BALANCING BENEFITS AND DISADVANTAGES

How do tourism professionals in Leeuwarden consider the impacts of sustainable tourism on resident communities?

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Sustainable tourism, defined by the World Tourism Organization as: "tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities" (n.d.), has been widely implemented in policy, academia and the private sector, as it is often considered an answer to the problems caused by mass-tourism (Muwforth & Munt, 2016). However, sustainable tourism has also been critiqued, for, amongst others, as it presents a paradox (Hall, 2011). While it should balance the "triple bottom line" of economic, social and environmental impacts (Mathew & Sreejesh, 2017; Morrison, 2022; Smith, 2016), scholars argue in reality it is still regarded primarily as a driver for economic development, as the industry foremost exists to make profit (Qian, Wei, & Law, 2018). It has been found the large number of stakeholders and their variety of interests might obstruct the implementation of sustainable tourism development (Fodness, 2017; McDonald, 2009). Particularly, as not all needs are considered equal, and the needs of one group might take precedent in the development of sustainable tourism (Liu, 2003). Particularly its economic benefits are still often considered the focal point of sustainable tourism development (Muwforth & Munt, 2016). To develop sustainable tourism, it was found there is a need to minimize negative impacts and maximize positive impacts (Smith, 2016). In order to do so, there should be monitoring of resources and their capacity, as to sustain the level of tourism impacts acceptable for the host community (Liu, 2003). However, this was found difficult to implement in practice (Morrison, 2022). To counteract the (economic) interest of the private sector, government might aid in the develop tourism for the benefit of the general public (Higgins-Desbiolles, Bigby, & Doering, 2022; Ruhanen, 2013). In addition, local government could prove instrumental for stakeholder management in sustainable tourism, however, stakeholder collaboration might challenge existing power holders (Ruhanen, 2013). This goes to show the importance of relations of power in the tourism-stakeholder-ecosystem, particularly in in light of the economic interests associated with the tourism industry.

Not only the economic benefits associated with sustainable tourism raises questions of power, this also holds for the construction of what is 'sustainable tourism' and for whom (Muwforth & Munt, 2016). To assess the impacts of sustainable tourism and how this relates to power relations amongst stakeholders, this thesis will explore how professionals value impacts experienced by host communities. To this point, it is often disregarded that residents are not a homogenous community, but experience tourism and its impacts differently (Liu, 2003; Muwforth & Munt, 2016). This has also been shown in the case of tourism in Leeuwarden and Friesland. It was found there is variation across age groups in how residents of Leeuwarden experience the intensity of tourism (FSP, 2020). Additionally, in Friesland the intensity of tourism in a location generally affects how communities value the impacts of tourism (ibid.). These findings under scribe that residents experience tourism impacts in various ways. Considering the variety of experiences of tourism impacts, this thesis will explore how tourism professionals in the city of Leeuwarden reflect on (the variety of) residents experiences of tourism impact through Foucauldian Discourse Analysis

1.2 SUSTAINABLE TOURISM & FOUCAULDIAN DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

In light of the power relations that influence sustainable tourism development (Liu, 2003; Muwforth & Munt, 2016; Ruhanen, 2013) this thesis applies Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA) to the field of sustainable tourism studies. Power relations are a central point in FDA, as Foucault's work considers power to be rhizomatic and fluid (1977). This thesis applies this to the relations between tourism professionals and residents in Leeuwarden. It is consequentially expected that not only tourism professionals hold power, based on their authority on the topic of (sustainable) tourism, but simultaneously residents also hold power. Nevertheless, the power held by residents might nog be equally distributed across or within communities based as a result of their heterogeneity (Liu, 2003; Muwforth & Munt, 2016). How relations of power inform professionals' discourse on sustainable tourism in Leeuwarden will be explored in this thesis.

FDA is applied to find how professionals describe the strategies and development of sustainable tourism in Leeuwarden and how these professionals reflect on the impacts of sustainable tourism in Leeuwarden experienced by residents, to understand what shapes their discourse and how it represents power relations. Thereby, it builds on Qian, Wei & Law (2018) who reviewed the existing literature on Critical Discourse Analysis[1] in the field of tourism studies. They found that research employing CDA in the field of tourism studies generally entails one or more of five key areas: travel motivation, destination image, tourism marketing, sustainable tourism, and social relationships in tourism (p. 526). This provides the starting point of this research as the focus is on sustainable tourism. Social relationships will receive special attention considering the importance of power relations in FDA (Foucault, 1977; Watt, 2016).

1.3 CURRENT RESEARCH GAP

This thesis builds on two academic fields: (i) the application of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis in the field of (sustainable) tourism studies and (ii) sustainable tourism development studies. With this thesis I aim to fill the current gap in sustainable tourism research, as well as FDA research, by gathering empirical data on sustainable tourism in Leeuwarden, specifically from the perspective of tourism professionals. This will add to the academic discourse in the field of sustainable tourism discourse analysis as both the location and the participants are currently underdeveloped in these respective research fields. By illustrating power relations that influence the discourse on sustainable tourism in Leeuwarden, this thesis applies an academic-activist perspective (see: Bertella, 2023) to this topic which has not yet been applied in this context and case. By conducting this research, I aim to produce new knowledge that can thereafter be implemented to potentially restructure existing power relations between tourism professionals and residents. As the production of knowledge is a central part of FDA, through this thesis I will myself be producing new knowledge on the existing power relations, thereby intersecting myself and my research into the FDA framework.

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND QUESTION

The objective of the study is threefold. First, I analyze how tourism professionals in Leeuwarden regard the sustainability of tourism in Leeuwarden. Second, I analyze how these professionals reflect on the impacts of sustainable tourism on the residents of Leeuwarden. Lastly, I analyze whether they consider the variety of residents and their experiences and how their discourse reflects power relations. From the objectives follows the following research question:

Main research question: Which experiences and impacts are highlighted or silenced in the discourses of sustainable tourism in Leeuwarden by tourism professionals?

This will be answered through the following sub-questions:

Sub-question 1: How do tourism professionals describe the current state of sustainable tourism in Leeuwarden?

To support analysis of the discourse by professionals regarding sustainable tourism, a proper understanding of the tourism strategy and development is necessary to grasp and contextualize the professionals' discourse. Therefore, it is aimed to develop knowledge of what is currently in place and in development with regards to sustainable tourism in the city of Leeuwarden.

Sub-question 2: How are impacts of tourism valued by tourism professionals?

I aim to find if different kinds of impacts of sustainable tourism – conceptualized following the "triple bottom line" (Smith, 2016) – are valued equally. Tourism impacts will therefore be ascribed to these three dimensions, and through discourse analysis it will be explored whether these dimensions are weighted equally by professionals in the industry. Thereafter, I can analyze whether professionals' valuation of these impacts shapes their discourse.

Sub-question 3: Does the discourse of tourism professionals relay a variety residents' experiences of impacts?

Based on the research by the FSP (2020) it is suspected that there exists a variety of experiences of the impacts of tourism. Therefore, it is aimed to understand how (and if) various experiences inform – and reflected through – the discourses of tourism professionals. This is twofold: it aims to understand how experienced impacts are relayed to professionals (e.g. through quantitative measurements, or the information of key figures in the community). And subsequentially: to understand how the professionals reflect these experiences in their discourse? This will inform the focus of the FDA through understanding how discourses become dominant.

Sub-question 4: How are the relationships of power described and enacted within the discourse?

Following Muldoon & Mair (2016) who developed this sub-question in their application of FDA, this question distills the essence of FDA: the relation between power and knowledge through the (re)production of prevailing discourses. This aids the research objective through exploring the power relations between professionals and residents. The previous question explored how professionals are informed of residents' experiences, this question follows to understand how the discourse of professionals is shaped by power relations. Professionals might enjoy power based on their authority, but power might flow within and from communities as well. Finally, professionals' discourses are expected to be shaped by their own positionality and worldview (such as their valuation of impacts) which could reflect various power relations.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter explores the relevant academic publications on the topic of sustainable tourism development. This chapter starts by a distillation of the theoretical discussion of the concept (section 2.1), which will be used to understand the implications of its development in practice. The stakeholder ecosystem within sustainable tourism is discussed in section 2.2, in response to the questions raised by scholars in the previous section, and in relation to power relations within tourism. Finally, section 2.3 explores the conditions for sustainable tourism development, specifically in relation to the experience of the host community. Thereby, this chapter aims to understand both the academic debate as well as the real-life impacts of sustainable tourism

2.1 SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN ACADEMIA

2.1.1 CONCEPTUALIZING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

This thesis concerns itself with the discourse of tourism professionals about sustainable tourism. To conceptualize sustainable tourism, this research follows the definition by the World Tourism Organization: "tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities" (n.d.). The three domains of impacts – social, environmental, and economic – are often referred to as the triple bottom line, and it is generally accepted that these should be balanced in order for tourism to be sustainable (Mathew & Sreejesh, 2017; Morrison, 2022; Smith, 2016). The rise in popularity of the concept of sustainable tourism appears to lie in it proposed answer to the disadvantages of mass tourism, which has presented a number of problems (Muwforth & Munt, 2016).

