of job candidates having noticeable tattoos. Based on other studies (Degelman & Price, 2002) show that people with tattoos are frequently regarded as lacking warmth and competence. Job seekers with tattoos are probably seen similarly. As such, individuals may encounter bias regarding perceived warmth, friendliness, generosity, and levels of intelligence, competence, and professionalism. This implies that those having visible tattoos could be perceived as being cold and incompetent, which could make them more vulnerable to discrimination in the workplace (Henle, 2021).

Justification-suppression model

A perspective through which to understand the dynamics of prejudice is provided by the justification-suppression model (JSM) developed by Crandall and Eshleman (2003)

along with knowledge from the stereotype content model (Cuddy et al., 2004). This is especially true when it comes to employment discrimination against people who have visible tattoos. According to Henle (2021), people who have tattoos are stereotyped as less warm and competent than people who do not have tattoos. These stereotypes act as defences against discrimination expressed through unfair employment practices.

According to the JSM, people are driven to express unfavourable opinions on particular groups of people because they belong to those groups. However, bias may be suppressed by personal beliefs and societal standards. However, prejudice is more likely to materialise as discrimination in situations where suppression factors are minimised and rationalisation elements are maximised (Henle, 2021).

When this approach is used for job candidates who have noticeable tattoos, it exposes a system by which prejudice in the workplace can be justified by preconceptions. According to Goffman (1963), visible tattoos are frequently linked to stigma, which leads to negative attributions and preconceptions that marginalise people and restrict social relationships. As a result of these misconceptions, job candidates who have tattoos could be viewed as less qualified for employment (Henle, 2021).

Studies show that people who have tattoos are often perceived as less knowledgeable, professional, friendly, and possessing lower character than people who do not have tattoos (Ruetzler et al., 2012). Furthermore, tattoos are frequently mistakenly associated with negative traits such as substance abuse, promiscuity, and criminal activity (Koch et al., 2010). Hiring managers might justify their bias in favour of hiring people who have visible tattoos by using these preconceptions as predictors of future job performance (Henle, 2021).

The conversion of discriminatory practices into unfavourable stereotypes is supported by empirical evidence. People with visible tattoos are difficult to get hired by, according to employers in a variety of businesses (Anderson et al., 2015). This data underlines how prejudices affect tattoo-wearers' career prospects in real life and emphasises the necessity for efforts to lessen appearance-based discrimination.

Body modification and Employability in the Hotel Sector: The Case Study of tattooed workers in mid-scale hotels, cross Cultural research: France versus Spain

Because of all the concepts discussed previously, this study now has a theoretical framework that guides future qualitative and quantitative analyses of the topic as well as the study's literature review.

Body modification and Employability in the Hotel Sector: The Case Study of tattooed workers in mid-scale hotels, cross Cultural research: France versus Spain

Chapter 2: Hypotheses - Navigating the ideas

Issues were brought up because of the theoretical framework and the literature review. The main one, the problematic, originates from a simple starting question: To what extent do the perceptions of tattoos by both managers and customers influence recruitment strategy and practices in the hotel sector?

Which leads to this question: To what extent does societal culture impact the employability of tattooed workers? Specifically, how do cultural attitudes towards tattoos influence hiring practices, career advancement, and workplace acceptance, and are there discernible differences across Spain and France cultural contexts?

But other questions have to be put into perspective: Is it only for front-of-house employees? Knowing that tattoos are not expected on white-collar employees, is it the same for the management domain in hospitality? Does it just depend on the work environment? Or also on how the hotel brand in itself want to represent? Is it still the same socially for the data collected in the first part in the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia in France and Spain?

The answers to all those questions will be supported by hypotheses that can be true, or false and will then lead to a future investigation in the domain next year.

My hypotheses are as followed:

In the dynamic landscape of the hotel sector, the intersection of managerial decisions, customer perceptions and societal attitudes plays a central role in shaping the experiences and employability of tattooed workers. Through three interrelated hypotheses, we aim to illuminate the nuanced dynamics that contribute to the stigmatisation and inclusion of tattooed workers within the hotel sector.

Hypothesis 1: Managerial Bias and Stigmatisation of Tattooed Workers

Managerial bias in the hotel sector is positively correlated with the stigmatisation of tattooed workers and consequently negatively affects their employability. Specifically, I hypothesise that hotel managers with preconceived notions or negative attitudes towards employees with visible tattoos are more likely to contribute to a stigmatised workplace environment for tattooed individuals.

