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Special Issues in Responsible Tourism Vol. 2

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CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

Promotion of responsible tourism is gained more attention after the intensive periods of COVID-19 restrictions around the world. Tourism is one of the sectors hit hardest by the COVID-19 pandemic, and businesses are lacking work force everywhere in the world. However, the destinations now understand what it is without any tourists around. In some part of the world it is a relief, and in some countries it is miserable situation without any economic impact. The new steps in multidisciplinary research have appeared, and research field is considered more important now than ever before. However, it is still required proactive planning and cooperation between different actors –like in several years ago. What is the future of tourism? It is a question mark for Russian markets during the war operations, but the climate of uncertainty continues all over Europe.

The publication is split into three themes following mainly the content of the research papers presented in the 15th International Conference on Responsible Tourism (ICRT 2022) in Oodi Library, Helsinki. Part 1 deals with research work linked to climate change. Examples of ecological perspectives in tourism open the discussion of responsibilities in this publication. Part 2 introduces actions planned and taken towards responsible tourism in the region of Jamk University of Applied Sciences and Central Finland. Visit Jyväskylä Region is the organization taking a destination manager's role in the beginning of the year 2022 and getting together responsible actions of the companies as well as other communities. The main goal in Central Finland is to reach STF (Sustainable Travelling Finland) label of responsible tourism destination, which in turn is controlled by Visit Finland (Business Finland) operations. Part 3 gives a brief overview of the cases in Finnish Lapland and Iceland. Responsible tourism is already under command of some actors or at least the need for management of responsible tourism becomes an issue. In Finland, we need role models – actors whom to follow in this matter.

Keywords: Tourism Business, Tourism Industry, Sustainable Tourism, Responsible Tourism, Responsible Destination, Tourism Research, Tourism Development

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FOREWORDS

"ICRT Finland organised the 15th International Conference on Responsible Tourism in Destinations in Helsinki's Oodi Central Library. Its Book Heaven on the third floor, houses an extensive collection of over 100,000 books in twenty languages and a large collection of movies, sheet music and games. Children's World offers a world of fairy tales; entering through a secret door children find a 'soft nest' for peaceful story times. Oodi is no ordinary library, it pulses with life. People are encouraged to 'Borrow books, read magazines, enjoy lunch, work, hang out, see a movie, hold a meeting, hold events, enjoy a glass of wine, create music, sew curtains, play with children or play board games.' In the Urban Workshop on the second floor people can print a T-shirt or learn to use a 3D printer, there are cookery courses in the learning kitchen". (Goodwin, 2022b). "Oodi is much more than a library. Oodi was built to mark the 100th anniversary of Finland's independence and to contribute to the realisation of Finnish society's 'most important values, such as freedom of speech, education, equality and openness'. Oodi is accessible for all in prams and push chairs, and it is fully accessible to the differently abled. The venue was chosen for the conference because of the values it embodies, they accord with those of the Responsible Tourism movement of which the ICRT Finland is such an important part. Open for everyone, residents and tourists, young and old, it is firmly founded on the values of equality and respect; 'everyone's shared living room' where all are 'responsible for keeping it comfortable'". (Goodwin, 2022b).

Oodi offers exemplary access for the differently-abled whether as travellers, employees and holidaymaker and for tourists and visitors they offer guided tours. If you are in Helsinki don't miss Oodi, we need more libraries like Oodi, because of the facilities it offers to everyone and the values it embodies and conveys.

It was back in 1972 that the issues of man and the environment were first raised at the UN conference, the World Commission on Environment & Development. The Club of Rome's "The Limits to Growth" was published in the same year. Its forecasts of the consequences of continuing on the same trajectory pursuing business as usual were widely dismissed by academics and policy makers. I well remember thinking that we would not be so foolish as a species as to make that mistake. I was wrong as were the overwhelming majority of the academics and scientists who dismissed the

Club of Rome's report. Subsequent research (Turner, 2008) has shown those original projections to be broadly accurate – we failed to heed the warnings.

The Brundtland Commission defined sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." This is a noble and aspirational ambition, but it does not define sustainability. Whilst policymakers and academics constantly refer to the concept we have failed to define it in ways that make it operational, we cannot effectively use the concept to determine whether or not we are achieving sustainability. This is partly because the definition is aspirational and vague, and also because we are wildly optimistic that we shall keep finding technical fixes. Occasionally we do – the international progress on the ozone layer (Litfin, 1994) is one such example. These examples are rare. On greenhouse gas emissions we have not so much as dented the rate of growth (General Monitoring Laboratory. n.d.), the concept of net zero is a dangerous trap, we need to reduce the amount of CO_2 in our atmosphere now, we are still growing our problem despite all the evidence of the negative consequences of global warming. (Fankhauser et al., 2022.) This is a classic tragedy of the commons (Paavola, 2011) we, businesses, governments and consumers, look to others to bear the pain of reducing emissions or hope for technological solutions, inaction and further warming is the consequence.

Sustainability is the ambition; Responsible Tourism is about what we do as producers, consumers and destination governments to realise the aspiration. Too often, "sustainable" is used only in the abstract sense and is inoperative. Responsibility requires that we say what we are doing to make tourism better and transparent about what we achieve. Responsible Tourism is about using tourism to make better places to live in and better places to visit. Responsible Tourism is not a product- any forms of tourism can be more, or less, responsible.

Overtourism is the opposite, a consequence of a failure to manage tourism sustainably. Overtourism describes destinations where hosts or guests, locals or visitors, feel that there are too many visitors and that the quality of life in the area or the quality of the experience has deteriorated unacceptably. Often both visitors and guests experience the deterioration concurrently.

Responsible Tourism was defined in the 2002, Cape Town Declaration on Responsible Tourism in Destinations (Goodwin, 2014). Our world is diverse, that is fundamental to the tourism industry, it is that diversity that fuels the desire to travel. Responsible Tourism has a broad economic, social and environmental agenda calling on all stakeholders at the destination level "to

take responsibility for achieving sustainable tourism and create better places for people to live in and for people to visit."

Academia has an important role to play in exmining and reporting on initiatives taken to use tourism to address local challenges, to use tourism to make better places to live in. Since many tourism businesses and destinations have developed proven solutions to the issues which arise from tourism. The Platform for Change (Goodwin, 2022a) provides examples of tried and tested ways in which businesses and governments, national and local, can reduce negative impacts and increase positive impacts, using tourism to benefit communities and their natural and cultural environment.

Businesses can implement some solutions acting alone, but many require cooperation with suppliers, clients, competitors and neighbours. Some of the solutions presented on this platform show great promise but are as yet unproven – they are identified as "one to watch". The travel and tourism sector rarely looks at progress being made in other sectors, even when it is happening nearby or could easily be replicated. We are keen to identify solutions from beyond the travel and tourism sector and to include them on this platform. If you know of proven solutions or "ones to watch", please share them.

Harold Goodwin

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Sir Colin Marshall
British Airways 1994

Tourism and the travel industry "is essentially **the renting out for short-term lets, of other people's environments,** whether that is a coastline, a city, a mountain range or a rainforest. These 'products' must be kept fresh and unsullied not just for the next day, but for every tomorrow"

Chapter 1

Climate change challenges tourism

Tourists and consumers are a priority from the point of view of the tourism business, and humans are considered the second priority in terms of nature protection. This creates a conflict situation. Consumers appreciate nature and are willing to compensate for the environmental impacts of their behaviour. This – feeling ecological responsibility – is the focus in the articles of this chapter. The articles were presented at the ICRT conference.

ECOLOGICAL VALUES AND WILLINGNESS TO COMPENSATE FOR LEISURE TIME AIR TRAVEL IN FINLAND

Pinja Savolainen, Elina Vaara & Anne Törn-Laapio

ABSTRACT

Climate change mitigation has become a common agenda and a wide range of ways to reduce air transport emissions have also been created in recent decades. The pressure on airlines to reduce emissions is high and companies have an ardent desire to switch to biofuels, but pressure also comes from consumers. Ecological values of consumers affect consumers' purchasing behaviour. Although, the coronavirus pandemic has halted air traffic completely, people still want to travel and therefore increasing emissions from air transport are a dilemma from an environmental point of view. One customer-oriented way to reduce emissions is to offset emissions. The aim of the study was to determine the willingness of Finnish consumers to compensate for emissions from leisure time air travel and secondly to study the relationships between consumer ecological values and willingness to compensate for emissions from leisure time air travel. According to the results of the survey (n=160), ecological aspects are seen as important, but they mostly affect everyday activities and people are not willing to give up on leisure time air travel. However, people are willing to compensate for the emissions from leisure time air travel, and even if flight tickets would become more expensive due to emission compensation, many people would still be eager to travel. Three groups of consumers were found: the "Ecological", "Worried" and "Price-conscious", who had different awareness of air travel emissions, and willingness to pay for ecological choices. The findings of the study showed a discrepancy between ecological values and consumption behavior, which have been shown also in previous studies. The study highlighted people's ignorance of the compensation of air transport emissions as well as emission offset schemes. In order to promote compensation, it is important to engage customers transparently in reducing emissions and to communicate the means of contributing to mitigating climate change in sufficient detail.

Keywords: emission compensation, ecological values, leisure time air travel

INTRODUCTION

Air travelling is a significant contributor of emissions of greenhouse gases and there is alarming need for emission reduction especially in industrialized countries in this sector (e.g., Sausen et al., 2005; Gössling & Hall, 2008; IPCC, 2007). From a broader perspective, nowadays environmental aspects and the urgency for ecological reconstruction, especially related to climate change, have been highlighted as the most significant ongoing megatrends (e.g., Dufva, 2020, 13). Still only maximum of 10 percent of passengers pay for emission offsets (e.g., Ritchie, Kemperman & Dolnicar, 2021). Previous studies have shown that most Finns (58%) are worried about the climate change, but there is a discrepancy between their ecological values or concerns about climate change and their consumption behavior (e.g., Hyry, 2019, 29). In recent years, interest in more responsible consumption decisions has grown and responsibility has become trendy. There are numerous motivational factors for responsible consumption. However, the ways responsible consumption is implemented depends on the consumer's own values and the willingness to act in accordance with their values. In addition, responsible consumption might be affected by social pressure (Willman-Iivarinen, 2012). Ultimately, values guide us to make decisions when our preferences conflict with each other (Dietz, Fitzgerald & Shwom, 2005).

While in theory the increase in environmental awareness should be reflected in responsible consumption, research data shows otherwise. Thus, values and attitudes do not directly guide people towards making more responsible consumption choices. (Haanpää, 2009, 70–71). Environmental conservation is also nowadays considered a socially accepted norm, which partly explains the positive results in attitudes and values (Koskela, 2008, 11). Concerns about sustainability have complicated multidimensional consumer behavior which is already complex (Wells, Ponting & Peattie, 2010, 2). It has been proved that socio-economic background factors affect consumer behavior especially in terms of making sustainable choices. Previous studies have shown that women are more positive about their environmental attitudes than men. Studies also show that women are more concerned than average about the state of the environment, which is reflected in their more active role in protecting the environment. (Koskela, 2008, 10; Booi Chen & Teck Chai, 2010, 30; Wells, Ponting & Peattie, 2010, 27.) The same gender differences have also been observed in the attitudes of young people (Autio & Wilska, 2003, 10). According to the Hyry (2019) research, a clear majority (73%) of Finns believe that human activities have a significant impact on climate

change and the mitigation of climate change is considered necessary. Additionally, one-fifth of Finns estimate that they have compensated for their emissions (Hyry, 2019). From an environmental point of view, the COVID-19 pandemic has had positive effects on environment. The stagnation of global air traffic has been reflected, among other things, in a significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. (Abu-Rayash & Dincer, 2020, 9; Ching & Kajino, 2020, 1). Hietaniemi and Poussa (2020) have considered that the COVID-19 pandemic will further intensify the tension between environmental awareness and actions.

Incoherence between the types of the consumers related to environmental attitudes and air travelling have been discovered. For example, McDonald et al. (2015) reported that many "otherwise green consumers" continue to fly and found four strategies related to flying: not flying, compensating for flying with other choices or actions, reducing the frequency of flying and continuing to fly like before. The reasons behind responsible consumption can be diverse. However, one common factor is the same for all ethical and environmentally responsible consumers: they want to take care not only of themselves, but also how their consumption decisions affect the world around them (Harrison, Newholm & Shaw, 2005, 2). In addition to environmentally friendly purchase choices, responsible consumption is reflected in a reduction in consumption and a boycott of certain products and companies (Carrigan & de Pelsmacker, 2009, 674). Other means of ethical consumption include compensating for harmful consumption and reducing environmental effects by choosing another product.

The gap between people's attitudes and their behavior and habits in their everyday life and on holiday has been well established. On holiday the aim is often to forget climate concerns that have a strong impact on everyday life, and this view is reflected in behavior that is contrary to people's values (Cohen, Higham & Reis, 2013, 1). Numerous international studies have been carried out on the willingness of air travelers to compensate for the air travel emissions. Previous studies have revealed a lack of awareness. Studies have shown that people in general have poor knowledge of the environmental impacts of air travelling, and the concept and ways of reducing CO_2 emissions are still unknown to most people and there is also a lack of belief and trust in their effectiveness. Studies have also shown that there is limited information about individual-level empowerment and that awareness is one of the main obstacles to compensating for emissions from air travel. Only a small proportion of people are aware of emission offset schemes and there is also a lack of belief in their effectiveness. If the concepts are foreign and unknown, it is

understandable that there will be no compensation. (Lu & Wang, 2018, 96.) In addition to awareness, factors affecting the willingness to compensate for emissions have included the cost of the flight, the purpose of the trip, the frequency of travel and the age of the air traveler (Lu & Shon, 2012, 128). As a result, travelers will have the choice between two different priced air tickets in the future, of which the price of the more expensive ticket will include emissions compensation. (Finnair aims to be carbon neutral by 2045 in 2020.) Air fares do not actually offset the emissions from the flight itself, but they make it possible to direct part of the ticket price to work to combat climate change or to various emission reduction projects. However, because there is no willingness to stop air travel, it is possible to make each trip more responsible by choosing a more sustainable air travel ticket. (Dedolli-Yasa, 2019, 95–102.)