Nevertheless, the concept of sustainable tourism has also been challenged in academia. This thesis builds on the work of scholars such as Muwforth & Munt (2016) and Hall (2011) who have previously questioned the legitimacy of the phrase. In their seminal work *Tourism and Sustainability: Development, Globalization and New Tourism in the Third World,* Muwforth and Munt provide an extensive review of the many facets of sustainable tourism development. They propose that sustainable tourism is a social construct: "sustainability is that it is a word that is defined, interpreted and imagined differently between individuals, organisations and social groups ... that is 'socially and politically constructed' and reflects the interests and values of those involved" (2016, p. 22). This illustrates how relations of power are interwoven into the fabric of sustainable tourism development. Thereby, they raise the questions as to what is to be sustained, by whom and for whom (ibid.). In addition, Hall notes that "sustainable tourism presents a paradox" based on its undeniable ecological impact despite its call for environmental sustainability (2011, p. 649). The critiques by these scholars illustrate the difficulty of implementing sustainable tourism in practice. However, despite the problems with its execution, both Hall as well as Muwforth & Munt acknowledge the widespread adaptation of the concept of sustainable tourism in policy, academia and the private sector.

1.1.2 SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AND DEVELOPMENT

Tourism and development are inextricably linked. To this point, Muwforth & Munt critically note that: "[s]ustainable development ushered the ultimate oxymoron [...] an approach, as we will argue, that is largely reflected in the growth and development of the tourism industry. The primacy of economic

growth remains, albeit tempered by a social and environmental consciousness" (2016, p. 38). This goes to show sustainable development is inherently linked to development, and its call for economic growth cannot be disregarded, despite its sustainability ambitions. Scholars have raised attention towards the dominance of the Western capitalist hegemony that supports the discourse of economic growth as driver for development (Muwforth & Munt, 2016; Smith, 2016). Following these claims and the argument of Hall (2011) that sustainable tourism presents a paradox, I argue that, its essence, any type of tourism is the movement by people to consume elsewhere – whether this be a consumption of goods, resources, experiences or services – and therefore the notion of 'sustainable' tourism is best regarded as a 'more sustainable' tourism. This is further supported by scholars who have claimed that the tourism industry ultimate exists to make profit (Qian, Wei, & Law, 2018).

Despite this gravitation towards the economic benefits of sustainable tourism, I will argue that this does not imply sustainable tourism develop cannot also contribute to positive social and ecological impacts. However, it does urge for a critical review of what is considered (sustainable) development, and for whom. To this point, Hunter claims: "it is, therefore, a considerable over-simplification of the issues merely to call for sustainable tourism to contribute to the goals of sustainable development without further elaboration of what the latter are or should be." (1997, p. 851). Thereby, sustainable tourism development presents a need for clearly defined (social and environmental) goals and objectives.

The academic debate on sustainable tourism development has shown that while the concept is fully integrated into the development of tourism by professionals, government and the private sector there remain issues with its conceptualization in practice, as well as the continued emphasis on the economic benefits of tourism development.

2.2 STAKEHOLDERS, GOVERNANCE & COMPLEX SYSTEMS

In the previous question it was discussed that Muwforth & Munt (2016) raise the question of "by whom, for whom?" with regards to the development of sustainable tourism. This will be further explored in this section where I discuss the stakeholders, communities and the role of governance in (sustainable) tourism.

2.2.1 STAKEHOLDERS

There are a multitude of stakeholders in the tourism sector. Liu[2] lists these as: "tourists (domestic and foreign); tourist businesses (investors, developers, operators; shareholders, management, employees; public and private); the host community and their governments" (2003, p. 466). It is expected that a large number, if not all, of these stakeholders also operate in the tourism sector in Leeuwarden. They further identify that "the needs of one group may take precedence over those of the others in development decisions depending on the specific circumstances of each destination, such as the stage of development, economic conditions or market situation" (ibid. p. 467). This goes to show that the balancing of the various needs of the stakeholders within the tourism sector is not a one-size-fits-all strategy. The understanding of Liu that the needs of one group might take precedent over that of others depending on the situation also connects to the previous section where it was discussed that while sustainable tourism development should be balance of sustainable social, environmental, and economic development, it is often driven by economic development. This also relates to the variety of stakeholders, particularly those who have economic interests into the tourism sector. To this point, it was argued by Ruhanen (2003) that collaboration between stakeholders can challenge the power of existing power holders. How it is decided which and whose

needs precedent in the tourism development is therefore a question of power relations, and how this takes place in Leeuwarden will be explored through the data collection.

2.2.2 Host communities

The previous section identifies host communities as one of the stakeholders of the tourism industry. As professionals' discourses of residents experiences are the focal point of this research, this section explores the relation between the tourism industry and host communities. It has been acknowledged that there are various (potential) economic benefits for the host community of a tourism destination, such as the generation of income, regional development and the multiplier effect (Burns, 2015; Liu, 2003; Morrison, 2022). However, scholars have been cautious to celebrate the economic benefits of tourism development for residents, as it is not necessarily the host community that enjoys the (economic) benefits from the tourism sector (Liu, 2003; Morrison, 2022; Muwforth & Munt, 2016). Furthermore, there it was found that cultural differences between tourists and the host communities can lead to conflict (Burns, 2015). This goes to show the type of visitor impacts the experience of the host community. It would be expected that if the visitors of Leeuwarden are socially and culturally similar to the host community of the residents, this could negate conflicts.

However, the problem with the notion of 'the culture of the host community' was raised by Liu who states: "[w]hen the needs and interests of the local communities are emphasized, many writers fail to realize that local communities are not some kinds of homogeneous mass but contain deep divisions of class, status and power" (2003. p. 466). A similar argument was raised by Muwforth & Munt (2016) when questioning for whom sustainable tourism is developed. This goes to show that in the discussion of the benefits and disadvantages for residents in tourism destinations, it is important to be aware that there is no such thing as 'the resident.' This variation amongst residents is explored in the interviews to see if this is reflected in the discourse of tourism professionals in Leeuwarden. In reference to the work of Foucault, which (residents') experiences are reflected in the dominant discourses is also a reflection of power relations (1977).

2.2.3 Governance in tourism

Previous sections have identified the economic incentives of (sustainable) tourism development for the private sector. Considering these incentives for the sector, and the possibility of benefits to not reach the host community it would follow government has a role in managing the tourism industry and dividing its benefits and impacts. To this point, Ruhanen (2013) claims local government should concern itself with the development of sustainable tourism, in absence of strong industry leaders. They state local government has a potential to regulate tourism in avoidance of implementing top-down policy by federal governance structures. However, they too identify power struggles, as well as tokenistic participation, as a barrier for (local) governments to develop tourism sustainably. Furthermore, Zemla (2016) argues that many of tourism resources are community owned, and if there is a lack of development or government mandate as to how to manage these resources, this is respondent to by management through a collective network of stakeholders, which is complex and prone to external shocks. There is also a point to be made about the role of government in developing "fair" tourism: tourism that is to the benefit of the host community. In their call to "socialize" tourism Higgins-Desbiolles, Bigby, & Doering address the problems with growth-oriented tourism and resulting over-tourism and general unjust tourism:

> "the ongoing need to call out structural injustices in tourism and advance just forms of tourism practice [...] [thus] re-orienting tourism to serve the "public good", protecting the "commons" from further encroachment, regulating tourism to bring it under control and better justifying the use of scarce resources in tourism by requiring

government resources to only be used to support public good forms of tourism" (2022, p. 212)

This call for government resources to be utilized to support the development of 'public good' tourism was also argued by Ruhanen (2013) who claims the government has the mandate to represent the (broad) interests of the public. However, the work of Higgins-Desbiolles, Bigby, & Doering (2022) concerns itself mainly with over-tourism, which is currently not reported to be experienced in Friesland (FSP, 2020). Nevertheless, the debate on the role of governments can also be applied to smaller tourism destinations. The identification of structural injustices in tourism also relates back to the question raised by Muwforth & Munt (2016) about for who 'sustainable' tourism is developed. Building on the work of these scholars, this thesis will explore whether and how government aims to develop 'public good' (sustainable) tourism and how this could benefit the host communities in Leeuwarden. However, as government is only one of many stakeholders, it will also be explored how this is affected by relations of power in the tourism sector. The following section will elaborate on this theoretically through complex systems theory.