This stigmatisation, in turn, is expected to manifest itself in reduced opportunities for employment, promotion and career advancement for tattooed workers within the hotel industry.

Hypothesis 2: Recruitment Strategy and Customer Perceptions

The recruitment strategy of managers in the service industry, particularly in customer-facing roles within hotels, is influenced by customer perceptions of tattooed workers. I hypothesise that managers, aware of customer preferences and potential biases, tailor their recruitment approaches based on prevailing societal attitudes towards visible tattoos.

So that positive customer perceptions of tattooed workers will lead to a more inclusive recruitment strategy, whereas negative perceptions may lead managers to adopt a more conservative recruitment approach, potentially limiting the employment opportunities for individuals with visible tattoos within the hotel sector.

Hypothesis 3: Managerial Recruitment Choices and Shaping Customer Biases

Hiring decisions made by managers in the hotel sector play an important role in shaping customer prejudice towards tattooed workers. I propose that the visible presence or absence of tattooed employees in customer service roles influences customer perceptions and contributes to the development of bias over time.

I hypothesise that managerial decisions to actively include or exclude tattooed workers in customer-facing positions contribute to the formation and reinforcement of

customer biases towards individuals with visible tattoos, thereby influencing broader societal attitudes towards this group of service workers.

The incorporation of hypotheses will enable a more thorough study after the topic has been defined and problematized.

However, those theories provide a clear route for what this study's future stages should be.

Indeed, specific answers that go beyond data will be required in order to attempt to determine whether or not the above-mentioned hypotheses are true.

This second part explained theories and models linked to this study, but also to create hypotheses to study this subject.

Many theories were explained in the first and second parts: servicescape, aesthetic labour and branded labour, perceived competence, continuity theory, image congruence, the Social Identity Theory and the Stereotype Content Model. Not only do they define and demonstrate, but they also provide certain answers to some of the questions we were asking ourselves.

Moreover, hypotheses were found after the problematisation of the subject. Thanks to findings made in the first part, this starting question quickly changed to a problematisation: To what extent does societal culture impact the employability of tattooed workers? Specifically, how do cultural attitudes towards tattoos influence hiring practices, career advancement, and workplace acceptance, and are there discernible differences across Spain and France cultural contexts?

Three hypotheses were found, which could help to answer this problematic question if proven right or wrong. Those questions concern the impact of managerial bias and stigmatisation, customer perceptions and managerial recruitment choices. All of those shaping the industry and potentially creating prejudices in the hiring process.

Thus, and as mentioned earlier, the hypotheses, the concepts proposed the need to create a deeper analysis. This analysis needs to go beyond the literature review and theoretical framework and provide more answers than the data collected before. That is when the third part on methodology and field of application appears.

PART III. PROPOSAL OF A METHODOLOGY AND FIELD OF APPLICATION - EXPERIENCES AND LIMITS

The tattooed workers, managers and customers have been analysed all along in this study. Thanks to a literature review, to define the subject and the issues discovered by many researchers. And then, through a theoretical framework and hypotheses, which continue defining the base of this study, but also questioned its relevance.

The analysis carried out in the first half of this study was helpful globally, but it needs to become concrete in the specialisation of France and Spain. That is why this third part appears to conduct a qualitative analysis as well as a quantitative analysis, thanks to the methodology and the field of application.

This part will be divided into two chapters. The first one will determine the methodology and the field of application, which will highlight the importance of future interviews and questionnaires, as well as, the selection of mid-scale for the field of application.

The second chapter will explain how the work was conducted and the limitations encountered while writing and researching for this paper, but also the ones that could be met later. Finally, the last part will determine what will be the link between my first-year internship, what will be needed in the second year of research, and the next steps that will be followed in this year as well as next year.

Chapter 1: Methodology and Field of Application - Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches

The work completed in the first two sections of this study has contributed to the development of a theoretical framework, hypotheses, a literature review, and a problematisation of the topic. The upcoming chapter will provide a clearer picture of the tasks that lie ahead. The aspects, which are all related to the primary issue of this study, were all evaluated with the use of global data and studies conducted on a variety of topics. These analyses have been useful, to understand, but neither in France nor in Spain has the work been done. This first chapter will be dedicated to this topic. The qualitative approach and required hotel management interview should be explained first. Next, the questionnaire and quantitative approach that will be gathered from mid-scale hotel customers in both nations. The choice of mid-scale hotels in both hotels will be the last point.