Different voluntary emission offset schemes have been provided and offered to consumers to 'neutralise' their air travel emissions. Usually, the compensation is implemented so that the operator invests in sustainability project, renewable energy etc. (Gössling et al., 2007.) There has been multifaceted criticism of offsetting, which has affected consumers' willingness to compensate for air travel emissions. The significance of the emission compensation made by customers is still small, because research data has shown (e.g., Ritchie et al., 2021) only 10% of air travelers worldwide pay for emission compensation. One major factor in the belief and trust in airlines among customers is probably that airlines communicate poorly and unclearly about their emission offsets and that transparency in operations is low (e.g., Babakhani et al., 2017; Zhang et al., 2019).

MATERIAL AND METHODS

An e-questionnaire was sent via e-mail to 905 Finnish speaking UAS students, from which 160 working-aged (18–64 years) students answered the survey. In addition to the background characteristics such as age, gender, and earlier number of flights per year, survey consisted of questions about aspects such as ecological values and awareness of the possibilities to influence climate change as well as compensating for emissions.

For preliminary analyses, frequencies and crosstabulations were utilized. Via hierarchical regression analyses, variables indicating the willingness to compensate for leisure time air travel were predicted with all variables measuring ecological values, awareness, and actions, as well as background characteristics.

Additionally, a cluster analysis using an explorative two step cluster method (listwise deletion, n=156) was performed to determine groups of students with different values or awareness. Three distinct and statistically significant clusters were observed (n1=20 13%, n2=69 44%, n3=67 43%). The clusters were cross tabulated (and associations tested with Chi square tests) with background characteristics and variables indicating a willingness to compensate for emissions from leisure time air travel. The data was analysed with SPSS 28.0.

RESULTS

ECOLOGICAL VALUES AND CONSUMPTION CHOICES

In the results of the study, the high concern about climate change was visible. This also affected attitudes and values. More than 80 percent of the respondents were concerned or very concerned about climate change. Ecological values were also perceived as important, but this was not directly reflected in consumption behavior. A major part (78%) of the respondents considered ecological values to be important or very important to them. Despite of the importance of values, only 52 percent of the respondents were guided by their values in terms of their consumption behavior. However, a majority of the respondents (60%) were willing to make responsible consumption choices, even if they would be more expensive. The percentage of women (67%) willing to compensate was clearly higher than the percentage men (48%). Although responsible consumption choices were generally considered important, this was lightly reflected in leisure time air travel. Only just over half of the respondents (58%) were interested in the environmental impact of their leisure time air travel, and for even fewer was this shown in their actions. Only a third of the respondents aimed to choose a means of travel that minimized the environmental impact of their travel.

COMPENSATING FOR LEISURE TIME AIR TRAVEL AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF FLYING

The respondents were aware of the emissions from air travel (Figure 1). Over four-fifths (82%) reported to be partly or fully aware of air travel emissions. Half of the respondents also actively followed the news on climate change, which might explain the good level of awareness. In contrast, awareness of their own ability to reduce emissions from air travel was clearly lower (63%

were partly or fully aware). This also separated older and younger respondents: older respondents were clearly more aware of their own opportunities to reduce emissions from their air travel than younger ones. Up to 75 percent of over 40 years old were partly or fully aware of their own opportunities to reduce emissions from their air travel. The corresponding percentage for under 30 years old respondents was only 51 percent. An even smaller share of respondents was aware of aviation emission offset schemes, and as many as 43 percent of respondents were completely or almost completely unaware of emission offset schemes. Despite of the low awareness of offsetting, about the half of the respondents (47%) were willing to compensate for the emissions from their leisure time air travel. Almost the same number of respondents (48%) were also willing to pay more for a flight ticket which includes emissions compensation. On this question, women were clearly more willing to pay more than men (51% vs. 41%, respectively).
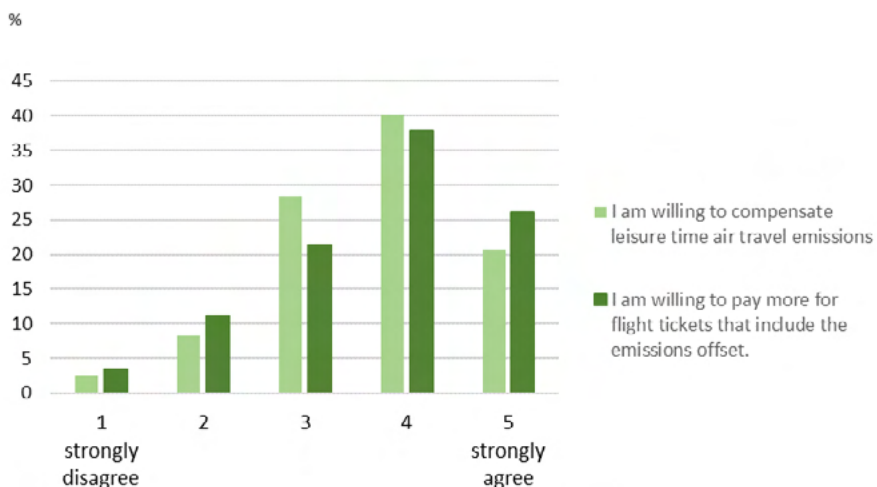
Figure 1. Willingness to compensate for leisure time air travel emissions

The respondents of the study did not see the environmental impact of their leisure time air travel as important when planning the trip. Additionally, their knowledge of climate change did not appear to have a major impact on their leisure time air travel. About the half of the respondents (49%) were willing to reduce their leisure time air travel to mitigate climate change. Despite the

good readiness, this was not seen in action. Only about one quarter (24%) of the respondents had consciously reduced their leisure time air travel due to emissions. In the open ended questions, some respondents said that they would not give up flying because of experiences related to travelling, having relatives abroad, or they considered ecological aspects otherwise in their daily lives. Therefore, the results show a discrepancy between values and practical action: it seems that responsible consumption choices are made, but the target is often other than with leisure time air travel. The same discrepancy between the readiness and practical action was shown concerning the emission offsets. Although 47 percent of the respondents were willing to compensate for the emissions of their leisure time air travel, only about 13 percent of the respondents had done so.

The willingness to compensate for emissions and being prepared to pay more for leisure time flight tickets with emission offsets were predicted with all variables measuring ecological values, awareness, and actions, as well as background characteristics. Having an interest in the environmental effects of flying and an awareness of emission offset schemes, as well as making responsible consumption choices even if it costs more were the only statistically significant predictors for the willingness of the respondents to compensate for their leisure time flight emissions. Therefore, the interest, awareness and possibilities to pay were all important for being favorable for emissions compensation. Together, these three variables still explained only 32% of the variation, and therefore there were multiple other aspects that could affect the willingness to compensate for emissions in addition to those measured (Table 1).

TABLE 1. Predictors of willingness to compensate for emissions	
	I am willing to compensate for emissions from air travel
I am interested in environmental effects of flying	$B=0.297$, $p<0.001$
I am aware of emission offset scheme	$B=0.191$, $p=0.004$
I make ecological consumption choices even if it costs more	$B=0.192$, $p=0.030$
Final model *R squared* and ANOVA *p*	32%, $p<0.001$

When investigating being prepared to pay more for leisure time flight tickets with emission offsets, the statistically most significant predictor was an interest in the environmental effects of flying (Table 2). For those whom the ecological actions or choices of others worked as a motivation for own actions, the preparedness to pay more for flight tickets with emission offset was diminished. In addition, considering the overall ecological aspects when planning a trip was positively associated with being prepared to pay more for more ecological tickets. All together, these three variables explained 36% or the variation.

TABLE 2. Predictors of being prepared to pay more from tickets with emission offset	
	I am prepared to pay more for leisure time flight tickets with emission offset
I am interested in environmental effects of flying	$B=0.320, p<0.001$
It is not sensible for me to take action for the environment, in case others do not act as well	$B=-0.278, p=0.001$
I consider ecological aspects when planning leisure time trips	$B=0.290, p=0.003$
Final model R $squared$ and ANOVA p	36%, p<0.001

THREE TYPES OF CONSUMERS

Additionally, three clusters of students were formed to determine typical patterns of values and awareness (Figure 2). Those named "Ecological" consumers (13%) can be depicted as being very worried about climate change and aware of air travel emissions and emission offset schemes. Overall, their values were extremely ecological, and they also reported that their values directed their consumption choices, also if they must pay more. The second cluster, "Worried" consumers (44%), were also worried about the climate change but only some were aware of the emissions of air travel. They saw their own actions against climate change as important even if others did not act as well, and for those in the "Worried" cluster ecological values were important and directed their choices. The last cluster was named "Price-conscious", as they reported that they were not ready to pay more for ecological choices,

and ecological values were not that important for them. Only a few of them believed that they could have an impact on climate change, even though they were worried about it, too. Some in this cluster did not know what carbon dioxide emissions were or about the emissions of air travel or compensating for emissions.

Figure 2. Clusters of ecological values and awareness

The readiness to compensate for air travel emissions was compared between the three clusters. In all clusters there were individuals that were ready to compensate for the emissions, and a few that would not. The clusters differed statistically significantly (p<0.001), so that most (75%) consumers in the "Ecological" cluster would compensate for air travel emissions (average 3.8±1.4), whereas in "Price-conscious" cluster most (76%) consumers would not or were undecided (average 2.9±1.0). The "Worried" cluster was located between the other two. Similar significant differences between clusters were found concerning the willingness to pay more for flight tickets with emission offset schemes (p<0.001); "Ecological" consumers had highest average

willingness (average 4.0±1.4) and the "Price-conscious" consumers had the lowest level of willingness to pay emission offsetting (average 2.7±1.1).

EFFECTS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON AIR TRAVEL

The possible effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on future travel and consumption behaviour divided the opinions of the respondents. At the time of the data collection at the beginning of 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic had lasted about a year. For about third of the respondents, the COVID-19 pandemic had already changed their values and made them more ecological, and for an even higher percent of the respondents (40%), the pandemic had changed their consumption behaviour making it more responsible. In addition, nearly half (46%) of the respondents believed that the pandemic would have lasting effects on their consumption behaviour. This was not directly reflected in their leisure time air travel. However, the COVID-19 pandemic had changed the way of thinking and leisure time air travel had become less important for about a third of the respondents. A third of respondents also planned to voluntarily restrict their leisure time air travel in the future. Despite the uncertainty about the future, the results of the study also showed that people are still eager to travel. A third of a respondents had no plans to reduce their leisure time air travel, and 14 percent of the respondents believed that they would fly even more in the future than before the pandemic.

DISCUSSION

The aim of the study was to determine the willingness of Finnish consumers to compensate for emissions from leisure time air travel and secondly to study the relationships between ecological values and the willingness to compensate for emissions from leisure time air travel.

It is clear that responsible consumption is emerging alongside materialistic consumption, which is expected to be increasingly reflected in the attitudes and values of young people in the future. (Nyrhinen & Wilska, 2012, 37–38.) In this study, almost all (about 80%) respondents were worried about the climate change. Only about half were interested in the environmental impact of their air travel, and for even fewer was this shown in their actions related to travelling. Therefore, there was a discrepancy between the ecological values of the respondents and their consumption behaviour, which has been shown also in previous studies. The results also highlighted people's ignorance of the compensation of air transport emissions. Hyry (2019) added that among

those who reported to act for climate change in their everyday life, 75% had changed some of their consumer behaviour, and only 44% had changed their means of travelling. Hence, it seems that especially as far as travelling in daily life or leisure time is concerned, individual habits hold tight.

One common factor emerged in the comparison of all countries: the aim is to minimize emissions in everyday life, but the same thinking does not extend to holiday trips. The unwillingness to reduce leisure time trips was justified, among other things, by the convenience of air travel, efficiency (time) and competitive fares (Higham, Cohen & Cavaliere, 2013, 1–2, 24–26). Moreover, in an earlier study in Finland, 43% of respondents thought that they would not choose an environmentally friendly mode of transport if it cost more. Additionally, only one-fifth would compensate for emissions from air travel. (Hyry, 2019, 13–14, 53, 69.) As McDonald (2015) noted, ecologically aware consumers might experience anxiousness due to their desires to travel and "holding anti-air travel ideas", depicted by the flying dilemma with competing ideas about leisure time travel. Again, these results underline the contradiction between the willingness and possibility to pay for some consumers, as found in this study.

So far, it seems that the surest way to reduce emissions is to reduce flying (Landström, 2019). In this study, a bit less than half of the respondents was willing to compensate for the emissions from air travel or were willing to pay more for a ticket with flight emission offset schemes. Similar results were found in EVA's research, in which 59 per cent of Finns would be willing to compensate for emissions from air travel with additional fees, and as many as 56 per cent of Finns would be willing to give up flying altogether (Metelinen, 2019, 2–6).