2.2.4 COMPLEX SYSTEMS THEORY

While it was claimed that the tourism industry is a solely for-profit industry (Qian, Wei, & Law, 2018), McDonalds (2009) calls for applying a complex systems framework to the sustainable tourism industry to reflect the complex systems and inter-relations between stakeholders who are said to have various interests which could comprise sustainable tourism development. McDonalds claims sustainable tourism development is difficult for this reason, as (i) different interests might not allow for one understanding of what is sustainable and (ii) a constant state of transition as a result of these systems does not allow for one sustainable end-point.

Following this, it should be considered what the goals for sustainable tourism development are for both the tourism destination and the industry. Similarly, Fodness (2017) applies Complex Systems with Wicked Problems theory as to explain why sustainable tourism development yields uneven results. To this point, they too identify a great variety of stakeholders and interests that affect the success of sustainable tourism development by policy makers and managers. Therefore, they argue that stakeholder management is key in addressing the issues that come with sustainable tourism. This relates to Ruhanen (2013) who identifies that the government can foster collaboration between stakeholders. The great variety of views and interests obstructs a one-size-fits-all tourism strategy, particularly in relation to the argument by Liu (2003) that the needs of one group might take precedent over others, depending on the context. Building on the work of these scholars, this thesis explores how tourism professionals consider the multitude of interests in tourism and how this reflects power relations and thereby affects the goals of sustainable tourism development in Leeuwarden.

2.3 RESOURCES & IMPACTS

A final point in the development of sustainable tourism is the development of its attractions. The attractions and their subsequent impacts are expected to influence the experience of the host community of the tourism destination.

2.4.1 RESOURCES

The sustainable tourism debate often involves is the problem of over-tourism, which happens when the destination cannot sustain the number of tourists (Higgins-Desbiolles, Bigby, & Doering, 2022; Morrison, 2022; Muwforth & Munt, 2016; Smith, 2016). To this point, Liu identifies three levels of

resources that support effective tourism management: the attractions for tourists, infrastructure, and the physical and social settings. These resources determine the carrying capacity of the destination as: "generally speaking, the number, quality and size of tourist attractions decides the maximum potential tourism (attracting) capacity of a destination. Infrastructure and amenities determine the actual or effective tourism (carrying) capacity while agency and administration normally set the level of the realized capacity in a given period of time" (2003, p. 464).

To prevent over-tourism, it is was argued that the carrying capacity of the destination should be calculated and effective planning and management should aim to not exceed these limits (ibid). Nevertheless, it was found that over the years various indicators of sustainable tourism were proposed, but: "[t[hese were, however, often perceived by the industry and policy makers as too complex and thus difficult to implement in practice" (Morrison, 2022, p. 209).

2.4.3 IMPACTS

An overflow of the carrying capacity can result in negative impacts for the host community. Smith argues that one of the goals of sustainable tourism should be to minimize negative impacts and to maximize positive impacts (2016). The negative impacts of (over-)tourism have been famously conceptualized in Doxey's levels of irritation index, where the sentiment towards tourists by the host community ranges between four levels related to the number of tourists, starting at euphoria (small number of tourists) to antagonism (high number of tourists) (1975). However, there are also positive impacts that can result from tourism development. Smith mentions the possibility for tourism to enhance standard of living and quality of life (2016). This should be considered in relation to the vested economic interests within the tourism sector discussed in the previous sections. To this point, Hall does not deny the economic interests of tourism, and calls for a sustainable tourism system that serves qualitative development, but not detrimental aggregate growth (2011). The need for the tourism sector to balance economic benefits with other positive impacts was also found by Morrison, who finds the WTTC report of 2019 to be an example of this for their consideration "that tourism development in cities can only achieve sustainable growth if the focus extends beyond the tourism sector, into the broader urban agenda" (2020,p. 207). This goes to show that while there are vested economic interest connected to the (growth of) the sustainable tourism industry, this industry nevertheless has the potential to develop positive impacts for the destination and its residents, on the condition that resources do not exceed the limits of their capacity.

2.4 THE CURRENT GAP IN THE LITERATURE

This chapter has illustrated that while sustainable tourism is often celebrated for its potential as a driver for (sustainable) development, there are problems with the concept – particularly the primacy of economic development and the relations of power between various stakeholders. Nevertheless, when incorporated into a broader development agenda and conditional on effective management of resources and stakeholders, sustainable tourism can present positive impacts for the destination. Following this chapter, the data collection will explore the stakeholder ecosystem in Leeuwarden and how their interests power relations influence the development of sustainable tourism in the city. It also explores how the various impacts (social, ecological and economic) are valued, and if there indeed presents a desire for economic growth. Finally, it is aimed to find whether the heterogeneity of the host communities is considered by tourism professionals' and how this impacts their discourse. This aims to fill a gap of in the current literature as there is currently little research into the social effects of sustainable tourism in Leeuwarden, and it does not include Foucauldian Discourse Analysis. The next chapter will discuss how FDA will be applied in this research.

CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

3.1 STUDY AREA

Being awarded European Capital of Culture in 2018 has highlighted Leeuwarden as a tourism destination. In that same year Friesland made third place in the Lonely Planet's Best in Europe list, the highest spot awarded to a Dutch destination at the time. Because of attention such as this, it is expected tourism in Friesland will increase (FSP, 2020). Leeuwarden, being the capital of Friesland, and thereby the economic and cultural center is expected to see a large share of the potential increase in tourism in the region.

The tourism sector in Leeuwarden and Friesland is substantial in size and importance. For example, the province of Friesland has allocated a total budget of € 23.424.400 for their hospitality strategy in the period 2020-2024 (Provinsje Fryslan, 2020). Furthermore, from the annual budget for 2022 it was found that (from the program for Economics and Tourism), tourism is currently one of the driving sectors for the earning power of the region, and there is a budget of €400.000 for city marketing in 2022 (this does not include funds raised through tourism taxes and the budget for festivals and events, that might also serve to attract visitors) (Gemeente Leeuwarden, 2021).

Next to the economic interests in tourism, there are the social impacts of tourism. The Frisian Social Plan Bureau (FSP) has studied the social impacts of tourism in Friesland and Leeuwarden. They reported that out of the Frisian regions, people in Leeuwarden are the most likely to report that they have experienced an increase in tourism, in particular older age groups (FSP, 2020). However, the publication also reports that people in cities that enjoy higher levels of tourism are also more likely to generally consider the advantages of tourism to outweigh the disadvantages. As the main advantage the respondents in Friesland state the economic benefits and increased employment. Disadvantages include tourism nuisance, increased cost of living, decreased livability and decreased ownership of the living area (FSP, 2020). All disadvantages are experienced more often with an increase in tourism in the area. This all gives to think about how the advantages and disadvantages of tourism are experienced across population groups in Leeuwarden and how tourism professionals consider this variation in their professional practice.

3.2 METHODOLOGY

3.2.1 DATA COLLECTION

This research entails empirical qualitative data collection. This was be done through semi-structured in-depth interviews with professionals working in organizations that concern themselves with tourism policy, strategy, promotion and/or research in the city of Leeuwarden. In-depth interviewing allowed to collect a range of views and experiences. The interview guide is deductive and was based on academic literature in the field of the impacts of (sustainable) tourism to substantiate the research (see: Dunn, 2016). In the design of the interview guide, open-ended, non-guiding questions were designed as to not influence the discourse of the interviewees. The interview guide is presented in Appendix A. Seven interviews were conducted, with participants selected through the snowball method, starting with the network of the researcher and their supervisor. Interviews were conducted in a live setting where possible, and through digital video conferencing software (Google Meet)

where necessary. Interviews were audio recorded and transcribed, using the transcription software of Microsoft Word and coded using Atlas.TI.