1.1. Qualitative approach: Manager interviews

As said before this study will cover both managers and customers. We will first start with the managers. Mid-scale hotels mananagers of both France and Spain will be interviewed and this will be analyse thank to a qualitative approach. Accoding the 2001 Handbook of Interview Research, sociologist Carol A. B. Warren defines a qualitative interview as one that aims to "understand the meaning of respondent's experiences and life worlds" and highlights the "importance of participant's perspectives for an understanding of the process" (Gubrium et Holstein 2001, p. 83). The individual's opinions, which are connected to their social situations, are somewhat important since they will influence the interview process and produce outcomes that a quantitative study would not have. The goal and of a qualitative analysis is to ask questions of up to 10 participants in order to confirm or refute the hypotheses that have been made.

The future of this dissertation, in Master 2, will be centered around the persons who will answer those questions and will be analysed thanks to the qualitative analysis. To do this, the goal of the second section of this dissertation, which was written and researched in the second year, is to produce a qualitative analysis. Consequently, there will be open questions in this qualitative study that will be asked to French and Spanish hotel managers.

First, each manager from the French and Spanish hospitality industries that was chosen will have at least a thirty-minute interview conducted with them. The managers who will be interviewed consist of around ten managers who are employed in the hotel sector.

The questions asked will aid in addressing the theories put forward in this dissertation's second section. Consequently, there will be three sections to the qualitative analysis. First, ask them personal questions to define who they are. A brief synopsis of the dissertation will be given to them in order to make them feel at ease with the subject. In addition, asking them personal questions may help to ease them into the topic while still being pertinent to this study. Secondly, questions concerning their company and whether they work in a brand or not. Then their opinion when hiring and working. Finally, questions regarding their individual experiences related to customers experiences. These will cover a wide range of topics, primarily centred around the experiences of tattooed workers, who are connected to all of the hypotheses.

Therefore, the following will be the questions asked

Defining

- A) How old are you?
- B) What is your position in the company
- C) What is your educational background?

D) Why did you choose to work in the industry?

E) Do you have a tattoo?

The company

F) What type of hotel do you work in? Brand or independent?

G) If brand hotel, are there any rules of standardisation?

H) Do you work with tattooed individuals?

I) Are there any specific policies or guidelines in your hotel related to body modifications, and how are they communicated to the employees?

Personal experience when hiring

J) Can you describe the hiring process in your hotel and the criteria you typically use to evaluate potential candidates?

K) How important is the appearance and overall presentation of hotel staff in your establishment, and to what extent does it influence the hiring decision?

L) Have you encountered situations where a candidate's body modification, specifically tattoos, influenced the hiring decision? If so, how?

Personal experience when working

M) How do you handle situations where an employee decides to get a visible tattoo after being hired? Does this impact their current position or future advancement within the organisation?

N) In your experience, have you observed any differences in the acceptance of body modifications among hotel staff and management?

O) How do you balance the desire for a diverse and inclusive workforce (if it is looked for) with any potential concerns or biases related to body modifications?

P) Are there specific roles within the hotel where you believe visible body modifications may be more or less acceptable, and why?

Managing and customers opinions

Q) What is the general perception among your guests regarding the appearance of hotel staff, including those with visible tattoos?

R) Can you share any instances where the presence of tattooed employees positively or negatively affected the overall guest experience or the hotel's reputation?

S) Have you received feedback or complaints from guests or employees regarding the appearance of hotel staff, particularly concerning tattoos?

T) In your opinion, do you believe that having a diverse team, including individuals with visible tattoos, enhances the overall guest experience and the hotel's image?

U) Looking to the future, do you foresee any changes in the hospitality industry's attitudes toward body modifications, and how do you think these changes might impact hiring practices?

1.2. Quantitative approach: Customer questionnaires

We will now work on the customer side. Mid-scale hotels customers of both France and Spain will have to answer a questionnaire and this will be analysed thanks to a quantitative approach. According to Bhandari, quantitative research is “the process of collecting and analyzing numerical data. It can be used to find patterns and averages, make predictions, test causal relationships, and generalize results to wider populations.”¹⁷

Here, the questions will be either open, yes/no or multiple choices. The questionnaire will provide statistical answers on the specific topic that is customer perceptions on tattooed workers in hospitality. The sample to be studied must be representative of the target population. It must also be a large sample in order to obtain

¹⁷ Pritha Bhandari, (June 12, 2020), What is Quantitative Research? Definition, Uses & Methods, Scribbr <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/quantitative-research/>

relevant statistical data. That is why a large number of customers should answer the questionnaire.