Earlier studies have demonstrated different types of consumers related to environmental attitudes and flying. Also, in this research a highly conscious and ecologically oriented group of responsible consumers was found ("Ecological" cluster), as in many others (e.g., McDonald, 2015). They were also more willing to pay for leisure time air travel offset, but some still planned to continue to fly – and reported to compensate otherwise with environmentally responsible actions, as reductions in other consumption, as suggested by Harrison, Newholm and Shaw (2005). In this study on the other end were those consumers in the "Price-conscious" cluster, who were mostly younger students. They were also concerned about the climate change but were not ready to pay for green choices. This might be due to lack of money or behaviour contrary to expressed values (e.g., Cohen, Higham & Reis, 2013). Therefore, the limited possibilities to compensate for emissions may reduce the environmentally responsible actions in leisure time travelling.

In the near future ecological values will probably gain even more popularity, and the trend for domestic travel will continue in the future and correspondingly the number of foreign tourists in Finland will decrease (Hiltunen, 2020, 39–40; Jänkälä, 2019, 47). There are also possibilities to gain experiences related to leisure time travelling otherwise. Futurist Elina Hiltunen (2020) believes that digital tools in particular will replace travel and thus reduce air traffic. They can play a role in enabling the escapist or aesthetic experiences in the future, but perhaps not replacing air travel.

In last few years, the unstable situation in the global economy and lower disposable incomes are likely to have had a long-term impact on the demand for air transport and people's ability to travel (Suau-Sanchez, Voltes-Dorta & Cuguero-Escofet, 2020). Although the pandemic has brought about new challenges and uncertainties, the pressure to reduce emissions has not disappeared. The COVID-19 pandemic has changed air transport permanently and the political situation and security may have a long and multifaceted impact on the development of all transport and travel. Hietaniemi and Poussa (2020) consider it likely that the coronavirus will further intensify the tension between environmental awareness and actions. As the focus has been on the acute coronavirus crisis and the economic problems it causes, the environmental crisis might have been given less attention (Hietaniemi & Poussa, 2020). However, an international survey shows that concerns about climate change have not been forgotten, and it was strongly pronounced also in this study. To the contrary, ecological concerns or anxieties may even intensify. According to Ipsos research, 71% of the world's population considers climate change to be as serious a crisis as the coronavirus. (Beaver, 2020.) Therefore, these crises are by no means mutually exclusive.

CONCLUSIONS

When studying the impacts of ecological values and consumers' willingness to compensate for leisure time air travel emissions, it is critical to understand consumer behaviour. It is worth trying to find solutions to promote environmentally friendly solutions taking into account different consumer groups. According to the results of the study and earlier studies there is a lack of knowledge on how to mitigate individual air travel emissions. When the awareness is low, it is understandable that consumers will not offer to pay for compensation either. Therefore, airlines should focus carefully on communicating their values in the future. Consumers' willingness to compensate for the emissions from leisure time air travel should definitely be utilized and

avenues should be clearly visible. In order to promote compensation, it is important to engage customers transparently in reducing emissions and to communicate in sufficient detail about the means of contributing to mitigating climate change.

In addition, it would be important to strive to provide customers with value creation (Lusch & Vargo, 2006), for example, customers could gain relief from climate anxiety and confidence in the future by compensating for emissions from their air travel. On the other hand, it has been discussed that emission offsets might in some cases lead to rebound effects, if flying is seen as more acceptable due to offsetting – and therefore offset schemes might even increase the number of flights environmentally conscious passengers take (Kerner & Brudermann, 2021). In addition, companies are also expected to act responsibly, as customers can choose companies and their services based on environmental or social performance (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). Therefore, the responsible adequate communication of responsible choices is vital as they may affect the decision making of possible passengers. However, it has been questioned whether communicating about the carbon emissions and the effects of voluntary emission offsets is sufficient now (e.g., Guix, Ollé & Font, 2022).

Although most consumers are aware of the need to travel less via air (Gössling et al., 2019), it is not in the interests of the air transport sector or the leisure time tourism companies (Becken & Mackey, 2017), not least as the sector recovers from COVID-19 pandemic (e.g., Amankwah-Amoah, 2020). With the coronavirus, the world has changed, which can also be seen as an opportunity to build a more sustainable future. In today's world, different environmental, political or other crises might compete for attention in the daily news, but climate change is not going to disappear.

On the other hand, by increasing the awareness of the effects of flying on the climate and communicating ways to compensate for leisure time air travel emissions clearly and visibly, it could be possible to encourage responsible consumer behaviour in the future. In the end, as also seen in this study, the ecological values and responsible leisure time actions can be contradictory, and ways to promote sustainable travel in the future are vital in coming years.

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THE POTENTIAL OF LOCAL FOREST-BASED CARBON OFFSETTING IN DECARBONISING TOURISM

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ABSTRACT

Climate crisis is more evident than ever, and tourism industry should contribute to mitigation activities and find solutions for considerably reducing its carbon footprint. In many cases, however, emission reductions fail to be sufficient and reaching carbon neutrality is difficult/challenging only with reduction measures. Decarbonisation objective in tourism thus requires that the remaining emissions must be compensated or offset. Compensation does, however, appear surprisingly complex, especially in the case of multifaceted tourism industry. Hence, the aim of this study is to lessen the complexity of offsetting by evaluating the potential of local offsetting means and models in Finland and explore their attractiveness for the tourists.

To support the industry in its mitigation efforts, a framework for evaluating the suitability of local CO_2 compensation approaches and models for tourism sector was developed. The framework includes two main themes: issues and criteria that are linked to the region/area in which the compensation activities take place, and issues and criteria connected to the feasibility, credibility, and transparency of the compensation model(s). Besides these, important factors in realising carbon compensation are the perceptions and acceptance of the idea of offsetting among the tourists. Thus, it is important to study their perspectives as part of the evaluation process.

Pre-examination helped to identify locally suitable means for carbon sequestration in the case area, namely protection of forests and fertilization of forests. These offsetting means were then taken into a closer examination, and they were evaluated based on the diverse criteria and indicators set in the developed framework. Additionally, the offsetting means were included into a customer survey targeted to the tourists visiting the case area. The survey included a choice experiment which focused on tourists' perceptions related to four aspects of the tentative offsetting model: the share of compensated emissions, location of the

offsetting project/activity, mode of action/purpose (protection of forests/ fertilization of forests) and price for the compensation.

The study brings new insights on the potential of local offsetting models and develops a framework that can be applied in the evaluation of local offsetting projects/means/approaches in other areas and regions. The framework also acts as one tool that can helps tourism sector to find new solutions to decarbonising the sector in future. The study is currently on progress and the current stage of the evaluation is presented in the conference.

BACKGROUND & PURPOSE

Climate crisis is more evident than ever, and tourism industry should contribute to mitigation activities and find solutions for considerably reducing its carbon footprint. In tourism, the pressure for climate change mitigation has increased after the publication of the year 2018 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report and the study of Lenzen et al. (2018) in which the tourism-related greenhouse gas emissions were calculated to represent eight percent of the global emissions. Growing awareness of the industry's harmful contribution to changing climate has led the industry to seek ways to more sustainable and climate-friendly travel and to decrease its emissions. However, since tourism is a carbon intensive industry, in many cases the emission reductions fail to be sufficient. Thus, reaching carbon neutrality is difficult only with reduction measures. Decarbonisation objective in tourism requires that the remaining emissions must be compensated or offset. Compensation does, however, appear surprisingly complex, especially in the case of multifaceted tourism industry.

One of the most important starting points in carbon compensation is the calculation or estimation of the caused emissions. In tourism, the major share of carbon emissions comes from travel, from tourism mobility between tourists' homes and destinations (Becken, 2019; Lenzen et al., 2018). The share of accommodation, food, and tourism activities is often much smaller, especially in the case of long-haul travel (Becken, 2019; Lenzen et al., 2018; also Filimonau et al., 2013). However, as tourism is such a multifaceted industry, the composition of total emissions varies a lot. Also, there remains a lot of confusion and inaccuracy in the calculation of emissions. This uncertainty

and inaccuracy are reflected in tourism compensation activities. It can be said that tourism carbon compensation is still in its infancy (see Babakhani et al., 2016; Becken, 2019).

However, several tourism actors, including tour operators and tourism enterprises currently offer carbon compensation for their customers. Our examination on carbon compensation tourism enterprises shows that there seems to be three major ways to realize compensation: by investing in projects that focus on increasing energy efficiency or the use of renewable energy (mostly in developing countries), by investing in projects based on compensation in forests, or by taking part in emission trading. Recent studies have also examined the interest in and willingness to pay for offsetting emission from flights (e.g., Berger et al., 2022; Ritchie et al., 2021). The studies bring forth some insight on tourists' and travellers' perceptions on offsetting that can partly be used in evaluating the demand for carbon offsetting. However, less attention is paid to the mode of action, or the purpose of offsetting, and customer preferences related to the location of compensation activities. Though, Heintzman (2021) has suggested that voluntary carbon offset programs offered by outdoor recreation industry could increase interest in carbon offsets among their customers especially if they reference to local municipalities and specific services.

Recently, voluntary compensation markets have developed internationally and in Finland where several enterprises already offer compensation services that are typically based on forests. These activities, however, have limited transparency and credibility that restrict their acceptability and upscaling. Forests cover large part, over 75 percent of the land area, in Finland and today there is common understanding that forests have great potential to contribute to climate mitigation and act as even larger carbon sinks in the future if appropriate measures are taken.

In Finland, it is acknowledged that management changes in different types of nature environments can help and bring solutions for CO_2 compensation that include, for example, afforestation of low productive agricultural fields, prolonging forest regeneration cycles and nature conservation (Lehtonen et al., 2021). There is a growing interest towards local models that can support and benefit also the tourism industry. Hence, the aim of this study is to increase understanding of potential forest-based compensation modes to develop solid, effective, and transparent model for offsetting tourism emissions. This is done by developing an evaluation framework for local compensation modes and models including tourism perspective. In addition, a demand perspective on local compensation options is explored.

STUDY AREA AND DESIGN

This case study focuses on Koillismaa region in north-eastern Finland. The tourism in the region is based on diverse nature-based activities, and the main destinations in the region, namely Ruka-Kuusamo and Syöte, are actively seeking to profile themselves as sustainable travel destinations. Hence, there is interest in finding new ways for tourism sector to compensate the emissions to reach carbon neutrality and thus support sustainability.

To support the industry in its mitigation efforts, a framework for evaluating the suitability of local forest-based CO_2 compensation approaches and models for tourism sector was designed. The forest-based compensation models were evaluated in terms of their feasibility (how well they fit to be executed in the region) and how they benefit tourism. The framework helps to evaluate the feasibility by focusing on two main themes: area/region specific criteria and compensation model related criteria. The region/area (in which the compensation activities take place specific) issues are looked especially from tourism point of view and criteria developed based on this (e.g., local supply for suitable nature/forest areas, benefits to tourism). The compensation model related criteria are connected to feasibility, costs, efficiency, credibility, and transparency. Besides these, important factors in realising carbon compensation are the perceptions and acceptance of the idea of offsetting among the tourists. Thus, it is important to study their perspectives as part of the evaluation process.

The evaluation framework builds on the previous knowledge on good compensation criteria (e.g., Laine et al., 2021; Niemistö et al., 2021) and the calculations conducted at Natural Resources Institute Finland to analyse what are the most cost-efficient ways to sequestrate carbon in Koillismaa with forest management changes during the next 30 years period. The previous studies, however, have not looked the compensation models or modes of action based on the implications on tourism (e.g., the influence on attractiveness) at destination level. Hence the framework brings new insight by developing evaluation criteria that especially focuses on issues at regional/destination level.

Additionally, to gain customer preferences on the local offsetting model/mode of forest-based compensation, a customer survey was developed. The offsetting modes were included into a customer survey targeted to the tourists visiting the case area. The survey included questions of tourists previous offsetting activities and their interest in climate issues and compensation, statements on environmental issues, nature connectedness as well as

sustainable tourism behaviour. The survey also included a choice experiment which focused on tourists' perceptions related to four aspects of the tentative offsetting model: the share of compensated emissions, location of the offsetting project/activity, mode of action/purpose (protection of forests/fertilization of forests) and price for the compensation.

The data reported in this abstract was collected from the beginning of December 2021 till 25th of April 2022. This covers the winter season of the case area (Koillismaa, including Kuusamo-Ruka, Pudasjärvi-Syöte and Taivalkoski) under examination. The data was collected on site and the data collection continues also during the summer season and hence, only preliminary results are presented here. The results are based on the answers of 152 Finnish respondents and 36 responses of foreigners.

FINDINGS

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

The regional aspects are at the core of the evaluation when examining the potential of local forest-based carbon compensation models in decarbonising tourism. At the first phase, the potential of diverse land use modes was evaluated in terms of the goals set for the project. In this case the goal was to find an effective way to sequestrate carbon with the land use modes available at the case area. This was done based on scientific data and evaluations of most efficient ways to sequestrate carbon to forests with management changes (Lehtonen et al., 2021). Pre-examination and calculations with MOTTI forest growth simulator helped to identify locally suitable modes for carbon sequestration in the case area. These were the prolongation of the rotation cycle of mature forests for additional 30 years, protection of forests, and the fertilization of young forests. From these, the potential (amount of local supply, i.e., suitable forest areas) as means to offset the local and regional carbon emissions from tourism was evaluated.