3.2.2 DATA ANALYSIS

The focus of the research is the Foucauldian discourse analysis that was used to analyze the interviews. In its essence, Foucauldian discourse analysis focusses on the reciprocal relation between knowledge and power: "discourse analysis offers insights into how particular knowledge of the world becomes common sense and dominant, while simultaneously silencing different interpretations" (Foucault, 1977, p. 27). Having established power relations are interwoven into the development of sustainable tourism development, Foucauldian discourse analysis (FDA) is particularly suitable for the analysis of tourism professionals' discourse of the impacts of tourism on communities in Leeuwarden. Because of the dichotomy of professionals as those who hold the most formal power ("authority") in shaping and evaluating the tourism sector in Leeuwarden as opposed to the residents who experience the tourism, the discourse they construct in a research-interview setting poses as the production of knowledge, and the narrative they employ could serve to silence or empower their communities. Discourse analysis can help explore whether policy makers are talking *about* their communities or *with* their communities when developing tourism.

Of particular interest is the consideration of the diversity of experiences amongst various population groups as highlighted by the FSP (2020). As it is the aim of FDA to analyze which discourses are highlighted and silenced is aimed to find if the discourses reflect the variety of communities of the tourism destination. This fills a gap in the current research as host communities are still often considered homogenous (Liu, 2003; Muwforth & Munt, 2016).

The goal of all academic research is foremost the production of knowledge. However, as a result of the FDA this knowledge can also restructure power relations (Muldoon & Mair, 2016). By producing knowledge on how communities are considered in discourses of tourism professionals this can serve to empower communities. Apart from the empowering effects of FDA, this research will employ the *care-full academic activism model* for sustainable transformations in tourism as conceptualized by Bertella (2023). This model poses a guide for scholars who wish to engage in ethic of care by aiming for radical changes towards sustainable tourism. The goal of the model is in line with the goal of this research: a more sustainable tourism sector, foremost socially, in particular through empowerment of stakeholders (the host communities). The model presents guiding questions for researchers to steer their research with in "its core in reflexivity and comprises four other interrelated components concerning interconnectedness and transformative agency: attentiveness, responsiveness, imagination and critical thinking" (Bertella, 2023, p. 219). The reflexivity proposed by the model, as it is partially based in feminist research practices, makes the model a good foundation for Foucauldian epistemology as they can be argued to intersect in matters of power and empowerment. Likewise the related method of Critical Discourse Analysis, it draws on the overlapping research paradigms of discourse studies, feminism, and critical linguistics as it is inherently normative in its assessment of language and discourse (see: Qian, Wei & Law (2018) on the epistemology of Critical Discourse Analysis).

3.3 RESEARCH ETHICS

A detailed description of all facets of the ethics of this research is attached in Appendix B. Foremost, as participants were recruited based on their professional characteristics it is important the information they shared could be linked to themselves or their organization. Therefore, any

recognizable traits were removed to avoid identification. As the research concerns itself with their professional practice they might be apprehensive to participate out of fear of disclosing sensitive information. To negate this, participation is fully voluntarily and participants could cease participation at any time without stating a reason or retroactively ask for information to be withheld from the results of this research up until completion of the research. When choosing to participate in the research, participants consented to the interview being audio recorded (video files from digital interviews will be converted to audio files). Any data collection poses a risk of data leakage. To prevent this, to the researchers upmost ability, appropriate data protection measures were taken. This included anonymizing transcripts before storage and password protecting the personal computer and associated iCloud account of the researcher. The data is deleted from the researchers personal computer after one year beyond the completion of the research. Additionally the data can be stored on the y-drive of the University of Groningen for 5 years after which it will be deleted. All participants will receive an informed consent sheet prior to their participation which explains to them their rights and the research process. For any matters concerning the ethical conduct of the research, participants were provided the contact details of the researcher, their supervisor and the ethical committee of the Campus Fryslân where could ask questions and state concerns. The research findings are used for this thesis only and (potential) associated publications and presentations.

RESULTS

4.1 MAIN FINDINGS

From the conducted interviews three main findings became apparent. (I) There is a large stakeholder-ecosystem in the tourism sector of Leeuwarden, which is influential in the design of its tourism strategy. (II) The tourism strategy is developed with special consideration for its economic benefits, particularly for entrepreneurs, and in addition, while it is also aimed to benefit residents through tourism, not all residents benefit equally. (III) Finally, while the professionals aim to develop sustainable tourism, there are not always clear indicators as to how this should be done, which is also reflected in the matter of continued growth.

4.2 STAKEHOLDERS

4.2.1 THE STAKEHOLDER-ECOSYSTEM

From both the development of the research and the interviews it was found that there is a great number of stakeholders who concern themselves with tourism in Leeuwarden and/or Friesland (this often overlaps). These include (but are not limited to) numerous organizations that concern themselves with the promotion and/or development of tourism, research institutes, governmental organizations (municipality, province), sectoral representatives and residents. As a result of this, the landscape is very fragmented. Some interviewees indicate everyone knows each other very well: *"there is a lot of collaboration, already, between those organizations [...] Yes, there are many organizations working on everything, but Friesland is not very big. We know where to find each other and everyone is quite adjusted to their role, and know who has which role."* While all interviewees are in agreement the collaboration within the tourism-stakeholder-ecosystem is strong, not everyone agrees that the division of tasks is always clear: *"And then you have... Uh, what else do we have... That is a bit of a thing... I notice that that can be pretty confusing for everyone. Here in Friesland is tourism sector is very, very fragmented [...] And, uh, that because of that not everyone always knows who is in charge of what."* It was also found from the interviews that the Province of Friesland is a big stakeholder in the tourism sector, both in terms of policy and also as they fund many tourism organizations such as the 'Tourism Alliantie Friesland' and Visit Friesland. Alongside the provincial funding for the tourism organizations there was also said the province has a large role in funding tourism events, such as the Cultural Capital in 2018 and associated legacy events, but is also influential in designing tourism strategies in the region and developing policy. This goes to show the role of the provincial government in the stakeholder eco-system.

4.2.1 TOURISM STRATEGIES

Outside of the organizations and governments that concern themselves with tourism, it was found the private sector is a big stakeholder in tourism in Leeuwarden. When asked who are the stakeholders in tourism in Friesland, the entrepreneurs and businesses were mentioned first and most. It was also found tourism policy and strategy is not only developed by policy makers, but in collaboration with the private sector: *"the image of a policy maker that sits in his attic by himself, typing away, that does not exist. So together with that [ecosystem] you look together 'Well, what are your needs? What kind of developments do you see in the market, what should we bet on? Where should we invest?'"* However, this is not to say the tourism policy is only designed by stakeholders. It was said in the interviews that on the municipal level there are four pillars that steer the tourism strategy, these relate to (I) attractive programming, (II) walking, cycling, boating (III) synergy with the

environment, and (IV) (overnight) accommodations. The municipality has standardized (legally mandated) participation moments when a new policy or strategy is being designed, and outside of these moments there are also frequent discussions with the entrepreneurs and other organizations that represent the tourism sector/industries to stay in touch with developments in the sector. As a result of the standardized opportunities for resident participation, outside of these moments residents can approach the municipality and other tourism organizations on their own accord to express their sentiments. However, as a result of this, it is often 'the usual suspects' who relay their experience. An interviewee expressed that: *"residents that want something will find their way to the municipality."* However, it was mentioned that the organization of the municipality might appear inaccessible to some residents, as they lack understanding of its operations. Generally, it was said that the participation of residents into the design of tourism strategies is still relatively small: *"you have the inner-city management with all those entrepreneurs of the inner-city, so those are often involved, but really the residents. Not very specifically. [...] Maybe one or two. Those fanatics that think, 'I want to know more.' But mostly they just let it be."* While currently citizen participation is not large with regards to tourism in Leeuwarden, it was said that tourism is often designed to benefit residents as well. The next section discusses the goals of the tourism sector, particularly in relation to entrepreneurs and residents.

4.3 DEVELOPMENT, FOR WHOM?

From the interviews it follows that the main benefit and goals of tourism is its potential for various types of development. This includes both economic developments, but also development of facilities within Leeuwarden and socio-economic development. The following section explores these developments and who it benefits.