The future of this dissertation, in Master 2, will be centered around the persons who will answer the questionnaire and will be analysed thanks to the quantitative approach. Consequently, there will be questions in this quantitative study that will be asked to both French and Spanish mid-scale hotel customers.

The questions asked will help in addressing the theories put forward in this dissertation's second section. Consequently, there will be 20 different questions from personal information, to the experience, review, and recommendations.

Therefore, the following will be the questionnaire

Customer Perception of Staff Appearance and Service in Hotels: A Questionnaire

Note: This questionnaire aims to gather insights into customers' perceptions of staff appearance, including body modifications, and its impact on their overall satisfaction with hotel services. Please answer the following questions honestly and to the best of your ability.

A) Demographic Information:

Gender: Male / Female / Other

Age: _____

Nationality: _____

Educational Background: _____

Do you have a tattoo? Yes / No

How often do you stay in hotels for leisure or business purposes?

Rarely / Occasionally / Frequently

B) General Experience:

On a scale of 1 to 10, how satisfied are you with the overall service provided by the hotel during your recent stay?

(1 being very dissatisfied, 10 being very satisfied)

C) Staff Interaction:

How would you rate the friendliness and professionalism of the hotel staff during your stay?

Excellent / Good / Satisfactory / Fair / Poor

D) Staff Appearance:

Do you notice the appearance of hotel staff, including clothing and grooming?

Yes / No

E) Attitude Towards Visible Tattoos:

Are you personally comfortable with hotel staff having visible tattoos?

Very Comfortable / Comfortable / Neutral / Uncomfortable / Very Uncomfortable

F) Impact of Staff Appearance on Your Experience:

To what extent do you believe the appearance of hotel staff, including body modifications, affects your overall experience?

Significantly / Moderately / Slightly / Not at all

G) Specific Body Modifications:

Do you have any specific preferences or concerns regarding certain types of body modifications (e.g., tattoos, piercings) on hotel staff? Please explain.

H) Cultural Sensitivity:

How important do you think it is for hotel staff to be culturally sensitive in their appearance to cater to guests from different backgrounds?

Very Important / Important / Neutral / Not Important / Not at all Important

I) Feedback Channels:

Were you provided with any channels to provide feedback on your overall experience with the hotel and its staff?

Yes / No

J) Social Media Engagement:

In the event of a positive or negative experience related to staff appearance, would you be inclined to share your feedback on social media platforms?

Likely to Share Positives / Likely to Share Negatives / Unlikely to Share / No Impact

K) Repeat Business:

To what extent does the appearance of hotel staff influence your decision to choose the same hotel for future stays?

Significantly / Moderately / Slightly / Not at all

L) Diversity and Inclusion:

How important is it for you that the hotel staff reflects diversity, including individuals with visible body modifications?

Very Important / Important / Neutral / Not Important / Not at all Important

M) Communication Preferences:

Would you appreciate it if the hotel communicated its policies regarding staff appearance, including body modifications, during the booking process?

Yes / No / Indifferent

N) Personal Experience:

Have you ever had a negative or positive experience related to the appearance of hotel staff during your travels? Please share.

O) Impact on Hotel Rating:

On a scale of 1 to 10, how likely are you to give a higher rating to a hotel with staff that has a diverse appearance, including visible body modifications?

(1 being very unlikely, 10 being very likely)

P) Recommendations:

Do you have any recommendations for hotels on how they can better address customer perceptions of staff appearance while maintaining a diverse workforce?

Q) Inclusivity Policies:

Are you aware of any inclusivity or diversity policies implemented by the hotel you recently stayed at?

R) Booking Decisions:

Would the information about the appearance policies of a hotel influence your decision to book a stay?

Yes / No / Maybe

S) Future Trends:

Do you anticipate that attitudes towards staff appearance, including body modifications, will change in the hospitality industry? How?

T) Additional Comments:

Is there anything else you would like to share regarding your experience with hotel staff appearance or any suggestions for improvement?

1.3. Selection of mid-scale hotels in France and Spain

It was important to identify a field of application for mid-scale hotels in both France and Spain in the hospitality landscape. A diverse range of tourists seeking a balance between comfort, affordability, and high-quality service were attracted to these mid-scale hotels. Shaping and understanding the mid-scale hotel field will play an important role in future research in the second year.