In addition, the impact of the suitable modes for tourism were evaluated by looking how the compensation activity influences diverse ecosystem services important for tourism, including e.g., biodiversity, landscape, and recreational values. Diverse indicators were developed for the evaluation. Additionally, the location of the compensation sites was evaluated in terms of their attractiveness and usability for tourism activities at the destination level. Currently, the evaluation of the diverse identified modes mentioned above is still on progress. In the following phase, the identified forest-based compensation

models are evaluated based on the criteria of a good compensation model, such as emissions reduction additionality and credible measurement and reporting (e.g., Laine et al., 2021; Niemistö et al., 2021). In addition, the acceptability and the demand perspectives (previous research insight and data collected by the customer survey) are integrated to the evaluation.

CUSTOMER PERCEPTIONS RELATED TO OFFSETTING THEIR EMISSIONS FROM TRAVELLING

The results show that 24 percent of the Finnish respondents and 22 percent of the foreign respondents have paid to offset their carbon emissions from travel. The Finnish respondents were more aware if they have done so as only 13 percent were unsure if they offset their emissions while the share of unsure among the foreigners was 20 percent. The figures 1 and 2 show that over 80 percent of Finnish and foreign respondents were interested in the climate and environment related actions that are implemented at the destination. Almost 80 percent were also interested in knowing the size of the carbon footprint of their trip. The foreign respondents (75%) were more interested in offsetting their emissions from travelling compared to the Finnish respondents (53,3%). However, the share of Finnish respondents is rather high as many of them travelled to the destination by a car. The interest in compensating the emissions of the whole stay was lower (49,3% of Finnish and 52,8% of the foreigners) compared to the interest to offset just the emissions from travelling.
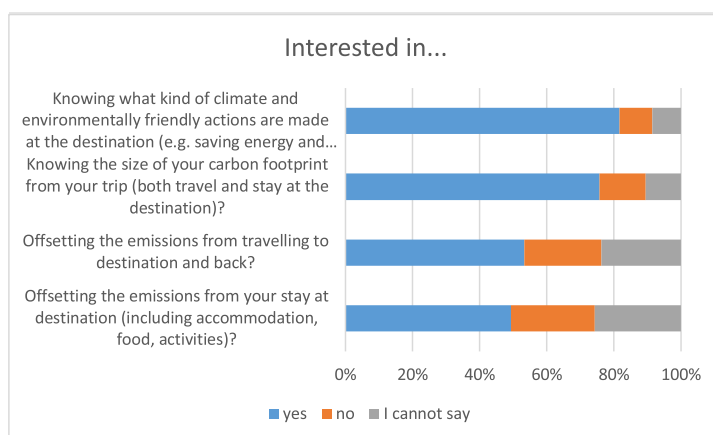
Figure 1. Finnish respondents (n=152)
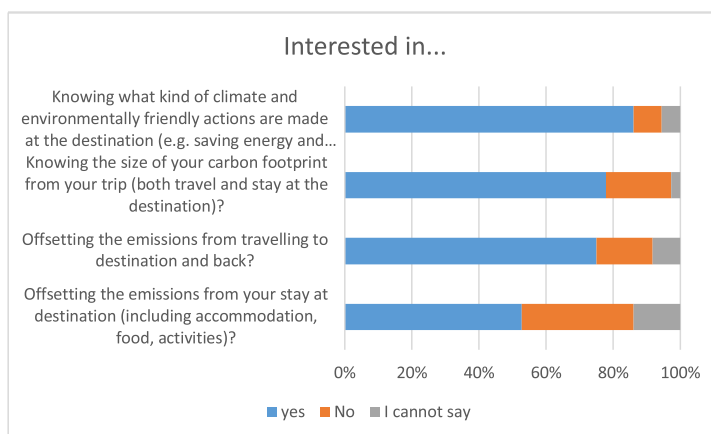
Figure 2. Foreigners' responses (n=36)

The tentative results indicate that the Finnish respondents seem to prefer local carbon offset models over international options when selecting the offsetting option. The most valued options were the ones when carbon sequestration took place locally through forest protection, when the option compensated for 100% of emissions and when it was cheaper than the second option. However, it seems that Finnish respondents are open to both carbon sequestration options presented, i.e., protection of forests and fertilizing forests and are choosing the local option even if it is more costly. Foreign respondents otherwise seem favour options that offset emissions most comprehensively (option offsets 100% of emissions). Location of the offsetting project was not as important as for the Finns. The price of compensation seems to influence foreigners' choices a little more.

CONCLUSIONS

The study brings new insights into the potential of local forest-based offsetting models and develops a framework for the evaluation of local offsetting modes and models that can be applied also in other areas and regions. The framework also acts as one tool that can help tourism sector to choose solutions for decarbonising the sector in future. The framework developed for the analysis of the compensation modes at local level, and specifically the region-based criteria, contributes to the discussion on the effectiveness and reliability of the compensation by providing detailed information on the topic. The study also feeds into the discussion on how different compensation modes can benefit tourism at destination level beyond offsetting the emissions.

The tentative findings indicate that compensation activities taking place locally near the destination seemed to be important especially for the Finnish tourists. This supports some previous notions on the general preference acceptance of local versus international compensation programs (see e.g., Baranzini et al., 2018). However, as Baranzini et al. (2018) showed, the perceptions and preferences can be changed with informational treatment. Hence, before the final choice experiment analysis of the full data collected in Koillismaa case area is completed, no further conclusions should be made. What is important, though, is the high interest towards the environmentally friendly actions at the destinations among tourists, and the international tourists' rather high willingness to compensate at least the emissions from travel. This puts pressure on the destinations to reach carbon neutrality in other means than offsetting.

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Chapter 2

Towards responsible actions in tourism

The previous decade brought overtourism challenges as a negative concern to responsible tourism discussions and research areas. During COVID-19 period all the actors have had time to rethink tourism to be more sustainable. The articles in this chapter seemed being inspired by redesigning Finnish tourism destinations for a new period with the management model, communication practices or a new type of responsible tourism concepts such as voluntourism. Also, the education institute – Jamk University of Applied Sciences in this case – has a role enhancing tourism towards more responsible activities at least in Central Finland.

MANAGING VISITOR FLOWS IN A RESPONSIBLE DESTINATION

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ABSTRACT

Sustainable and responsible tourism has become essential in tourism strategies around the world. Continuous growth is no longer the main objective in tourism development. Overtourism is considered as an opposite of responsibility in many ways since unmanageable tourism may have various negative impacts in a place and in people. The negative impacts may appear, for example, in the unique character of a place, the comfort of living or the pull factors of a destination. (Goodwin, 2016a.) Destination management organizations (DMOs) around Europe have paid more attention to preventive actions regarding overtourism as overtourism has been widely presented in media (Capocchi, Vallone, Pierotti & Amaduzzi, 2019.) 'Pre-overtourism phase' is an opportunity to plan, to discuss and to plan actions for the possible growth (Majdak & Almeida, 2022).

Article sums up the results and the ideas of a master's thesis (Maukonen, 2022) made in Jyväskylä University of Applied Sciences. The thesis focuses on the phenomenon of overtourism and the preventive actions regarding it that could be applied in a DMO. It was identified during the research that overtourism, its birth mechanisms and its impacts are not yet strongly identified in Central Finland as tourism is seen more as a way for economic growth. However, the possibility for growth too sudden or too strong is identified a possible threat for some locations or attractions. Precautionary planning, actions and measures proved to be considered valuable. This article presents a model for managing visitor flows from a preventive perspective that could be applied in various destinations.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The tourism industry has been growing strong and it has multiplicative effects on many other industries as well. Tourism is known to have multiple positive effects, for example in employment and in the economy. The industry has been growing

and even after the COVID-19 recovery and growth has been recognized. It has been noted that the tourism industry needs to become even more sustainable and responsible to prevent the possible negative effects that increasing tourism may cause. Negative impacts may increase in sociocultural and ecological environments as tourism becomes more easily accessible and available to larger masses of people. (Buckley, 2012.) UNWTO defines sustainable tourism to be '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' (UNEP & WTO, 2005).

The number of tourists might sometimes grow too strongly or suddenly and cause negative impacts which is when the needs of visitors, the industry, environment, and host communities are not always addressed in a sustainable way. Overtourism has been widely presented in media and tourism research as tourism has caused problems in some well-known destinations, places, and attractions (Dodds & Butler, 2019). Overtourism in cities such as Barcelona and Venice have been discussed about a lot as the access to common resources has become disturbed, crowding has become an issue and visitors have, for example, added litter, pollution and feeling of unsafety in cities. (Goodwin, 2016b.) Blinnikka and Grönroos (2019) tell that overtourism has not been a major issue in Finland yet. There are though some locations in Lapland and a location such as Suomenlinna that have already undergone the impact of too many visitors. Isolation and remoteness are often conceived as a part of tourism in Nordic countries, and they are qualities many visitors seek. A conflict between expectations and experiences may occur if the destination feels too crowded. (Oklevik et al., 2019.)

DMOs are committed in developing sustainability in tourism field in Finland. Some sustainability and responsibility goals are defined within national Sustainable Travel Finland (STF) programme and some area specific goals are defined within destinations and their stakeholder groups. A criterion for implementation of sustainability defined by STF is that destination management organizations pay attention to the possibility of overtourism and manage visitor flows with a suitable model. (Sustainable Travel Finland, 2022.) The need for research was defined by the local DMO Visit Jyväskylä Region (Lakeland – Jyväskylä region) to meet this criterion. This kind of research was not done before, and such models were not published so the results can be considered to add some new insights to this matter. Overtourism was not seen as an issue within the destination's area, but it was already recognized that in order to be able to develop the more responsible destination, discussion and preventive ideas on possibilities for overtourism are useful.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Destinations can be described as common good that no one owns (Epler-Wood, 2017) or they can be described as products that develop along their life cycle through used resources, marketing, mental images and stakeholder groups (Saarinen, 2014; Saraniemi & Kylänen, 2011). There are expectations for DMOs to advance the responsibility in their area in cooperation with their stakeholder groups. Diverse phenomena, including overtourism, should be researched locally as well as nationally. International guidelines for destination management need to be integrated with local circumstances. (World Tourism Organization, 2019.) It is widely recognized that tourism industry is involved with a wide-scale stakeholder groups and finding a balance between the interests of those groups requires a well-planned balancing towards common goals (Polese & Minguzzi, 2010). Stakeholder groups such as companies, associations, public services, local residents and visitors are in continuous interaction with each other and with the destination (Saraniemi & Kylänen, 2011). As responsible tourism is described in Cape Town Declaration (2002), the purpose is to make better places for people to live in and better places for people to visit. Residents are in this way the most important stakeholder group for a destination and for a DMO. Responsible destination invests on wellbeing of locals and in quality visitor experience instead of just continuous growth (Capocchi et al., 2019; Joppe, 2019).

Overtourism is described as unmanageable growth of tourism. Seasonal or continuous excessive tourism might burden the capacity of physical, ecological, social, economic, psychological and political environments. (Milano et al., 2018; Peeters et al., 2018.) The burden may be felt both by locals as well as visitors (Goodwin, 2021). Conflicts are also commonly experienced (Postma & Schmuecker, 2017). Overtourism is an experience-based phenomenon as the situation may be felt differently between individuals. Individual's experience or community's shared experience on life quality may change when it is felt there is too much tourism. (Goodwin, 2016a.) In rural areas, even relatively small growth can be experienced to be too much. Overtourism is often experienced seasonally. Yet, it may have permanent impacts of lives of locals as the way of life, wellbeing and accessibility of services may change (Milano et al., 2018; Dodds & Butler, 2019.) A balance between the right to travel and the right for wellbeing of residents should be considered carefully (Perkumienė & Pranskūnienė, 2019). Tight and well-organized cooperation between stakeholder groups across sector boundaries is recognized to be crucial in managing a destination (Plichta, 2019).

The development of destinations can be researched with many methods. Global Sustainable Tourism Council's GSTC-criteria emphasizes the importance of measuring and managing change. Carrying capacity and LAC-model are often used tools in measuring. (GSTC Destination Criteria, 2019.) Carrying capacity is used to examine how many people an area can carry until the quality of experience, or the wellbeing of nature becomes endangered in unacceptable way (UNWTO, 2018; Wall, 2019). In addition to examining the limits for amount for people, it is important to take notice on individual experiences as the acceptable limits can be experienced in different ways. Alongside and partly to compensate carrying capacity, LAC-model (Limits of Acceptable Change) is used to measure social carrying capacity. (Cooper, 2012.) The theoretical triangulation model for visitor sustainability has been recently developed in Finland to assess the ecological sustainability and ties economic sustainability to the social dimension (Veijola et al., 2020). A well-known model for researching area's development is The Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC) that was presented by Butler in 1980. Butler (2019) describes that TALC-model in its original purpose does not actually illustrate the situation of overtourism in an area, but the model shows well the possible ways of development after reaching the critical limits of capacity. Model can also be used in defining destination's carrying capacity. As Epler Wood (2017) describes, too high a demand might cause crowding, lack of water and energy, issues with waste management and problems for environment, residents and entrepreneurs. It is thus important to take notice how to proceed once the limits of capacity are reached.