4.2.1 ENTREPRENEURS

The benefits for economic development were found from the interviews to be a large advantage for the development of tourism in Leeuwarden. Particularly the local entrepreneurs were said by all interviewees to be one of the primary stakeholders in the tourism sector in the city. When asked which stakeholders experience the benefits of tourism, one of the interviewees said: *"first of all we have the entrepreneurs. And that is as a broad as 'horeca' [hotels, restaurants, cafes], retail, those kinds of things."* This is also reflected in the tourism strategy, where it was said that the development of tourism resources done for a large part by the private sector: *"we leave a lot to the market. So [the municipality] is not actively saying 'we want new camper places.' [But] which entrepreneur wants to take this on?"* It was also said that it is important for entrepreneurs that tourists visit, because if they do not *"then you don't have any liveliness here in the city and those entrepreneurs have to-, they make money of that. So for them, there has to be a buzz."* However, it was also expressed that this is not only for the (financial) benefit of the entrepreneurs themselves. It was expressed by an interviewee that the economic development was considered very necessary: *"If we have more tourists, we get a larger inflow of money. That is better for the entrepreneurs, better for the residents. Yes, Leeuwarden has a bad socio-economic profile with high unemployment, high youth unemployment and an above average number of bad neighborhoods. So yes, jobs do very much matter."* It was considered the development of jobs through tourism also benefits residents, as it gives them the opportunity to work in their own city. It was also expressed that the inner-city retail has seen bad years due to online shopping, and the economic impulse brought to entrepreneurs by tourists might reverse this, also to the benefit of residents. An interviewee said: *"I think at this time people long for more entrepreneurs. There is more vacancy because we shop more online [...] and now you see people think 'oh yes, we do want an interpretation for that building.' [...] So yes, there is a desire for more entrepreneurs."*

It was found from the interviews that not all participants immediately recognize residents as a stakeholder in tourism. One interviewee mentioned the focus group of the province where they discuss policy, when asked whether this includes the private sector or also the residents they replied: *"only the private sector. And you could actually see residents as a stakeholder in that, but those uh.. That is still, I would personally say, something that we have recently started to steer towards, towards the livability, not just only economic development. But to give them a voice in that... there is still room for development I think."* It was expressed the increased focus towards the residents was catalyzed by the COVID-19 pandemic, whereafter the tourist disappeared and the it was experienced that residents are also an important user of (tourist) attractions and facilities in Leeuwarden, necessary for their sustainment. However, this is not to say residents are there to support the development of tourism resources. Tourism resources are also being developed to the benefit of residents: *"that it is just very nice for the resident. [...] Yes, simply that there is more invested and that is not only an event, but of course simply more facilities: more trashcans in the streets, maintenance of greenspace, keeping the city attractive."* Another interviewee expressed: *"but in the first place we want to be there for the residents, and in the second place for the visitors, because the visitors are actually an addition."*

With regards to the heterogeneity of residents, interviewees expressed the goal to make an attractive offer of attractions and events for all age groups. However, while the different experiences of the impacts of tourism by age groups was widely acknowledged, there was also found to be a second determinant of tourism impacts: namely the social-economic status of residents. It was said the more suburban areas present a larger number of residents of low socio-economic status, who do not experience impacts of tourism, both positive and negative. An interviewee said: *"Yes, those suburban areas is not where you send the tourist. So they are not aware of the impact tourism has in a city. They do not visit the [inner-]city because of their economic status. [...] They shop in other places then in the center of the city with the local entrepreneurs."* When asked why these areas are not included in the tourism promotion of the city it was said: *"because it is not enjoyable for the tourist themselves. We have, in Leeuwarden – fortunately they are working on it – but a number of under-developed neighborhoods. Also what it looks like, that is not the image of Leeuwarden you want to create."* Nevertheless, not all professionals aimed for concentrating the tourism attractions in the city center. In 2018 part of the Cultural Capital agenda was a tour of walking giants, it was said that they purposely routed their path through those neighborhoods to include those residents, even though *"with regards to tourism there is nothing there... Well and then you see that **then** those people **do** visit such an event, while usually culture for them..."* A similar approach was said to have been used in one of the legacy events of Cultural Capital, Bosk, where 1000 trees 'walked' through the city. A number of them where thereafter permanently placed in those neighborhoods, aimed to distribute the positive impacts also to those neighborhoods. However, not all participants were convinced of the residents' appreciation for this. Another interviewee said:

> *"where maybe the people in the lesser neighborhoods, those might feel like: 'what is this nonsense with those trees?' I think that divide is enormous. Because those [that concern themselves more with tourism strategies] embrace this. But in reality, a larger part of the population, really sees this like, what a total nonsense. [...] I think that divide is very big. The same goes for restricting access to a recreational area [for events]. That means your recreational area is not accessible for people with a small or empty wallet, that those don't have options for recreation."*

This goes to show that while there have been efforts, by some, to include previously excluded residents into the tourism strategy and its benefits, not all participants are currently convinced as to whether the employed strategies resonate with the target audience.

4.3 TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE

4.3.1 BALANCING THE TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE

It was expressed by various interviewees that there were efforts to develop tourism sustainably to the benefit of the triple bottom line. In the previous section it was discussed how tourism is developed also to the benefit of the residents. With regards to environmental impacts, for example, in the development of Cultural Capital numerous efforts were made to benefit, what they called, people, planet, profit. Examples mentioned were the use of fossil free development, clean water technologies, 'Green Key' certification, and the 'walking' trees of Bosk which functioned as attraction but also created awareness about the importance and benefits of greenspace. The importance of environmentally sustainable tourism development was raised by an interviewee who said: *"the sector just has to be future proof, and sustainability- circular entrepreneurship is a part of that."* To negate the negative environmental impacts of tourism in Leeuwarden, strategic and practical efforts were made to achieve this. For example, for events aimed at younger audiences no or few folders were printed. Furthermore, in the promotion of Leeuwarden as a destination it was encouraged to use less-polluting modes of transportation: *"Also the journey, yes, that you also stimulate people: there are more options. You don't have to go by car, but look how nice it is when you come here by public transport and rent a bike."*

The previous sections also discussed the economic benefits of tourism, or as a participant said: *"the profit side is very clear, right?"* Some participants mentioned the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a guideline for sustainable tourism development. However when asked what to do when the triple bottom line was not in accordance with the interest of stakeholders the general consensus was there was no defined instrument for decision making, and rather it should be discussed in collaboration with the stakeholders what was best suited in that particular case. It was expressed it would be very difficult to design a standardized instrument for decision making: *"I think you cannot design a clear system for that, more a guideline of 'it should sort of fit this'. And if it doesn't, you should not do it regardless."* However, one of the participants also noted that sustainability is very difficult to achieve in the traveling industry *"we also have to be aware of the fact that you cannot do some things endlessly."*

4.3,1 GOALS, BUT NO CLEAR GUIDELINES

While the interviewees were all in agreement of the benefits of steering towards more sustainable tourism development, not all interviewees currently had clear indicators they used to measure or develop this. Some expressed the SDGs were incorporated into their budget reviews. An interviewee raised that: *"to have real impact, those limits have to be set in politics."* The same interviewee said that it was also about signals: *"which signals do you find more important than others. Sometimes it is about a hard limit. CO^2 for example, measuring those levels, determining a certain level. But nuisance, when it is too much... When the sentiment of the resident, which can be very determining, and very important, how do you measure that?"* As a result of the lack of indicators and the value of stakeholder collaboration and case-by-case decision making there are no clear guidelines as to what should be developed. An interviewee said: *"sometimes it is about who makes the most noise, sometimes there is a judicial base to do or not do something, sometimes it is guided by tradition."* Despite the lack of

indicators, there is a large amount of quantitative and qualitative data collected towards the size and sustainability of tourism in Leeuwarden, both by the organizations and also government.

4.5 "More!" Says who?

The previous sections discussed the benefits of tourism development for various stakeholders. To increase the positive impacts and decrease negative impacts to sustainable tourism development proactively aims to attract visitor types which are expected to align to the desired impacts. An interviewee said:

> *"because you don't want to become like Amsterdam, that you get rundown as a resident. And that is why you have to look very specifically to your target audiences for sustainable tourism. […] That is why you skip some people in your marketing. And that is okay, because we are, as Leeuwarden, not a city that wants hundreds of tour busses and boats full, like Giethoorn. That is why we skip Asia for example completely in tourism."*

The desired visitors were not only targeted through marketing but also said to be attracted by the available tourism resources: *"the reason to visit Leeuwarden […] what draws people, that is quite specific, and that is predominantly in the cultural sphere I think. And those are pretty pleasant visitors, little nuisance."* Participants appeared to be in agreement that there was no over-tourism in Leeuwarden. An interviewee said: *"over-tourism, mass tourism… No I don't see it."* However, it was expressed that the visitors should not exceed the limits of the host community: *"So that you don't only think 'oh we have to attract many people.' You have to keep it manageable for the city, because we are not that big of a city."* Nevertheless, it was expressed by researcher they thought other professionals did still experience a growth-mindset, despite the current comfortable level of visitors: *"the visitor… Is not that noticeable here. And regarding that you can say, yes, it is not to late. Let's, maybe, let's keep it like this, is it-, is it not good like this?"* This goes to show that there is not yet a consensus about the best way to develop tourism sustainably.

CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

5.1 DISCUSSION

5.1.1 ECONOMIC PRIMACY

In the discourses of the tourism professionals entrepreneurs often took center-stage. This reflects how the private sector was considered a very powerful stakeholder in the development of tourism (strategy) in Leeuwarden. However, interviews considered this also to be for the benefit of residents: with the aid of the private sector and entrepreneurs, tourism resources could be developed that improve the quality of life of residents and increase the economic strength of the region. This supports findings by scholars who argue for the economic benefits of tourism development (Burns, 2015; Liu, 2003; Morrison, 2022). However, this also supports the argument of Muwforth & Munt (2016) that while there are benefits to the development of sustainable tourism, it is still embedded in development which reflects economic primacy. In addition, while scholars have argued the tourism industry ultimately exists to make a profit (Qian, Wei, & Law, 2018), the interviewees consider the sector an ally in the development of tourism resources to the benefit of residents. However, the value assigned to the development of economic activities (despite its associated social benefits) does skew the gravitational point of the triple bottom line. This is not to say the social and environmental benefits are not considered valuable or important by professionals, but they are often achieved as through economic development. This further supports the claim by Muwforth & Munt that sustainable development follows from economic development (2016). However, because a great number of entrepreneurs were expressed to be local, the economic benefits do fall to the host community. This was claimed to not always be the case in other destinations (Liu, 2003; Morrison, 2022; Muwforth & Munt, 2016)

5.1.2 STAKEHOLDERS AND RESIDENTS

Foremost, it was relayed the stakeholder-ecosystem is fragmented and extensive. It was argued by Ruhanen (2013) that government has the potential to aid in stakeholder management, which was found key to overcome to problems associated with the variety of stakeholders and interests in the Complex System that is sustainable tourism development (Fodness, 2017; McDonald, 2009). The discourses relayed (private-sector) stakeholders are actively involved in the development of tourism policy in Leeuwarden, making them powerful actors in the design of tourism strategy in the city.

As a result of the prominence of private sector stakeholders in the discourses of tourism professionals, residents were sometimes presented as a second-order stakeholder. Sometimes it appeared to be an afterthought that residents were also stakeholders. I would argue that in some discourses, residents could best be described as beneficiaries, rather than active participants in the development of tourism. It was expressed residents rarely initiated participation in the tourism development, except for a couple of assertive 'usual suspects' who felt comfortable making their voice heard, but not all residents were expected to know how. While it was expressed it was aimed to develop tourism *for* the benefit of residents, there indication that there is room to develop the participation of residents in the tourism development, it shows it is not currently being developed *with* residents, at least not to full extent.

However, while some discourses relayed awareness of the lack of homogeneity across residents communities, some interviewees considered this in response to the questions. This goes to show it is not always considered that residents are heterogenous in their experience of tourism impacts, as

argued by Liu (2003) and Muwforth & Munt (2016). The residents of the weaker socio-economic neighborhoods do not reap the positive benefits of tourism as this is (often) developed segregated from their areas. Nevertheless, it was (proudly) expressed efforts have been made to include these residents, however other interviews question whether this was done in a manner that appealed to these residents.

5.1.3 Positive & manageable impacts

From the discourses of the professionals it was found that they do not consider over-tourism to be present in Leeuwarden. It was relayed that the number and type visitors is appropriate to the destination. It was said this is the result of the type of attractions that attract a 'pleasant' tourist, but also due to promotion targeted towards desired visitor type. As a result, the visitors are not dominantly present in the city. This shows professionals consider residents to be on the low end of Doxey's levels of irritation (1975). This might also relate to the culture of the visitors, which is arguably similar to that of the host community. This would be in line with the argument by Burns (2015) that large cultural difference between resident and visitors potentially cause conflict. Furthermore, the professionals relayed there is little experience of negative impacts of tourism. However, some also indicate there are little objective indicators to measure this, which was stated by Liu (2003) to be important to monitor the carrying capacity of tourism resources. It does support the findings of Morrison (2022) that it is difficult to implement indicators in practice. However, it should therefore be considered there are potential negative impacts of tourism that are not relayed to the professionals. This also in relation to the underdeveloped resident participation in tourism development. Professionals said to expected people to vocalize when negative impacts of tourism development, but it should be considered not all residents might feel empowered to do so.

With regards to the positive impacts of tourism, the discourses of professionals reflect that they consider the tourism sector to be a driver for broader development. This is not in spite of its economic interests, but because the economically motivated private sector can aid in the development of resources to the benefit of urban development as was also argued by Morrison (2022).

5.1.4 -academic-activism

Section 3.2.2 explored how this thesis aims to benefit academic activism as conceptualized by Bertella (2023). Particularly, by analyzing how residents are considered in the discourses of tourism professionals it is attempted to empower them through acknowledging their importance as stakeholders. Furthermore, it was also important to include marginalized resident groups into the design of this research. It was found that many residents, particularly those in weaker socio-economic areas, are not yet active participants in the development of sustainable tourism in Leeuwarden. Following this, this thesis aims to create awareness to the potential to include them more in the decision-making process of tourism strategy. This is particularly important, because while the private sector is a power stakeholder, participants have argued tourism is developed for the benefit of residents. Therefore, this thesis aims to be a catalyst for stronger collaboration with all residents in sustainable tourism development.

5.2 CONCLUSION

5.2.1 ANSWERING RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This section will first answer the sub questions to thereafter answer the main research question.

Sub-question 1: How do tourism professionals describe the current state of sustainable tourism in Leeuwarden?

Professionals relay that there is currently no over-tourism in Leeuwarden and therefore there are little negative impact experienced from tourism in the city. Furthermore, they develop efforts (through attractions and marketing) that aid environmental sustainability and social sustainability. With regards to social sustainability, it is aimed to develop tourism to the benefit of residents and it is expressed the private sector can aid these developments.

Sub-question 2: How are impacts of tourism valued by tourism professionals?

There is much value assigned to the economic benefits of tourism, also expressed by the valuation of entrepreneurs as stakeholders. However, it is considered social and environmental impacts are important and follow from the economic strength of the sector. The (economic) development of sustainable tourism is used as an aid for larger urban development.

Sub-question 3: Does the discourse of tourism professionals relay a variety residents' experiences of impacts?

While not all interviewees are necessary actively aware of the variety of residents experiences, they do consider socio-economic status, as well as age, to be influential in the experiences of residents with regards to sustainable tourism. Some professionals aim to include these residents groups, while others considered them segregated from the development of tourism in Leeuwarden. Furthermore, by lack of objective indicators and measurements, professionals rely on vocal figures in the community to inform them of the experienced impacts.

Sub-question 4: How are the relationships of power described and enacted within the discourse?

Professionals relay there resides a large amount of power with the stakeholders in the private sector, particularly with entrepreneurs, in the development of sustainable tourism. Furthermore, it followed from their discourse that residents are currently a stakeholder group that could be empowered in their participation in the development of sustainable tourism. It was also found that not all residents groups are equally empowered, as residents of weaker socio-economic status are rarely targeted in tourism development, and questions were raised about the effectiveness of their inclusion.

Main research question: Which experiences and impacts are highlighted or silenced in the discourses of sustainable tourism in Leeuwarden by tourism professionals?

It was found that the discourses of tourism professionals highlight economic impacts primarily, as well as the general positive impacts of tourism development in Leeuwarden. Furthermore, the experiences of entrepreneurs, and other private-sector stakeholders, are highlighted as they are regarded as powerful in the development of sustainable tourism. While residents experiences are not silenced, their voices could be amplified. Particularly those of weaker socio-economic groups which were expressed to not experience the same (positive) impacts of tourism development. In addition, non-vocal residents are not currently empowered to relay their experiences and are therefore not expected to be reflected equally in the discourses of professionals, also due to little formalized participation of these groups in the development of sustainable tourism.