We plan to use a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods as part of our study methodology to obtain a thorough understanding of the dynamics involved in hiring people with tattoos in mid-scale hotels. As previously noted, we plan to interview managers of mid-scale hotels in France and Spain for the qualitative approach. The interviews conducted at those mid-scale hotels will provide insightful qualitative data that will bring information on the strategies, beliefs, and effects of tattooed employee feedback from clients.

By giving out questionnaires to guests staying at those mid-scale hotels in France and Spain, we will use a quantitative approach. The purpose of these surveys is to learn more about the attitudes, preferences, and perceptions of guests about the presence of tattooed employees in the hospitality sector. We seek to evaluate the effects of hiring tattooed employees on visitor experiences and general satisfaction rates by gathering quantitative data on customer satisfaction, perceptions of authenticity, and willingness to return or advertise the hotel.

We chose to include those specific mid-scale hotel chains in Spain and France because of their well-established reputation and broad influence within the hospitality sectors of both countries. These chains have shown performance that is consistently

aligned with what mid-scale travellers would expect. They will contribute to the creation of an accurate representation of the mid-scale hotel sector.

One or two brands will be selected in each country to establish a field of application during the second year of our research for managers and customers who will answer our questions.

Here is the list of potential mid-scales hotels for our second-year research

France

- A) Novotel Novotel
- B) Mercure
- C) Holiday Inn
- D) Best Western Plus
- E) Ibis Styles
- F) Campanile

Spain

- A) NH Hotels
- B) Meliá Hotels International
- C) Vincci Hoteles
- D) AC Hotels by Marriott
- E) Barceló Hotels & Resorts
- F) H10 Hotels

It is now evident what will occur during both analyses conducted in the second year of this master's programme because of this first chapter. First, by using a qualitative method and interviewing managers of mid-scale hotels, we may learn more about their

perspectives on recruiting and collaborating with individuals who have tattoos. We could also determine whether or not their choices are influenced by what they believe their clients should anticipate. Secondly, the use of a quantitative approach and customer questionnaires will reveal the firsthand perceptions of tattooed personnel. Thus, these qualitative and quantitative analyses will be crucial to the study since they will enable the problematisation of the subject and provide answers to the difficulties addressed, as well as support or refute the hypotheses.

Chapter 2: The first-year work and the limitation

After describing the methodology and the field of application, the following section will discuss the work completed and the results of that first year. All of this while keeping in mind the challenges and constraints of writing the dissertation. Determining the next line of action and how I will select my first-year internship are also crucial. To address the questions, interviews and questionnaires must still be completed despite the methodological work having been completed. For this reason, we need to finish the job from the first year in a second year.

2.1. Analysis of the work - Master 1st Year

To be able to reflect on the work provided for this dissertation, both the intermediate dissertation sheet, submitted in early December and the whole work carried out for the first year dissertation will be analysed. First, will see what was learned about the methodology of research in the year, then what could have been done better regarding the work and organisation of the year, and the last part will reflect on what can be taken from a personal viewpoint.

Firstly, many components were learned when preparing the work for this master's dissertation. Indeed, the Intermediate Sheet was just the beginning of the amount of work that was going to arrive in the whole year. The first aspect was choosing the subject. The year started with a completely different idea of what to work on. The Food Studies were attractive, and an idea was already developed. But the whole subject changed last minute when it was time to validate it and choose a main supervisor. Indeed, the first subject would have been too difficult to work on for a Master's thesis that's how this subject came to mind since the Hospitality field was the second idea.

Moreover, the Erasmus done in the third year of Bachelor helped the methodology, but some important elements still needed to be worked on. The Intermediate Sheet also helped re-understanding how a thesis needed to be done with different parts, references,

or the bibliography. However, even if the Intermediate Sheet was the introduction of the literature review, it is the whole year thesis that fully created the literature review and its analysis. It is also the thesis that explains the theoretical framework and its importance regarding the work and its outcome. This work was also made possible thanks to the introduction of the Gantt Chart, it helped organise the work that needed to be carried out in both this year and the next one. To finish, even if they are not methodological courses, the courses of Professeur Anael Peu and Professeur Marie-Anne Dufeu, helped understand how to organise and prioritise according to importance and urgency. Those courses helped focus on what was important and prioritise those things to have a better organisation.