Overtourism has been researched also through the means of visitor flow management. Visitor flow management has originally used in nature attractions, but it has become more common in other kind of tourism as well (Cooper, 2012). As overtourism has caused a lot of discussion, the importance of visitor flow management has become more valued in DMOs' work (Gössling et al., 2020; Padrón-Ávila & Hernández-Martín, 2019). Managing visitor flows helps to protect certain locations from excessive load and improves quality of experience and may also add the feeling of security (Timothy, 2021). Knowledge management is needed to identify qualities of visitor segments which helps to understand which kind of locations attract visitors from certain segments. Visitor surveys are a possibility to gain more knowledge on visitors. (Padrón-Ávila & Hernández-Martín, 2019.) Procedures, such as limitations, extra fees, marketing campaigns, signs, mobile applications and inclusion of locals are common in visitor flow management. The procedures should be chosen depending on the goals of visitor flow management. Goals can be

for example to decrease the number of visits, to decrease traffic, to improve quality of experience, to add knowledge on sustainable tourism or to increase inclusion of local in tourism industry. Sometimes a location might have to be totally closed. (Wall, 2019; Timothy, 2021) Cooper (2012) also adds the possibility for a more positive approach that emphasizes individual needs and aims to improve the image of quality. Majdak and Almeida (2022) see 'pre-overtourism phase' as an opportunity to plan the management of visitor flow in a sustainable way.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

Empirical research was conducted to raise awareness of overtourism from an administrative point of view, to find preventive means to consider it and to find out which kind of model could be used to the prevent the phenomenon. The purpose was to collect a comprehensive overview on overtourism especially from DMO's point of view since overtourism did not appear to be very well known in Finland yet. As Blinnikka and Grönroos (2019) have described, long-term impacts of overtourism have not yet been experienced in Finland which is why there is not too much knowledge about it.

Data was collected with half-structured theme interviews and from written internet documents. Data's versality appears in the interactive nature of interviews and in the unchanging nature of written documents. As a comprehensive overview of the phenomenon was pursued, these distinct sources for data collection were seen to complement each other. 4 theme interviews were implemented of 14 invited and 16 written internet materials were selected to be analyzed. Theme interviews were conducted with people that represent different stakeholder groups of the DMO but who were not necessarily tourism specialists but specialists in their own fields. Internet materials were used to gather information on international experiences and procedures. Simple search term "overtourism" generated then over 2 million results but counterword in Finnish only 1060 results which also implicates to the possible lack of knowledge of overtourism in Finland.

The approach in the analysis was to add understanding of extensive phenomenon that consists of multiple factors. Theory-driven content analysis was used to gather and to organize information from the material into a clear and compact form (Berg & Lune, 2012). Both the interviews and internet materials were analyzed with content analysis though the interviews were transcribed first. Analysis generated information that appeared frequently in the material and some less-frequent point of views that stood out.

RESULTS AND INTRODUCING THE VISITOR FLOW MANAGEMENT MODEL

Matters related to sustainable and responsible tourism were well recognized in stakeholder groups. Those are seen as a framework for tourism this day. It was also noted that a destination or a place with sustainable values and responsible actions is more appealing to the informed consumers who do not wish to visit places suffering from impacts of overtourism. Guidance on sustainability and instructions for visitors to act responsibly was seen important. As a part of sustainability, it was seen important that public transportation is being developed and that it would reach even more remote places in the future. Many attractions, popular locations or national parks are now located distant from the public transportation network in Jyväskylä area which adds the amount of using one's own car. This then adds pollutions and traffic, which is an issue especially on smaller rural roads. It was also mentioned that a DMO could develop accessibility with pre-prized taxi packages, for example.

The need for strong collaboration and fluent, inclusive dialogue throughout the destination's stakeholder groups stood out in both interviews and in internet materials. The right balance between stakeholder groups' expectations and needs and the implementation of sustainability is seen to add value to the most. When developing an area towards a better place for people to live in and better place for people to visit, strong collaboration across sector boundaries between everyone involved is needed. Perhaps the most important factor in collaboration is that local residents are included in discussion and in decision-making. Decision-making concerning destinations influences residents' way of living which is why the discussion must be inclusive to be able to implement sustainability in all its aspects. Many local projects, for example Päijänne as a Biosphere Reserve, were also seen to include stakeholder groups and to provoke discussion.

Attempts to foresee the future are seen as a part of considering the possibilities for overtourism and making plans. Especially internet documents presented situations in which overtourism had already become a problem of some level and documents introduced actions focusing more on controlling the situation, but it was recognized that anticipating actions and planning would be needed. This would include collaboration with all the stakeholders. As for measuring and monitoring, the idea of carrying capacity does not seem to be familiar yet in Central Finland. Instead, it was thought that anticipative actions impact on visitor amounts in a way that limits of carrying capacity would unlikely be exceeded. It was felt difficult to estimate where the limits

might be. LAC-model has been used for example in some national parks in Finland.

Managing visitor flows is an effective way to manage the consequences of tourism and to prevent overtourism. It was considered important that visitor flows are directed to multiple locations year-round so that there would not be excessive pressure anywhere. As the destination might be geographically vast and include different types or areas, such as cities and countryside, it is important to direct visitors all around the destination and to more quiet locations. It became apparent that countryside can benefit economically, through widening the service supply and tourism products, through raising eagerness for entrepreneurship or through learning new. New residents may also be more willing to move to the countryside when the area is seen to develop. Increasing length-of-stay is also seen as an important matter related to sustainability as is increasing year-round tourism. Interviewed persons were hoping the tourism seasons in Central Finland would lengthen and that low seasons could attract more visitors which implicates that the seasonality of the industry is felt someway problematic. Communication seemed to be probably the most important factor in managing visitor flows, which requires inclusion of locals and all the relevant stakeholders. Interactive, inclusive, open, positive and honest communication seems to be needed through diverse channels. New digital solutions are also seen to ease communication and collaboration. Through digital solutions visitors can also be directed to other locations from the most crowded ones.

Some local locations were present in interviews from overtourism's point of view. Especially nature attractions such as national parks and smaller trekking locations are viewed as possible places for impacts of overtourism. Also, seasonal services were seen to be at occasional risk. There were concerns also about the accessibility of these places if the number of visitors grows too much. Also, historical or otherwise old buildings are not usually built to sustain today's use and therefore they might not sustain a large number of visitors. It was also clear that the character of some places limits the number of visitors, and it would not even be possible that those places would become too crowded. After all, balancing between different needs was again seen crucial in local point of view as well.

A holistic model for managing visitor flows was planned based on the results to support the work of a destination management organization (See Figure 1). The model is a demonstrative overview and summary of results gained in the research. The model presents the results as goals and actions. These are presented in short-term, mid-term and long-term objectives based

on theory, results and researcher's consideration. A holistic view on the phenomenon offers destination management organizations a possibility to apply and to focus the planning and actions to their needs.
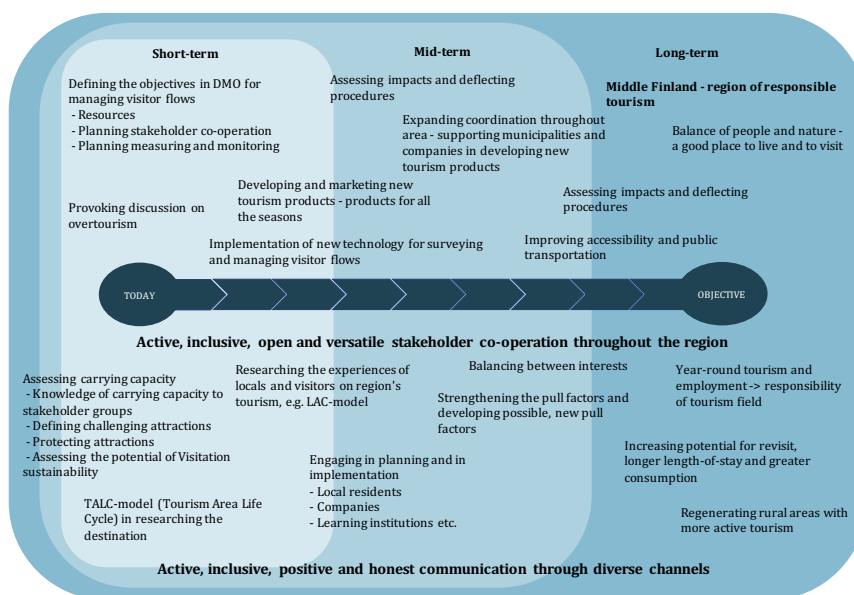
Short-term

Defining the objectives in DMO for managing visitor flows
- Resources
- Planning stakeholder co-operation
- Planning measuring and monitoring

Provoking discussion on overtourism

Mid-term

Assessing impacts and deflecting procedures

Expanding coordination throughout area - supporting municipalities and companies in developing new tourism products

Developing and marketing new tourism products - products for all the seasons

Implementation of new technology for surveying and managing visitor flows

Long-term

Middle Finland - region of responsible tourism

Balance of people and nature - a good place to live and to visit

Assessing impacts and deflecting procedures

Improving accessibility and public transportation

TODAY ▷▷▷▷▷▷▷▷▷ OBJECTIVE

Active, inclusive, open and versatile stakeholder co-operation throughout the region

Assessing carrying capacity
- Knowledge of carrying capacity to stakeholder groups
- Defining challenging attractions
- Protecting attractions
- Assessing the potential of Visitation sustainability

TALC-model (Tourism Area Life Cycle) in researching the destination

Researching the experiences of locals and visitors on region's tourism, e.g. LAC-model

Engaging in planning and in implementation
- Local residents
- Companies
- Learning institutions etc.

Balancing between interests

Strengthening the pull factors and developing possible, new pull factors

Year-round tourism and employment -> responsibility of tourism field

Increasing potential for revisit, longer length-of-stay and greater consumption

Regenerating rural areas with more active tourism

Active, inclusive, positive and honest communication through diverse channels

Figure 1. Visitor flow management –model

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

It was noted that literature and results of this research supported and completed each other. Managing visitor flows is an effective way to both prevent and to manage the consequences of overtourism. Stakeholder collaboration and communication stood up as they proved to be the most important aspects in considering possibilities for overtourism and in solving problems already existing. Concerning visitor flow management, communication helps to increase the length-of-stay, to even the seasonal differences and to manage the traffic flows. As mentioned in literature and as was noticed during research, the stakeholder groups may have different interests in mind and sustainable actions are not always the main priority for all. Interests in tourism may vary that way and sustaining growth is not what everyone wants. Engaging stakeholder

groups needs balancing between different needs but also requires spreading of knowledge and information on sustainable and responsible tourism. Gaining knowledge and learning new helps to adapt changes and to prioritize one's objectives. Besides the DMO itself, local learning institutions have a role in spreading information, implementing projects and including other stakeholders as well. Visit Jyväskylä Region (Lakeland – Jyväskylä region) has expanded its operational area to cover Central Finland as a whole (Visit Jyväskylä Region, 2021) which is an opportunity to discuss and to spread knowledge for example on overtourism, visitor flow management and sustainability questions throughout the region.

Inclusion of residents is crucial to make better places for people to live in and better places for people to visit (Cape Town Declaration, 2002). Destinations are often described as common good, and many would want to participate in improving this common good. As overtourism is experienced individually, it is important to give the locals a voice and opportunities to express opinions as decisions often impact their lives. Also, if visitor flows have been planned to be directed in a new way or to new locations, it is advised to listen to the local people.

Carrying capacity, LAC-model, TALC-model are commonly used and known models for measuring and assessing change. They did not though appear to be yet familiar in Central Finland and assessing the limits for capacity or the limits for acceptable change seemed unfamiliar and difficult as they appeared to feel too abstract. The theoretical triangulation model for visitor sustainability developed in Finland was not yet widely used while doing the research. As a conclusion, it could be said that there is not just one correct model or a way to measure for DMOs and the usage is useful to define based on region's needs and objectives. Comprehensive anticipation can be said to be in a key role in foreseeing, assessing and controlling overtourism. Also, new technology will take place in measuring and monitoring, and it will benefit both the user organization and the end users. There are already apps from which a visitor can see which locations the most crowded and which parking areas are already full and can avoid them. Applying new technology helps in many situations and provides a tool for effective communication. Although, it is suggested to carefully consider which technology is really needed and what data they are gathering. Gathering all the available data is not that useful as focusing on the data that is really needed in developing a destination.

The research was implemented during the coronavirus pandemic while the travel industry was one of the industries confronting major changes and challenges. Overtourism, especially in Finland, seemed like a distant thought

then but importance to discuss the topic and to plan procedures is recognized while the problems seem distant. In interviews, it became clear that signs of overtourism were not clearly experienced, except occasionally in some specific and popular locations. A worry of possibly changing the character of beloved places came up too. Thus, it is important to pay attention and to make proactive actions so that environments do not change more than locals can accept. There have been uncertain times in the tourism industry, but the importance of sustainable and responsible actions remains to grow.

It needs to be noted that the thesis described in this article offers only one view on the wide-scale phenomenon and is based on researcher's own working experience as well as on experience of the researched persons. Thus, the results cannot be considered universal, and it is suggested for each destination to reflect the results in their specific and unique context. Researcher does not work in a DMO and thus the best expertise is within the organizations themselves. The model has not yet been used in practice but as it is meant to be applied in suitable parts, the usability is believed to be good. The local DMO has mentioned that the model and main results of the thesis will be utilized in applying for a funded project and it remains to be seen how the model keeps developing.