5.2.2 Recommendations for further research

As this research contains itself with power relations as relayed through the discourses of tourism professionals, who talk about resident experiences, a logical and valuable next step would be to supplement this with additional research which includes discourses by various residents to see how they reflect on the development of sustainable tourism in Leeuwarden.

End notes

1) Critical Discourse Analysis is considered to be closely related to the method of FDA – as it has developed from FDA – and therefore to be relevant to the development of the FDA theory and methodology of this research.

2) In their work "Sustainable Tourism: A Critique" (2003) Liu raises strong arguments regarding the problems in sustainable tourism. However, I do strongly object to the section in their paper that claims that Westernization and modernization should be desired and accepted by 'less developed' and 'traditional' societies, an argument which I consider outdated and problematic. In light of this, I have assessed the quality of the rest of the publication I have weighted their other arguments and consider them sustained and valuable to the field of sustainable tourism studies. However, their view on 'less developed' tourism destinations should be taken with caution, in my opinion.

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Cover image: Humphrey Paap/City Train Leeuwarden (2022). Retrieved from:
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Appendix a.1: Interview guide (english)

I: introduction research and researcher

- Who is my conversation partner, position + career

- What does the organization do

II: sustainable tourism in Leeuwarden

- I'd like to start with a very broad, but I think fun, question to open this interview. In order to get an idea of how you view sustainable tourism as a professional, I would like to ask you to make a sketch of what sustainable tourism should look like in an ideal world. There are no restrictions, let your imagination run wild but take me into your experience, make it as specific as possible.

III: Power and tourism

- What are your organization's current goals in developing/promoting tourism in Leeuwarden?

- How do they come about?

- How are they implemented

- I am curious about the landscape of tourism stakeholders in Leeuwarden. What is the mandate of your organization and who/what gives this legitimacy

IV: Sustainable tourism according to the WTO and triple bottom line

- World Tourism Organization (n.d.): "tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities." This definition includes three domains: social, environmental, and economic impacts

- When there is conflict between the three parts of the triple bottom line, how is it determined which has the upper hand? How are the interests of the various stakeholders weighed up here?

- Are there indicators within your organization to assess sustainable tourism on these or other points?

V: Sustainable tourism and impacts

- Which facilities and attractions attract tourists to Leeuwarden? What is the impact of this on Leeuwarden residents?

- Leeuwarden residents are of course not homogeneous, what do you think determines whether someone experiences more or less impact from tourism? (demographic and socio-economic)

- How is this dealt with in the promotion and development of facilities/attractions?

- How do residents in Leeuwarden benefit from tourism?

- Which other stakeholders experience benefits from tourism?

- Is there consensus about the advantages and disadvantages of tourism in Leeuwarden? If not, where is the discrepancy, with whom?

VI: Complex systems

- What (financial) resources are there for your organization (or perhaps outside) to develop tourism in Leeuwarden and where do they come from? How is it decided how to use them, and on what basis?

- Does this sometimes lead to conflict, for example between stakeholders, but also what does the community think of this?

- Are there external trends from outside your organization that have influenced how you develop tourism/your goals

APPENDIX A.2: INTERVIEW GUIDE (DUTCH)

I: introductie onderzoek en onderzoeker

- Wie is mijn gesprekspartner, functie + carrière
- Wat doet de organisatie

II: duurzaam toerisme in Leeuwarden

- Ik wil graag beginnen met een hele brede, maar denk ik leuke, vraag om dit interview te openen. Graag zou ik, om een beeld te krijgen van hoe u als professional naar duurzaam toerisme kijkt, u willen vragen een schets te maken van hoe duurzaam toerisme er uit zou moeten zien in een ideale wereld. Er zijn geen beperkingen, laat uw fantasie de vrije loop maar neem mij mee in uw beleving, maak het zo specifiek mogelijk.

III: Power en toerisme

- Wat zijn op dit moment de doelen van uw organisatie in het ontwikkelen/promoten van toerisme in Leeuwarden?
- Hoe komen die tot stand?
- Hoe worden die geïmplementeerd
- Ik ben benieuwd naar het landschap van toerisme stakeholders in Leeuwarden. Wat is het mandaat van uw organisatie en wie/wat geeft dit legitimiteit

IV: Duurzaam toerisme volgens de WTO en *triple bottom line*

- World Tourism Organization (n.d.): *"tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities."* This definition includes three domains: social, environmental, and economic impacts
- Wanneer er conflict is tussen de drie onderdelen van de triple bottom line, hoe wordt bepaald wat de overhand heeft? Hoe wordt hier een afweging gemaakt tussen de belangen van de verschillende stakeholders?
- Zijn er indicatoren binnen uw organisatie om duurzaam toerisme te beoordelen op deze of andere punten?

V: Duurzaam toerisme en impacts

- Welke faciliteiten en attracties trekken toeristen in Leeuwarden? Wat is de impact daarvan op Leeuwardenaren?
- Leeuwardenaren zijn natuurlijk niet homogeen, wat denkt u dat bepalend is of iemand meer of minder impact ervaart van toerisme? (demografisch en sociaaleconomisch)
- Hoe wordt daar mee om gegaan in het promoten en ontwikkelen van faciliteiten/attracties?
- Hoe worden bewoners in Leeuwarden beter van toerisme?
- Welke andere stakeholder ervaren voordelen van toerisme?
- Is er consensus over wat de voor- en nadelen zijn van toerisme in Leeuwarden? Zo niet, waar zit de discrepantie, bij wie?

VI: Complex systems

- Welke (financiële) middelen zijn er voor uw organisatie (of misschien daarbuiten) om toerisme in Leeuwarden te ontwikkelen en waar komen die vandaan? Hoe wordt besloten hoe die worden ingezet, op basis waarvan?
- Leid dit wel eens tot conflict, bijvoorbeeld tussen stakeholders maar ook wat vindt de gemeenschap hiervan?
- Zijn er externe trends van buiten jullie organisatie die invloed hebben gehad op hoe jullie toerisme ontwikkelen/jullie doelen

APPENDIX B.1: ETHICAL RESEARCH CHECKLIST

1. Participants

- What is the (estimated) number of participants? What is the power analysis to determine sample size, if relevant? **6-8 interviewees.**
- Does the study involve participants who are unable to give informed consent (i.e. people with learning disabilities)? If yes: Explain why and what measures you will take to avoid or minimize harm. **No.**
- Does the research involve potentially vulnerable groups (i.e. children, people with cognitive impairment, or those in dependent relationships)? If yes: Explain why and what measures you will take to avoid or minimize harm. **No.**
- Will the study require the cooperation of a gatekeeper for initial access to the groups or individuals to be recruited? (i.e. students at school, members of self- help group, residents of nursing home)? If yes: Who is the gatekeeper? What agreement have you made, and which expectations do you share? **No.**
- Will it be necessary for participants to take part in the study without their knowledge and consent at the time (i.e. covert observation of people in non-public places)? If yes: Explain why and how, and provide a risk analysis if applicable. **No.**
- Will any dependent relationships exist between anyone involved in the recruitment pool of potential participants? If yes: Explain why and how, and provide a risk analysis**. No. Amongst the professionals working in the organization(s) in relevant roles who could be interviewed one is acquainted to the researcher as this is a former student of Campus Fryslân. However, this has been mitigated by not selecting a acquainted professional as a potential participant.**

2. Research design and data collection

- Will the study involve the discussion of sensitive topics? (i.e. sexual activity, drug use, politics) if yes: Which topics will be discussed or investigated, and what risk is involved? What measures have you taken to minimize any risk, if applicable? **No, the study involves the professional practice of the participants.**
- Are drugs, placebos, or other substances (i.e. food substances, vitamins) to be administered to the study participants? If yes: Explain the procedure and provide a brief cost-benefit analysis. **No.**
- What measures have you taken to minimize any risk, if applicable? **Participants participate voluntarily and anonymously, are free to refuse questions and cease participation at any time.**
- Will the study involve invasive, intrusive, or potentially harmful procedures of any kind? If yes: Explain the procedure and provide a brief cost-benefit analysis. What measures have you taken to minimize any risk, if applicable? **No. Exclusively interviews concerning their professional practice.**
- Could the study induce psychological stress, discomfort, anxiety, cause harm, or have negative consequences beyond the risks encountered in everyday life? If yes: Clarify the procedure and explain why no alternative method could be used. Provide a brief cost-benefit analysis if necessary. What measures have you taken to minimize any risk, if applicable? **No.**
- Will the study involve prolonged or repetitive testing? If yes: Explain the procedure and clarify how the interests of the participants are safeguarded. **No.**
- Is there any form of deception (misinformation about the goal of the study) involved? If yes: Explain the procedure and provide a rationale for its use. **No. Participants are aware of the research question and topic. They will not be made aware of the method of analysis (discourse analysis) to not influence their responses beyond necessary for their understanding of the research question.**
- Will you be using methods that allow visual and/or vocal identification of respondents? If so: What will you do to guarantee anonymity and confidentiality? **Interviews will be audio recorded but the recordings will only be available to the researcher and their supervisor. If digital interviews are needed, the recording of the video will be converted to an audio file and the original video recording will be deleted. Transcripts will only be stored after anonymization.**
- Will you be collecting information through a third party? If yes: Who is that party? Provide a brief outline of the procedure. **No.**