Secondly, the work carried out also helps develop an understanding of what can be done better in the next year. When working on the Intermediate Sheet, not enough notes were taken, which led to the necessity of re-working the references already read. It was unfortunately a loss of time that is regrettable. Moreover, as said before both courses on the importance of prioritising and organising led to not following the Gantt Chart provided in the Intermediate Sheet. A lot more time was spent on the literature review than what was expected to fully grasp the subject and know where to focus the attention. Furthermore, as planned on the first-year Gantt Chart it is still expected to collect data from May to August, linked to the Internship that will be explained a bit further on.

Finally, many lessons were learned from a personal view. Firstly, it is now clear how to organise time, to manage courses, the thesis and personal time. This time was mostly well managed in the last month of the work, which helped build this work. Working on this thesis also helped recognise that it is a work that can be enjoyed when, like here, the subject is something that can be deeply affecting. It clears out that it is a subject that wants to be spread and discussed between hospitality workers. Indeed, when talking about it to past colleagues still working in the industry, most were interested in the outcome of the work. This interest helped being invested in the work that needed to be conducted.

This work, while having difficulties to write creating a loss of motivation in some moments of the year, still has allowed a lot of learning and discovering.

2.2. Limitations of the work

As mentioned above, some limitations of the work carried out were encountered while writing this study. It is important to mention them, as they have had an impact on the study, and some other limitations will continue to have an impact on next year's study.

Firstly, the limitations of data are an important one. Indeed, the lack of data was mentioned several times. This is because there was no data on the tattooed workers in hospitality for both France and Spain. This led to a very vague literature review, that did, most times, not focus on the French or Spanish hospitality sector, but on the global hospitality sector in Western countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia. It complicated the research, as not having data forced us to oversee the cultural context of France and Spain; but also forced this study to be less detailed and complete than wanted. As a result, data that would have helped answer some of the questions asked.

Moreover, another issue and limitation encountered in the first year was the difficulty of time management. This issue led to insufficient literature review time and rushed writing. Due to the lack of time, some data might have been missed. In addition, the lack of qualitative and quantitative approaches in the first-year thesis can be seen as limitations and lack of data.

In contemplating future research, a pertinent consideration arises regarding the limited number of interviews conducted with managers from comparable hotels in France and Spain. Recent scholarly discourse has underscored the pivotal question of the adequacy of qualitative interviews in research. Scholars have debated the optimal number of interviews required to ensure methodological work and credibility in empirical studies. While some say that a single interview with an expert is enough, others say that a broader range, from 12 to 60 interviews is needed. That is why the sample is a limit that still needs to be discussed and found.

Finally, another limitation can appear since this subject is based on subjectivity. Indeed, as read in the literature review, the manager's decision-making can be subjective when they don't have to follow brand regulations and rules. So we can ask ourselves whether or not the data collection will be relevant.

Arguably, those limitations are considerably low and limited: they have not made this study impossible to execute, nor endangered it. But, while limitations did provide more difficulties, other aspects made this study easier. The last part of this chapter will be regarding the next step of the work.

2.3. The next steps of the study - First Year Internship

This last section, therefore, leads to wondering what will be the next steps of this study. In Appendix A and B, the Gantt Chart of both years of study are listed. Both charts are the same as the ones from the Intermediate Sheet. Indeed, for the first year, even if the period of the literature review changed, all the other works that needed to be conducted were kept. Indeed, the data collection will be done from May to August.

The hope of keeping the same Gantt Chart for the second year of work remains, which is why the one from the Intermediate Sheet was used.

Coming back to the first year and the data collection. it will happen during the first year internship. Indeed, the internship will take place in Barcelona, in a hostel, it was decided to conduct the beginning of the data collection for both managers and customers in Spain.

This data collection in the first year will need a data analysis that will be conducted at the beginning of the second year. This will also help identify and limit the field of application and methodology.

Moreover, the assessment of the first-year thesis and the data collection will probably lead to clarification and development of the literature review.

This planning of next year's study is expected to be followed carefully, to ensure the facilitation of the work, but also better writing and stress management. It is still known that some possible unplanned events can impact the second year. Another issue that might arise is the difficulty of finding hospitality managers who will be inclined to answer the questions. This is why the interviews are expected to take a lot of time, both in the first and second years. The time needed to find respondents also needs to be taken into account.

This last part of this dissertation acts like a conclusion for the writing and research of this first year's study, while also acting like an opening to the second year of research.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

Numerous lessons are anticipated to have been learned by the time this year's thesis concludes. To explore those learnings, a review of the master's thesis work and a reminder of the study's conclusions are required. This will serve as the end of the first year of this dissertation as well as the beginning of the second year's work.