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VOLUNTOURISM IN FINLAND: BETWEEN PROFITABILITY AND PUBLIC BENEFIT

Rositsa Röntynen

ABSTRACT

Voluntourism is considered a responsible form of tourism because of its connection to the destination and the local community. By its nature voluntourism is double-faced: while tourism is an economic activity, volunteering is maintained by non-profit structures. Although as a term it is still unknown in Finland, in practice there is evidence of successful activity nation-wide. This study maps the different types of voluntourism existing in Finland and investigates the readiness of rural actors to engage in voluntourism, situating the different types of activity in the spectrum between conventional non-profit volunteering and traditional profit-driven tourism for the purpose of building conceptual models of voluntourism in Finland. For this study, interviews were conducted with voluntourism hosts, intermediary organizations and experienced voluntourists across Finland in order to discover the existing practices. Rural actors were interviewed as potential voluntourism hosts. In addition, international organizations were inquired via email correspondence. In the second stage of the research, workshops were held on specific themes formed by the information gathered from the initial interviews, with voluntourism actors and other interested parties to concretize and enrich the understanding of the voluntourism spectrum in Finland – a topic which is still under-researched. In addition, a survey was conducted to link voluntourism in Finland to specific sustainable development goals and responsible practices. The study discovered three main models of voluntourism according to the level of commercial activity, which are possible in the Finnish context, and which all carry both potential and risks in terms of responsible tourism and sustainability. This study contributes to the creation of a national operational model of voluntourism in Finland. It was conducted as a part of "The Value Project: Central Finland as a Leading Province for Volunteer Tourism", which is implemented in cooperation between Jyväskylä University of Applied Sciences and Central Finland Villages Association, and co-funded by the European Union.

Keywords: voluntourism, conceptual model, responsible tourism, sustainability, Finland

INTRODUCTION

Voluntourism has been very little researched and developed in Finland (i.e., Konu et al., 2017; Business Finland, n.d.). Despite the clear need to develop and coordinate it on national level (i.e., Kangas & Heinonen, 2011), it is often neglected due to the small number of operators and tourists involved. Konu et al. (2017) point out that voluntourism activity in Finland exists, but there is probably more demand than supply.

Both as a type of tourism and as a form of volunteering, voluntourism is not a mass activity, but it is not meant to be such either (Business Finland, n.d.). Yet globally, it is a significant phenomenon that generates $ 3 billion a year (Gharib, 2021).

DEFINITION AND HISTORY FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF PROFIT

According to Wearing (2001), volunteer tourism describes a form of tourism in which people visit and participate in local projects, usually related to nature, the local community, or the restoration of buildings and objects. In other words, voluntourism has two faces – travel and volunteering, vacation and work. From the tour operator's perspective, voluntourism is defined as a purchasable trip during which it is possible to volunteer (Brown, 2005).

Wearing (2001) provides an explanation for why this form of tourism is so little known. According to him, voluntary tourism has generally suffered from the fact that it is not separated from other forms of tourism or volunteering, but belongs to, among other things, alternative tourism, international volunteering, and social work.

Voluntourism is not a completely new concept. Volunteering in combination with travelling has been globally practiced over time. From a Western perspective, the first volunteers centuries ago have been missionaries, healers, sailors, and explorers, among others. Voluntourism became more organized in the 20th century with the establishment of the first voluntourism organizations. Activities were related to post-World War II reconstruction and then to developing countries. Africa became the number one destination for volunteer tourism. The first environmental trips were offered in the 1980s. The number of voluntourism organizations grew exponentially in the 1990s and 2000s. Most of the organizations were set up in the UK and the USA. Project locations have diversified and are currently not limited to developing countries. (Tourism Research and Marketing, 2008.) The activity has been steadily commercialized (Wendelius, 2019) and in the

beginning of the 2010's voluntourism is one of the fastest growing sectors of tourism (Birrell, 2010).

VOLUNTOURISM AND RESPONSIBLE TOURISM

Voluntourism is considered a form of sustainable tourism because it offers a deeper understanding of the characteristics of a destination, such as nature, history, and local community, than traditional tourism (Holopainen, 2015; Konu et al., 2017; Kangas & Heinonen, 2011). By volunteering the tourists can minimise, prevent, or compensate the negative effects of their trip, for example by rehabilitating nature sites or by animal protection (Kangas & Heinonen, 2011). From the climate point of view, voluntourism sometimes focuses on long-haul travelling and short stays in the destination, thus it cannot be considered low-carbon and environmentally responsible (El Geneidy & Baumeister, 2019).

If the volunteering project is genuinely community-based, voluntourism can nurture local culture, support local services, and reduce poverty (Spenceley & Meyer, 2012; McGhee, 2014; Waller, 2018). Voluntourism can be harmful and exploitative (Konu et al., 2017; Waller, 2018), mainly when it concentrates on the commercial instead of local benefit (Guttentag, 2009; Wilkinson, McCool & Bois, 2014) and the residents' point of view is not considered (Lee, 2020). Sometimes volunteer work is organized as a mere attraction for tourists, not derived from the genuine need of the destination or the locals (Pitkänen, 2020). Activities are not sustainable either when the operating environment of the destination has not been considered. Sometimes volunteering takes the jobs away from the local workforce (British Council, 2016) or blocks the accommodation capacity of an entrepreneur during the lucrative high season (Wendelius, 2019).

The importance of niche tourism is increasing as a contrary of mass tourism (Callanan & Thomas, 2005). Business Finland (n.d.) mentions voluntourism in connection with sustainable development and future trends and points out that as the boundaries between work and leisure become blurred, leisure becomes more serious. In future, it will no longer be enough to consume experiences, but to seek meaning and purpose from consumption. Tourists are demanding ever deeper and more authentic experiences from their travels and one form of tourism that meets this demand is voluntourism.

WARNING EXAMPLES FROM THE GLOBAL SOUTH

While research mainly states opportunities for voluntourism to contribute to the sustainability of tourism, non-scientific literature has brought warning examples of malpractices to light (see, e.g., Punaks, 2019; Hickmann, 2016; Ahern, 2013; Birrell, 2010; Häkkinen, 2013; Wendelius, 2019). Voluntourism in the context of developing countries has been a worldwide concern in the recent years and the image of this form of tourism has been damaged by serious ethical problems.

There are many examples of how volunteering can be harmful and exploitative in the context of tourism (Konu et al., 2017; Waller, 2018). Probably the best-known instance of damaging and exploitative voluntourism worldwide is the orphanage tourism (Blue & Green Tomorrow, 2014; Gharib, 2021; Pitkänen, 2020). In Cambodia, for example, tourists are being lured to visit and support orphanages in many ways – by direct face-to-face encounters on the streets of touristic sites, online by websites, and also by western companies intermediating the voluntary work as a part of a vacation. In a place, where helping abandoned children has become a business, the orphanages have partnered with guest houses and other tourism services to be able to offer a holistic voluntourism experience and expand own profits. (Birrell, 2010.)

The problem with orphanage visits is that they are not based on an authentic need in the destinations – quite the opposite. A study has found that about 75% of children in Cambodian orphanages are not orphans (Birrell, 2010), while in Ghana this number is even 90% (Ahern, 2013). The commercialization of orphanage volunteering has created places, where children are institutionalised in vain and kept intentionally in bad conditions in order to trade on the guilt of westerners (Birrell, 2010), visiting to practice white saviorism (Häkkinen, 2019). Most of the orphanages are non-registered and even the legitimate ones are neglected by institutions because they have sufficient means of income. The children are being emotionally damaged from the short-term relationships they form with voluntourists coming and going instead of bonding with their parents and relatives. In addition, they are exposed to the danger of becoming targets of traffickers and pedophiles. (Ahern, 2013.)

The orphanage example is probably the most notorious, but not the only one, where the ethics of voluntourism are being questioned. At its worst, volunteering can be a burden for locals. Volunteer trips are being sold as helping locals, when in fact it may be the other way around, as in the example of Nicaraguan coffee villages, where local women entrepreneurs

have invested in developing tourism services, but lost most of their profit, when volunteers came to their villages, paying for nothing and blocking all the capacity meant for tourism and commercial activity. (Wendelius, 2019; Höckert, 2015.)

'There is voluntourism that doesn't help anyone', Anu Häkkinen of Finnish Association for Fair Tourism shares in an interview with Linda Wendelius (2019). Although the non-professional approach characterizes volunteers in general (Lahdenperä & Röntynen, 2021), sometimes having no skills at all can make one useless in respect to the work being completed, for example if it comes to construction (Wendelius, 2019). In Tanzania, for instance, there has been a voluntourism project of building a library, where the incorrect daily work of volunteers was being redone every night by local workers for it to be able to serve its purpose (Gharib, 2021).

Although the examples from voluntourism practice should be taken seriously, they do not straight apply to Finland. Konu et al. (2017) notes that in Finland, voluntary tourism could operate on a sustainable basis, as Finland has a functioning legislation and a continuous society. This could be Finland's competitive advantage in the international market. Finland also has a long tradition of volunteering (Vihiniemi, 2020).

IDENTIFYING WITH VOLUNTOURISM IN FINLAND

A recent study on voluntourism's potential in Central Finland describes the problematic nature of the voluntourism term (Röntynen & Tunkkari-Eskelinen, in press). According to its findings, many of Finland's actors involved avoid using the term "voluntourism". The reasons include:

- differentiation from competitors within the market,
- using volunteering as an added value of tourism activity,
- enabling funding or overcoming administrative obstacles by adjusting the 'language' used,
- disassociation from unethical practices.

The substitution terms vary from long-term volunteering, volunteer camps or international volunteering through cultural exchange, adventure holidays and active citizenship all the way to regenerative tourism and even organization-specific terms such as woofing or twaming. Most of the ethical concerns are not found to be relevant for Finnish context but are based on image and prejudice. (Röntynen & Tunkkari-Eskelinen, in press.)

The study concludes that the lack of resolution on the term makes it extremely difficult to exchange knowledge, benchmark concepts and good practices. It is also important not to label the tourism-driven activity within voluntourism as less worthy than pure volunteering due to perceived lower altruism level. (Röntynen & Tunkkari-Eskelinen, in press.)

RESEARCH METHODS

The methodology used in this study (figure 1) has been flexible and reactive to the dynamic conditions and the interim findings. The study maps the different types of voluntourism existing in Finland and investigates the readiness of rural actors to engage in voluntourism, situating the different types of activity in the spectrum between conventional non-profit volunteering and traditional profit-driven tourism for the purpose of building conceptual models of voluntourism in Finland.
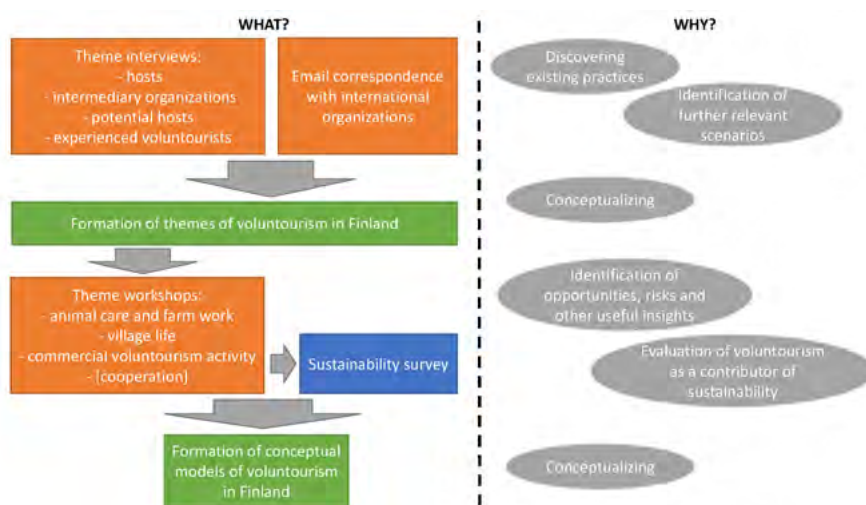

Figure 1. Methodology of the study

In the first stage of the study, theme interviews were conducted with voluntourism hosts, intermediary organizations and experienced voluntourists across Finland in order to discover the existing practices. The intermediary organizations included volunteer network associations, tour operators, as well

as some national and regional-level volunteerism trustee organizations, which maintain similar activity. Rural actors from tourism enterprises, village, and youth associations, as well as farmers were interviewed as potential voluntourism hosts. In addition, international organizations with operational coverage but no representation in Finland were inquired via email correspondence. Because of the fragmented nature of information on voluntourism in Finland, the interviewing process developed in a snowball effect, where the conversations with actors resulted in further referrals and interviews. A disadvantage of this method is to be found in the uncertainty that all relevant subjects have been identified and approached, although the study reached a saturation of answers for many of the aspects discussed with interviewees. Because of the limited time and unwillingness of some subjects found to be relevant to engage in the research, the interview data was complemented with some literature sources on the activity of these particular actors.

The information from the first stage of the study was coded and classified, and some typical themes of voluntourism in Finland were formed. They described the most common and most potential activities performed in Finnish voluntourism, such as farm work and village life, as well as crucial aspects of development of voluntourism, such as commercial voluntourism activity and cooperation. It needs to be noted, that there were more themes emerging from the interviews, but they could not be used for the purpose of the next stage, because they involved potential or hypothetical activity or concerned the unforeseeable future. Another observation from the first stage of the study is that the sustainability topic was not raised by interviewees spontaneously and unprovokedly. Only one existing case study was found to investigate the voluntourism activity of a particular actor. It was concluded that the topic of sustainability needs special attention and stronger facilitation in the next stage of research.