- Will the research involve respondents on the internet? If yes: How do you plan to anonymize the participants? **No.**

- How will you guarantee anonymity and confidentiality? Outline your procedure and give an estimate of the risk of a breach of confidentiality. **Because the organizations the potential participants work at are quite small it would be necessary to not explicitly name their organization, but rather give a vague description of their field/job description to ensure crediting them as experts in their respective field while avoiding being identifiable**.

- What information in the informed consent will participants be given about the research? Please consult the template for information sheets and informed consent sheets for further guidance. Provide a brief summary or upload the consent form. Which procedures are in place in case participants wish to file a complaint?

- Will financial compensation be offered to participants? Provide a short accounting of any compensation being offered. **No.**

- If your research changes, how will consent be renegotiated? **Contact participants to ask whether they would still participate in the research in its changed form/consent to their previously collected data to be used in the changed research. Redesign the informed consent sheet to fit the new research design**

3. Analysis and interpretation

- What is the expected outcome of your research? What would you consider a significant result? **The research focusses on the discourse surrounding sustainable tourism with a particular focus on how negative effects of tourism are minimized and positive impacts are highlighted. A significant result would be if the affected communities experiencing the (most) negative effects of tourism are not or minimally addressed in the discourse of those involved with tourism policy and promotion as this might illustrate effects of power imbalances.**

- During the course of research, how will unforeseen or adverse events be managed (i.e., do you have procedures in place to deal with concerning disclosures from vulnerable participants)? **While this is not expected due to the nature of the research and the selection of participants based on their professional, rather than personal, characteristics. However, if this happens the proper course of action will be established on a case-to-case base in consultation with the supervisor.**

4. Dissemination

• How do you plan to share your research findings? Which audience to you intend to target? **Foremost the final product is my MSc thesis in the form of a paper. If the quality is suitable it might be presented for publication in relevant academic journals and associated online publications. Upon request the final product will be shared with the participating organizations/persons**

5. Data storage

- Where will your data be stored? Which measures have you taken to make sure it is secure? **All data will be stored on the personal computer of the researcher, the linked iCloud account and an external hard drive. The personal computer is password protected and not left unlocked unattended outside of the home of the researcher. The hard drive is only stored in the home of the researcher. The iCloud account is password protected with a password that is not easily guessable.**

- Which safety precautions have you arranged for in case of data leakage? **Transcripts are anonymized before storing.**

- Will your data be disposed of? If yes: When? (date) if no: Why not? **All data will be deleted one year after completion of the research.**

- Will your research involve the sharing of data or confidential information beyond the initial consent given (such as with other parties)? What specific arrangement have you made and with whom? **No.**

APPENDIX B.2 INFORMATION SHEET

Balancing economic benefits and social disadvantages: How do policy makers and tourism promotors in Leeuwarden consider the potential effects of sustainable tourism?

Dear participant,

Thank you for your interest in participating in this research. This letter explains what the research entails and how the research will be conducted. Please take time to read the following information carefully. If any information is not clear kindly ask questions using the contact details of the researchers provided at the end of this letter.

WHAT THIS STUDY IS ABOUT?
- This research will explore how professionals within the tourism industry in Leeuwarden consider the advantages and disadvantages when establishing tourism policy/tourism promotion.
- You have been asked to participate in this researcher as your profession involves itself with tourism policy and/or promotion in the city of Leeuwarden.

WHAT DOES PARTICIPATION INVOLVE?
- As a participant in this research, you will be asked to participate in one interview of about 60-90 minutes. This interview is conducted preferably in person in a location of your choosing. When in-person interviewing is not possible, the interview will be conducted through videoconferencing software (Google Meet or a similar alternative). Potentially, follow-up questions can be sent over e-mail, if you consent to this.

DO YOU HAVE TO PARTICIPATE?
- Participation in this research is voluntary. You can choose to withdraw from the study at any moment and choose not to answer questions without consequences or providing reasons.

ARE THERE ANY RISKS IN PARTICIPATING?
- This research concerns your profession. Some people could be apprehensive to participate in a study that concerns their job out of fear accidentally disclosing sensitive information and/or being identifiable through their job/organisation. To negate this, you have the right to refuse to answer any questions and your name and organization will be not be named in the results of the research. Any potentially identifying traits about you or your place of work will be removed to avoid identification.

ARE THERE ANY BENEFITS IN PARTICIPATING?
- While there are no direct benefits to participating for you as an individual, the research may contribute to further knowledge relevant to your profession and the goals of your organization.

HOW WILL INFORMATION YOU PROVIDE BE RECORDED, STORED AND PROTECTED?
- The interview will be recorded using the recorder of my smartphone in case of an in-person meeting. If this interview is conducted digitally, it will be recorded using the recording function of the meeting software. Any video files will be converted to audio files and thereafter deleted to further anonymize the data. All audio recordings will be transcribed and the transcriptions will be anonymized before storage.
- The data (consent forms, audio recordings, interview transcripts) will be retained on the Y-drive of the University of Groningen server for 5 years, in correspondence with the university GDPR legislation. Afterwards it will be deleted. Furthermore, the data will be stored on the personal computer of the researcher, the linked iCloud account and an external hard drive. It can be expected the researcher takes appropriate measures to ensure (digital) safety of the data. The personal computer is password protected and not left unlocked unattended outside of the home of the researcher. The hard drive is only stored in the home of the researcher. The iCloud account is password protected with a password that is not easily guessable.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY?
- The results will be reported in a paper that will serve as my Master Thesis for my MSc Cultural Geography. When relevant, this paper can be used for publication in academic journals and other (digital) publications relevant to the field of study. If interested, participants can receive a copy of the results of the study. If you would like this please let the researcher know.

ETHICAL APPROVAL
- This research study has obtained ethical approval from the Campus Fryslân Ethics Committee
- I, as a researcher, will uphold myself to relevant ethical standards.

INFORMED COSENT FORM
- You will now be asked to sign the informed consent form if you agree to these terms. However, the intention to participate still allows you to withdraw at any time.

- If you have any further questions about your participation in this research, you can contact the researcher at the contact details below. Additionally, you can contact the researcher's supervisor or the ethics committee with any questions/concerns.

WHO SHOULD YOU CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION?

Researcher:

R. C. Meijer

r.c.meijer.1@student.rug.nl

+316-23142785

Supervisor

Meghan Muldoon

m.l.muldoon@rug.nl

Ethics Committee Campus Fryslân:

cf-ethics@rug.nl

INFORMED CONSENT FORM
Title study:
Name participant:
Assessment

- I have read the information sheet and was able to ask any additional question to the researcher.
- I understand I may ask questions about the study at any time.
- I understand I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason.
- I understand that at any time I can refuse to answer any question without any consequences.
- I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.

Confidentiality and Data Use

- I understand that none of my individual information will be disclosed to anyone outside the study team and my name will not be published.
- I understand that the information provided will be used only for this research and publications directly related to this research project.
- I understand that data (consent forms, recordings, interview transcripts) will be retained on the Y-drive of the University of Groningen server for 5 years, in correspondence with the university GDPR legislation.

Future involvement

- I wish to receive a copy of the scientific output of the project.
- I consent to be re-contacted for participating in future studies.

Having read and understood all the above, I agree to participate in the research study: yes / no
Date
Signature

To be filled in by the researcher

- I declare that I have thoroughly informed the research participant about the research study and answered any remaining questions to the best of my knowledge.
- I agree that this person participates in the research study.

Date
Signature