In conclusion, the place of tattooed workers in the hospitality industry was proven, thanks to the literature review part of this thesis, to be difficult to understand. We started the study with two questions: To what extent do the perceptions of tattoos by both managers and customers influence recruitment strategy and practices in the hotel sector? And to what extent does societal culture impact the employability of tattooed workers? Specifically, how do cultural attitudes towards tattoos influence hiring practices, career advancement, and workplace acceptance, and are there discernible differences across Spain and France cultural contexts?

The first part of the literature review helped us understand the place of tattoos in Western culture since no data have been collected in France and Spain. It leads us to the conclusion that even with the development of the tattoo culture and its perception of art, tattooed people are still stigmatised, and prejudiced. This led to the development of the second part of the literature review which is centred around the tattooed workers in the Hospitality industry. In this part, like the first one, the lack of data on both countries leads to a more global study. The hospitality industry is hard to define since a lot of different works, scales, and branding cohabited. However, the definition of the shaping of the industry as well as the explanation of the importance that the industry is deeply rooted in appearance and expectation were made. Then, it analyses the perception of those workers by both managers and customers. When it comes to customers, they still have some expectations on the look the worker has to have, according to the place where they work. Tattoos can be seen as welcome when it is part of the company culture but can be inappropriate when not. For the managers' perceptions, the studies show that hiring recruiters often have preconceptions about the workers which can create an impact on

employability. However, it has also been found that there were no differences in earnings between tattooed and non-tattooed workers.

That is where we can ask ourselves whether tattooed people are prejudiced when applying to the hospitality industry in both France and Spain since the studies have found several possible answers.

Then, the second part of this study allowed an evolution of the main issue and the understanding of a theoretical framework, with concepts and notions that intersect the identity of the self of a tattooed worker, and a model on stereotypes leading to the conclusion that those having visible tattoos can be seen in a particular way, strengthening the first idea that tattooed workers can be disadvantages in the hiring process.

This part helped create the hypotheses that will be useful in answering the beginning questions. This part deepened the explanation given in the literature review and will help the work that needs to be conducted in the second year.

Finally, the last part of the dissertation was created to validate or not the hypotheses. It led to the creation of both quantitative and qualitative approaches to answer them. The qualitative approach will be centred around manager interviews of mid-scale hotels in both France and Spain. And the quantitative approach for questionnaires answered by customers of both hotels.

What will have been learned at the end of this study will concern how tattooed workers are perceived; if managers already have biases in the hiring process; if the customer preferences and their biases will lead to the changing of the managers' decisions; or if the decision to include or not tattooed workers in customer-facing jobs create and deepen customers biases and influences social prejudices.

Moreover, a selection of mid-scale hotels was made in both countries to establish a field of application that will be worked on in the second year.

To finish, the analysis of the first year was made, listing what was learned, and developed. The limitation of the work done in this first year was also given, with the limited data, and the lack of qualitative and quantitative approaches done.

All of this finishes with what are the next steps, both in this year regarding the data collection, and next year with the following of the data collection, the data analysis and the organisation of the work.

Next year's study will continue answering the issues raised in this first year's dissertation:

- To what extent do the perceptions of tattoos by both managers and customers influence recruitment strategy and practices in the hotel sector?
- To what extent does societal culture impact the employability of tattooed workers? Specifically, how do cultural attitudes towards tattoos influence hiring practices, career advancement, and workplace acceptance, and are there discernible differences across Spain and France cultural contexts?

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Body modification and Employability in the Hotel Sector: The Case Study of tattooed workers in mid-scale hotels, cross Cultural research: France versus Spain