In the second stage of the research, workshops were held on the previously formed themes with voluntourism actors and other interested parties to concretize and enrich the understanding of the voluntourism spectrum in Finland. The aim was to identify voluntourism's opportunities for development, perceived risks, as well as other useful insights, such as which activities are existing and potential or unacceptable and unrealistic. Due to covid-19-driven uncertainty, the last of the four planned workshops did not receive enough participants to be implemented, so the topic of cooperation was not processed. The data from the workshops enriched the initial findings of the interviews and was analyzed and used for the formation of conceptual models of voluntourism in Finland.

In addition, a survey was conducted to link voluntourism in Finland to specific sustainable development goals and responsible practices. The survey was implemented in Webropol and was sent to all participants of the Value Project, including interviewees from the first stage and workshop participants from the second stage of this study, a total of 108 persons. The sampling was based on two reasons:

- participants in the project are already familiar with the concept of voluntourism and have relatively similar understanding of it, so they have higher readiness to engage in in-depth topics within it compared to unassociated respondents,
- people who have enlisted as project participants are already committed to voluntourism, so they are more willing to respond to research questions.

It is important to note, that the survey was conducted in Finnish language, and, as a result, the results need to be interpreted according to the linguistic context and slight differences in meaning.

The survey was open for a week and gathered 13 responses, which is about 12% or approached subjects. The response rate might seem low, but it is much higher than the one reached in previous surveys about voluntourism within this project and is a result of systematic stakeholder work. The survey had been opened 30 times (almost 28%), but more than half of the openings had not led to a response. This suggests that linking voluntary tourism to sustainable development is not easy or unambiguous for the average rural operator expected to develop or practice this form of tourism. However, the few responses to the survey are interesting and provide guidance for the development of volunteer tourism.

The survey included multiple choice questions, by which information was gathered on the following issues:

- which sustainable development goals does voluntourism in Finland promote,
- which are the most important sustainable development goals for Finland's voluntourism.

The additional open-ended questions aimed at an understanding of Finland's voluntourism current responsibility and the need and direction of its increasing. At first, there was an attempt to analyze the data as word clouds. The

small number of answers and the differences in the language used by the respondents, which only confirmed the fragmentation of information and term chaos within voluntourism, prevented this method from getting comprehensive results. Instead, the open answers were coded into a classification, which had not been pre-defined but emerged from the actual results of the survey.

The data from the survey was used for evaluating the potential of Finland's voluntourism as a responsible practice of tourism, which is further discussed in terms of the conceptual models presented.

FINDINGS

The study found that Finland's voluntourism could be a strong contributor to sustainability. The study discovered three main models of voluntourism according to the level of commercial activity, which are possible in the Finnish context, and which all carry both potential and risks in terms of responsible tourism and sustainability.

VOLUNTOURISM AND SUSTAINABILITY

Voluntourism in Finland carries some of the unsustainable features of Finnish tourism in general. For example, most tourists arrive in Finland from abroad by plane. This is problematic for every form of tourism, but the problem cannot be completely ignored due to Finland's location. However, voluntary tourism allows visitors to compensate for the negative impact of the trip, for example by protecting nature at the destination. (Sarajärvi & Vaajamo, 2011.)

The ecological sustainability of the trip could be increased by a longer stay and the inclusion of voluntary activities into a longer journey. Extending the duration of the volunteering activity also brings more benefits, as fewer resources are required from the host for orientation and guidance. Some volunteer trips can also teach participants ecological construction and cultivation, as well as recycling. (Sarajärvi & Vaajamo, 2011.)

Financial sustainability is seen in the transaction where travelers receive accommodation and food in return of their voluntary input. Voluntary tourism is also socially and culturally sustainable, when visitors are taught, for example, Finnish language and sauna culture. In their interaction with each other, both visitors and residents learn new things and develop themselves. Volunteering could also involve groups of the society, such as youngsters, immigrants, refugees, for whom traveling or participating in work and leisure activities is not self-evident. (Sarajärvi & Vaajamo, 2011.)

According to the survey respondents (n=13), voluntary tourism in Finland contributes or has the potential to contribute to each of the sustainable development goals of the 2030 Agenda (United Nations, n.d.). The following objectives have seen the greatest connection with volunteering (figure 2):

- partnerships for the goals (85%),
- responsible consumption and production (77%),
- good health and well-being (77%).

Figure 2. Results of the survey question: 'in your opinion, which sustainable development goals does Finland's voluntourism promote or have the potential to promote?' Source of the SDG icons: United Nations.

When it comes to arranging the sustainable development goals into an order of importance in the context of Finland's voluntourism, again "partnerships for the goals" is the most well-pronounced goal. Other SDGs of importance within voluntourism in Finland are "good health and well-being", "responsible consumption and production", and "climate action" (figure 3).
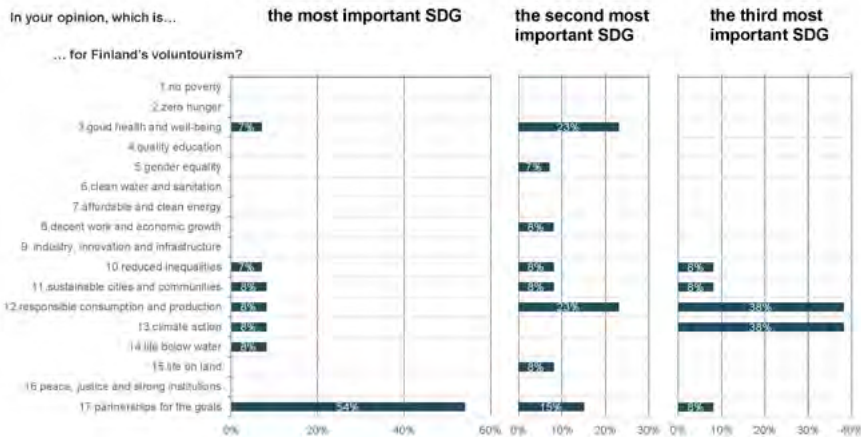
Figure 3. Results of the survey questions: "In your opinion, which is the most important, the second most important, and the third most important SDG for Finland's voluntourism?" presented question by question.

The order of priority (figure 4) also gives an indication of which themes should be included in Finnish voluntourism. The sustainable development goals represented are strongly socially oriented, while only a few environmental goals are included. On the other hand, the study has previously discovered that so far there is very little social and cultural volunteering in Finnish voluntary tourism, while nature-related activities, including farm work, are currently dominant. The "climate action" is the fourth most important goal and within voluntourism this is one way in which even dominantly holiday-oriented voluntourists could in the future compensate for their carbon footprint with some form of voluntary work.

Figure 4. Order of importance of the SDGs in the context of Finnish voluntourism. Coefficients were set in order to combine the information from the three questions and to develop the unified order of importance of the SDGs: 1 for the mentions of a goal as the most important, 0.66 as the second most important and 0.33 as the third most important.

In open answers, the respondents discussed "in what way is voluntourism a responsible form of tourism" and "how can the responsibility of voluntourism be further developed". The responses of the first question, which describes the current level and nature of responsibility of voluntourism, took three different perspectives (figure 5):

- the traveler's perspective, where voluntourism is seen as an opportunity to be responsible and to have meaningful experiences;
- the destination's perspective, according to which voluntourism provides opportunities for tourism that reinforces local values and goals;

- the interaction perspective, according to which voluntourism is a win-win activity for all participants, where added value arises precisely from the interaction.

In what way is voluntourism a responsible form of tourism?

Traveler's perspective:
opportunity to be responsible and
to have meaningful experiences:

willingness to help, to build
(cleanliness, well-being)

do something on one's own

traveling which is
more than just fun

active citizenship

target group interested in
responsibility as it is,
making conscious choices

away from the easy choices,
from mass tourism sites, from
selfishness

Interaction perspective:
win-win activity for all

mutual learning, cultural
exchange, exhange of good
practices and operational
models

means for reducing
inequalities both between
people and between
destinations

Destination's perspective:
opportunity to reinforce local values
and goals through tourism

destination which functions
responsibly and invests in
sustainability: nature protection,
cultural heritage; social, economic
and ecological responsibility

volunteers complement
professionals and help
the national economy

not consuming the goods and
resources of the destination,
compensating for the negative
impact of tourism

Figure 5. Results of the survey question: "In what way is voluntourism a responsible form of tourism?" Categorized into three perspectives.

The second open-ended question focused on the directions that voluntourism needs to take in order to be more responsible in future. Its responses formed four categories of further development (figure 6):

- developing the responsibility of the traveler,
- developing the responsibility of the destination,
- enabling strategic development,
- social inclusion and co-creation.

How can the responsibility of voluntourism be further developed?

Developing the responsibility of the traveler:	Developing the responsibility of the destination:	Enabling strategic development:	Social inclusion and co-creation:
ensuring the purpose and motivation of the traveler	genuine volunteering tasks: the right need for, purpose and result of work; not replacing paid work	voluntourism as part of a sustainable development program in support of national goals	involvement of special groups: the partially disabled, the elderly, migrants, refugees, youngsters, the ones rehabilitating from mental health issues
guidelines for more informed and responsible action		voluntourism as part of school curricula, entrepreneurship courses, labor market policy program	companies supporting the forms of employment needed by the disadvantaged
responsibility orientation course for voluntourists as a part of their orientation: e.g., every man's rights	improving the practices of the destination: e.g., serving meat, using plastic		co-development of voluntourism in society: acceptance, forms, encouragement
quality criteria, mapping questions		accessibility: improving rural transport links, alternatives to flying	equality for both hosts and travelers

Figure 6. Results of the survey question: "How can the responsibility of voluntourism be further developed?" Grouped into four categories.

CONCEPTUAL MODELS ACCORDING TO THE DEGREE OF COMMERCIALIZATION

There are two different sets of values clashing in voluntourism – yet tourism creates added value to volunteering and volunteering – to tourism. The two cores of the phenomenon produce motives in different directions, which many times serve as a criterion for classification of voluntourism or, at least, for judging which forms are positive, responsible, desirable, and which not. The motives sometimes lean more towards altruism and sometimes towards experientialism and the seeking of something new. Sometimes volunteer motives are polarized in themselves – selfish and selfless (Yeung, 2004). However, the traveler is usually moved by a combination of motives that are difficult to distinguish or verify as outsiders. In this study, an alternative criterion is used to classify the different forms of voluntourism and consequentially develop its concept models. The focus is on how the actual activities could be organized from the perspective of commercial activity.

The study found that voluntourism takes different forms depending on the degree of commercialization of the activity. Three distinctive models of voluntourism could be described (figure 7):

- **Non-profit model:** A person volunteers in a location away of their home environment and in that sense he / she is in the role of a tourist. The core services of tourism, such as accommodation, meals, and transportation, he / she receives in return of the volunteer input. There are no (significant) monetary transactions between the tourist, the host, and the potential intermediary. However, it is natural that a person in the role of a tourist spends their own resources (money, free time) to use other services at the destination, e.g., visiting attractions and local events. However, volunteering is kept at the center of the visit. The host is usually a non-profit organization, such as an association, or an individual and their family. The visit can last from a week to a year, but this model also sees long visits (half a year to a year) because they do not depend on the tourist's ability to pay.

  Example: the volunteer camps organized by KVT Finland and Maailman-vaihto.

- **Split model:** A person clearly sees themselves as a traveler but is looking for alternative destinations or a new kind of activity compared to the ones experienced before. The trip is marketed as a "package" that includes tourism services and volunteering as inseparable elements. Accommodation and tourism services are clearly priced, and the person is willing to pay for them. However, the crucial role in choosing a destination is played by the volunteer task, which provides added value to the visit. The volunteering does not cause monetary transactions in any direction – for example, the price of accommodation is not higher for a volunteer than for a traditional holidaymaker. The volunteer task as a holiday activity is not packaged together with tourism services, e.g., from legislative point of view, a travel package is not formed. Altruism and commercialism as elements of the visit remain separate and clear. The pattern of cooperation between for-profit and non-profit organizations, for example in a village, could serve as a background. Tourism services are provided by a tourism body, while volunteering is run by an association for which volunteering is relevant, significant, useful and topical. The duration of the visit is usually not very long, as it depends on the length of the tourist's holiday and ability to pay.

  Example: the shepherd's weeks organized by Parks & Wildlife Finland.

- **Commercial model:** The trip or visit can be purchased as a regular, commercial travel package that includes volunteer tasks in addition to tourism services. A person, so to speak, "buys" their place as a volunteer. In addition to the basic services of tourism, leisure activities could also be taken into account, either as part of a package or as a complementary service offered. The travel package is usually provided by a tour operator, but the individual services included in it can be produced by both for-profit and non-profit parties. In this case, too, the visit depends on the tourist's ability to pay and the length of the leisure period.

  Example: the eider trip package organized by Åland Expeditions.

