IS TEMPORARY THE NEW PERMANENT

A RESEARCH INTO THE TEMPORARY USE OF VACANT REAL ESTATE
- reflection -

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10.1 REFLECTION RESEARCH
The research methods applied in this research thesis are a literature study, case studies and interviews. Below, there will be reflected for each research method to what extent the method worked and if the choice for this approach was appropriate.

THE LITERATURE STUDY

“THE ART OF SIMPLICITY IS A PUZZLE OF COMPLEXITY” - DOUG HORTON

The literature shows the broad interest in the field of real estate, starting with my choice of topic, which incorporated two domains; real estate management and urban area development. Framing remained difficult during the process until the moment the indicators were defined and I could continue with the empirical part of the research. At that moment, everything connected into a complete picture and was clear that in my mind I had a clear vision from the start and tried to contribute knowledge for the property owner.

Throughout the literature study I discovered that by means of a lot of reading and studying, I drew a lot of conclusions in my mind that were not referred to on paper. Only in the last part of my research, certain topics were integrated and described in the research. Writing down studied literature earlier in the process is therefore a great lesson for me. Not aiming to dissolve everything at once, and draw conclusions through a more structured approach. In similar vein, I could only assess the essentials of certain elements and make the assessment. Previously, I could have deleted some literature that was not in line with my main research question, however this proved to be difficult as the produced documents took a lot of effort and time.

What I often did in the last phase of my research, is taking distance to the subjects and in logical order try to define the core values or direction. This contributed to find the common thread in my research and helped to bring clarity in the parts that I was stuck in. During the process, I often changed my methods and models, and sketched across the printed previous version. This has helped me to make decisions. The same I did with the contents and the order of the literature, which I often changed on a large scale.

Through the choice of a research related to values, both subjective and objective, I found the literature a challenge. Due to the fact that there is relatively little knowledge about temporary use and the contribution of added value in urban areas, it was sometimes a struggle to form a unified narrative. Because temporary use is a relatively new concept, there was not much knowledge available. Therefore I think that my research contributes much scientific value and relevance to the field of expertise of real estate and housing.

THE INTERVIEWS

“THE SECRET OF CHANGE IS TO FOCUS ALL OF YOUR ENERGY, NOT ON FIGHTING THE OLD, BUT ON BUILDING THE NEW” – SOCRATES

Making appointments takes time and a lot of effort; this was underestimated and has contributed to a delay in graduation of two months. I learned that the initiators of temporary establishment are busy entrepreneurs who are consistently involved in all kind of projects.
When the meetings were realized the entrepreneurial approach was noticed in the enthusiastic and passionate way of talking about temporary use. For me, afterwards every interview created a positive vibe and encouraged me to pore myself deeply in the research. It also sparked the dream to undertake in future years.

In retrospect I should have started earlier with the interviews, I was afraid to make decisions and thereby to conduct interviews that were not in line with my research and could not ensure a proper outcome of my research, or would contribute too little input. That is the reason of my broadly set up case interviews and after the first two interviews I filtered the questions, as I found out that not all the questions were relevant. The interviews helped to determine the approach to added value of the projects and helped to provide a clear choice for my framework.

10.2 REFLECTION PERSONAL PROCESS

“STRIVE NOT TO BE A SUCCESS, BUT RATHER TO BE OF VALUE” – ALBERT EINSTEIN

In my research I found out that my definition of success is whether an initiative contributes added value. Only when an initiative has added value it is in my opinion assessed as a success. Before this realization, the success aspect or topic was incorporated in every research question and I had repeatedly sought literature about success. This realization led to a change of direction in the research question and the focus on social and economic values.

In the overall process, I lingered too long in the literature, and I should have started earlier with the empirical part. It is the variety of the components of this study that provided me eventually with new insights and a more efficient working method. In addition to this, I also noticed that I myself need an "incubation period"; some conclusions and decisions had to be processed before I could continue with the research. A lesson is therefore to think not from problem to problem in the future, but to solve each individual problem independent instead, of holding on to the overall problems and definitions that rose.

LEARNING POINTS

My planning could have sooner identified the delay in the process as I programmed a lot of task around the P3 and P4 period. This was the result of making a lot of interim research planning’s and not following a global vision.

The actual research process was a more iterative process and really not as gradual as I envisioned. Overall, I gained more insight into the process, which accompanies theoretical research. In the future, this insight will help to better estimate the process;

1. More clearly define the problem and goals.
2. Establishment of essentials for the research topic.
3. Form soon a conceptual model that relate the themes necessary for an answer to the research question.
4. Structuring of the literature research, drawing up in between conclusions.
5. Feedback to the research questions and refine them.
6. The use of research techniques.
7. An objective view to the outcome of the research.