APPENDIX A - Master's 1 dissertation Gantt Chart

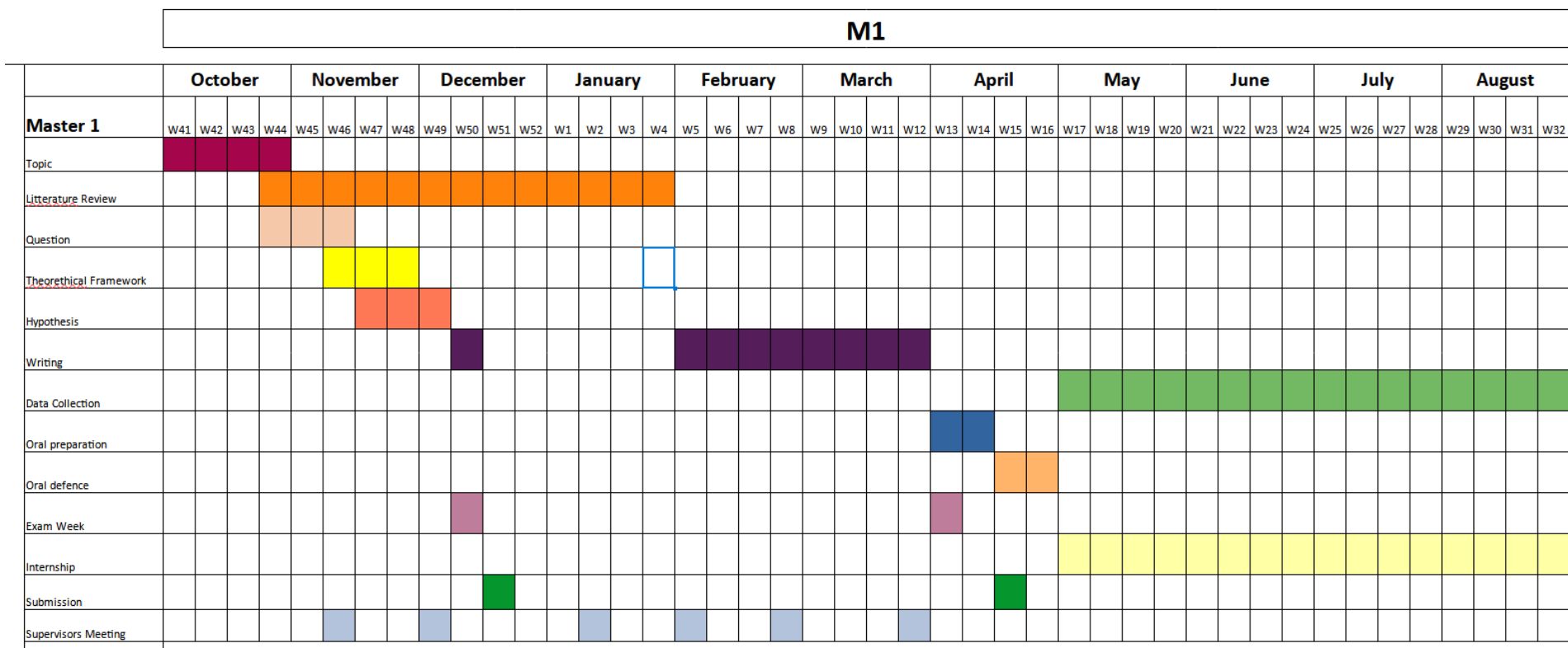


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ABSTRACT - Body modification and Employability in the Hotel Sector: The Case Study of tattooed workers in mid-scale hotels, cross Cultural research: France versus Spain

With an emphasis on France and Spain, it explores the complex world of tattooed workers in the hospitality sector. It discusses the conflict between the growing number of tattoos and persistent social stigmas, especially in work environments. It places tattoos in the perspective of Western society and the industry's emphasis on the appearance of employees. This provides insight into two main questions: first, how tattoo views affect hiring procedures; and second, how society culture affects tattooed workers' employability. It aims to find out more about hiring discrimination, obstacles to career advancement, and customers relationships. To understand identity, appearance, and the dynamics of the workplace in contemporary society.

KEYWORDS: tattooed workers - managers - customers - employability - prejudices

RESUME - Modification corporelle et employabilité dans le secteur hôtelier : Etude de cas des travailleurs tatoués dans les hôtels de taille moyenne, recherche interculturelle : France versus Espagne

En mettant l'accent sur la France et l'Espagne, ce mémoire explore le monde complexe des travailleurs tatoués dans le secteur de l'hôtellerie et de la restauration. Il aborde le conflit entre le nombre croissant de tatouages et les stigmates sociaux persistants, en particulier dans les environnements de travail. Il replace les tatouages dans la perspective de la société occidentale et de l'importance accordée par le secteur à l'apparence des employés. Cela permet de répondre à deux questions principales : premièrement, comment l'opinion sur les tatouages affecte les procédures d'embauche et deuxièmement, comment la culture de la société affecte l'employabilité des travailleurs tatoués. L'objectif est de trouver des informations sur la discrimination à l'embauche, les obstacles à l'avancement professionnel et les relations avec les clients. Comprendre l'identité, l'apparence et la dynamique du lieu de travail dans la société contemporaine.

MOTS-CLES : travailleurs tatoués - managers - clients - employabilité - préjudices