	NON-PROFIT MODEL	SPLIT MODEL	COMMERCIAL MODEL
Volunteer tasks	At the heart of the visit, uses most of time at the destination	Limited, part-time. Marketing added value to the whole	Balanced with leisure activities or sometimes just "tasting"
Tourism core services (accommodation, meals, transport)	In return for volunteering, at the expense of the organizer	At the expense of the tourist	At the expense of the tourist as part of the package
Tourism ancillary services and free-time activities	The tourist is free to choose them and spontaneously participates in them at own expense	The tourist is free to choose them and spontaneously participates in them at own expense	Usually as part of the package or as a complementary service
Monetary transactions	Minimal	The tourist pays for the core services of tourism	The tourist pays for the whole package, e.g., guidance on volunteering
Activity organizer	Non-profit organization - individual, association, community, club	A cooperation pattern between non-profit and for-profit organizations specializing in tourism and volunteering	A cooperation pattern between non-profit and for-profit organizations specializing in tourism and volunteering
Intermediary	Non-profit intermediary organization, online platform	Intermediary organization / tour operator / online platform	Tour operator
Traveler's motivation	- help and do good - visit a place on a budget - learn / experience something new	- create benefits for the common good - improve one's own well-being - visit an unusual destination - learn / experience something new	- help and do good - compensate for the negative effects of one's own journey - visit an unusual destination - learn / experience something new
Length of visit	Varies (1 week - 1 year), usually long (6 months - 1 year)	Usually short (1 week – 1 month)	Usually short (a few days – 1 month)
Traveler's ability to pay	Limited	Fair	Good
Location of destination	Usually overseas	Usually domestic	Usually overseas

Figure 7. The characteristics of the three conceptual models of voluntourism in Finland

The models presented are not absolute and unchangeable. They are a concept, the application of which in practice gives rise to many hybrid forms, borderline cases and interpretability of action. Especially when it comes to loosely regulated free citizenship, such as volunteering, each implementation is unique. However, the conceptual models are essential for understanding the potential of Finnish voluntary tourism and are an important block in outlining and building the actual activities.

One case that does not directly bend to any model is the opportunity to participate in volunteer tasks during the trip without prior planning. A non-profit organization in a village, for example, could give ordinary holidaymakers the opportunity to participate in local activities as volunteers or do something for the destination, by presenting it as an announcement in the cottage folder or on a message board. Such activities could be, for example, weaving wool socks for the elderly and children of the village, eradicating alien species in the national park, organizing a market event in the village. In that case, volunteering is not planned before the trip, but the opportunity is taken spontaneously during the trip. The project cannot rely on the participation of volunteer tourists, but the organizing body could supplement its own resources with a small additional investment. In this case, the implementation of voluntary tourism does not necessarily require intermediaries, but good partners are always needed.

The three conceptual models are situated within the realm of what is usually called "volunteering" and what is perceived as "tourism", and only rarely they are actually being called "voluntourism" (figure 8). But volunteering does not completely match the area of public benefit, which covers almost all forms of voluntourism. On the other hand, the area of profitability of commercial activity is much broader than tourism and covers the split and commercial model, as well as a small part of the non-profit model, where expenses need to be covered by ancillary activity. The three conceptual models of voluntourism are also situated between the pure case of volunteering, where mobility is only required, but there is no touristic motivation, and the conventional tourism, which only exploits a destination, but does not create more than economic value for it.
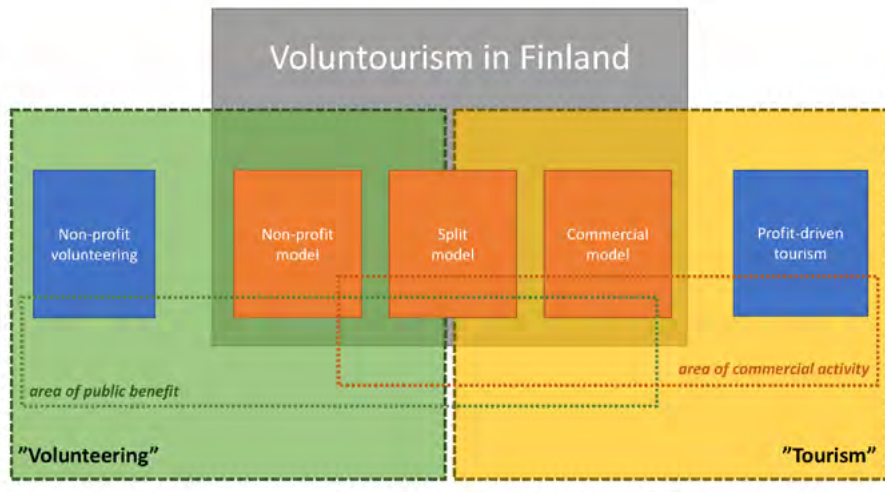
Figure 8. The three conceptual models of voluntourism in Finland between profitability and public benefit.

THE POTENTIAL AND RISKS OF THE THREE CONCEPTUAL MODELS IN TERMS OF RESPONSIBILITY

All three models hold both potential and serious risks to the responsibility of tourism. Responsibility needs to be looked at more deeply as concrete action develops and increases. However, here are a few ideas that conclude that none of the models presented are completely responsible, problem-free, or recommendable compared to others.

At first glance, the split model seems the most balanced. It generates economic benefits – as the tourism industry sees it, but it has not turned volunteering into a business and it does not encourage artificial initiatives such as orphanages where children are not orphans, nor does it confuse tourists as an expression, because altruism and experientialism remain separate. However, this model involves some challenges that need to be addressed on a case-by-case basis, such as:

- How is the orientation and guidance of the volunteer funded?
- How are animals or humans treated?
- How is security ensured?

The non-profit model on the surface looks altruistic and, in that sense, ethical. Public benefit generated by the contribution of volunteers cannot be denied. However, in the context of tourism, there are a number of challenges:

- What is the financial cost of the visit to the local community?
- Are potential or existing jobs being replaced by the steady stream of volunteers?
- Is the tourism accommodation capacity blocked by customers who do not pay for it?

Again, orientation, mentoring, and general volunteer coordination need to be funded somehow. Usually, this is solved by some kind of external, institutional funding, so in practice, the fact that money does not move in the process is not entirely true. The European Solidarity Corps provides project funding that reimburses the costs incurred. Intermediary organizations use various grants and charge hosts with participation and coordination fees. In addition, an increasing number of non-profit organizations are also seeking to provide tourism and ancillary services to voluntourists, which revenue is being used to fund volunteer mentoring.

The commercial model is sometimes difficult to comprehend, especially in Finland, where volunteering is a widespread phenomenon, and many other commercial activities are produced and carried out on a voluntary basis. In this model, the conflicting values of the commercialism and altruism collide. It is also criticized for creating an artificial supply of volunteering that is not driven by local needs but by the traveler's desire to save, repair and influence – with varying degrees of success. However, the commercial model solves the problem of where from the organizer could get the resources needed to guide volunteers: it is taken into account in the pricing.

In addition, the commercial model holds potential to impact tourism not only in the socio-cultural and economic realm, but there are also extensive opportunities to address the ecological issues. In the operation of other models, the tourist can choose to engage in activities that promote ecological sustainability, but this is not necessarily directly related to tourism, it can be described as "tourism for sustainable development". However, tourists ultimately make their visit because they want to move from one place to another, and this in turn has a negative impact on ecology, especially when it comes to long-haul travel. In the commercial model, the motivation of many tourists to volunteer during their holiday and at the destination is precisely that they would like to compensate for the negative impacts their trip causes.

They may invest fewer hours than traditional volunteers, but they have a significant impact locally, exactly where this is needed – and this is precisely regenerative tourism.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Voluntary tourism needs a lot of reflection and its development in Finland starts from scratch. However, it is worth giving it an open-minded opportunity. This study contributes to the creation of a national operational model of voluntourism in Finland.

For the time being, there are no bad domestic experiences with volunteer tourism in Finland, so the blame for horror scenarios materializing elsewhere should not be shifted to Finland. Strong legislation and a healthy society in Finland would not allow, for example, the exploitation of children or the replacement of jobs by volunteers. In addition, it is hard to believe that Finland would be subject to any kind of saviorism syndrome, because Finland does not need to be rescued. In the Nordic country, volunteer tourism is based on cultural exchange, learning new things and experientialism.

In terms of sustainability, volunteering in Finland involves similar risks as other forms of tourism, such as flying and short stays, but voluntourism could sometimes be a tool to compensate or reduce the negative impact, at least partially.

The study also found that the concept of voluntourism is very unknown. Instead of attaching to it all the attitudes that have developed around the international term "voluntourism", its obscurity could be used as an opportunity to create a positive atmosphere for its own national concept and good examples. Finland could be developed as the flagship of voluntary tourism.

The study suggests a few directions for the further development of Finland's voluntourism, namely as a responsible tourism activity:

- **Resourcing of volunteer orientation, guidance, and supervision.**

Organizing these resources is the cornerstone of successful voluntourism. However, they prove to be a challenge in all conceptual models. A volunteer is not a professional in the duties he / she performs and is not responsible for the activities. This means that he / she must first get orientation. If the visit is short, a larger proportion of the time devoted to volunteering is spent in orientation compared to the actual task, sometimes even unreasonably long. The paradox is that the volunteer does not free host's hands from the

actual activity, as the host must be present, guiding and supervising, which is important for both the quality and safety of the activity. Time, of course, means money. The commercial model can finance these activities by including their costs in the price of the package, but there is a risk that this will make the package too expensive and the customer will not be able or willing to pay for it.

- **Heading towards regenerative tourism.**

The study found many cases, in which the relation between voluntourism and regenerative tourism is misunderstood or misused. Regenerative tourism is an emerging tourism trend that concretizes, reinforces, and matures sustainability by creating value beyond the broad stakeholders for the local community, destination, and the entire planet, as well as fertile conditions for life to flourish (Pollock 2019). In the same way as responsible tourism, regenerative tourism is not defined by a specific activity but is a guiding idea or principle.

The conversation on regenerative tourism has recently been opened in Finland as well (see, i.e., Jaakkola, 2022, Nylund, 2022), but the examples are so far limited. However, there is a lot of volunteer tourism within regenerative tourism – volunteering during the trip is a tool that works for the benefit of the destination, the local community or the world as a whole. The juxtaposition of voluntary tourism and regenerative tourism or their use as synonyms sounds absurd. These concepts are rather complementary.

Responsible and sustainable voluntourism is largely included in regenerative tourism and should be kept in mind within the development of regenerative tourism. Still, volunteer tourism also needs its own recognition and development effort, recalling Wearing's (2001) remark that volunteering is often neglected because its development and implementation always take place within the framework of some other phenomenon – social work, alternative tourism, international volunteering, etc.

- **Voluntourism implemented in co-operation.**

Although volunteering is usually perceived as non-profit, voluntourism carries business characteristics, too. It requires strong cooperation between the public, private and third sectors. All types of actors have a role to play and all fit in. Nowadays, the boundaries between the public, private and third sectors in our society are blurring. More and more different actors have overlapping roles, or some activities have alternative forms – commercial and non-profit.

The best value for volunteering for all parties would come if different types of actors offered common products. It should also be kept in mind that in this form of tourism, the tourist also plays an active role as a co-developer and producer of value. Deep interconnections between actors are also characteristic of regenerative tourism (Pollock, 2019).

The participants in the study expressed their need of partners with whom to form or strengthen their service chain and share tasks and responsibilities, find peer support, examples of success and failure. Actors need to work together to find and strengthen their role in the voluntary tourism service chain.

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RESPONSIBLE ACTIVITIES TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN TOURISM

Petra Blinnikka & Minna Tunkkari–Eskelinen

Tourism is one of the strategic focus areas in Jamk University of Applied Sciences (later as Jamk). Specific focus areas and new rising fields have been selected based on the needs of the operating environment and Jamk's as well as cooperation partners' strong expertise. The expertise of Jamk and the cooperation partners gathered creates nationally competitive centres of excellence. (Jamk University of Applied Sciences, 2022a). Jamk has a strong history in developing sustainable and responsible tourism in Finland. It has established and coordinated national International Centre for Responsible Tourism (ICRT) Finland network since 2015 (Jamk University of Applied Sciences, 2022b).

This publication came out mainly due to the 15th International Conference on Responsible Tourism in Destination (RTD) in June 2022. This was the second time Jamk University of Applied Sciences (Jamk) organized this particular conference, and now it was implemented in Helsinki together with global ICRT-Hub and other partners. The first conference was organized in 2016 in Jyväskylä, the home city of Jamk University of Applied Sciences. RTD conferences have been organized since the launch of Cape Town Responsible Tourism Declaration 2002 in different countries. (Responsible Tourism Partnerships, 2022.)

Tourism and hospitality education in Jamk has for decades already considered sustainability and responsibility as one main competence in hospitality industry. Responsibility is the main value and core content in our education both in bachelor and master programs. In addition, being a core content of tourism and hospitality education, responsibility means also good cooperation with the tourism industry representatives, for example offering them a possibility to be commissioners in students projects. The development projects also offer a great learning platform for the students within sustainability and responsibility themes. The latest example of students' involvement is VALUE project in which explorative research work was done both with the experts and students. VALUE as the project name (jn Finnish) refers to volunteering tourism which is not yet formal tourism mode in Finland, and therefore we searched for its preconditions and actors in the project (Tunkkari-Eskelinen & Röntynen, 2021). It can be said that Jamk gives us a

perfect forum for new approvals and openings – in this case a new way to run tourism in Finland.

In terms of responsible tourism experts and development work in Finland, Jamk has coordinated several sustainable and responsible tourism projects over the years. Some examples of these projects are KESMA I and KESMA II (2010–2014): Sustainable tourism development projects, which both were interregional projects, and the goal was to research and develop sustainability issues in rural tourism companies (KESMA II, 2014). Micro enterprises and their customers were the target group and implementation of the projects was focused in altogether seven regions: Central Finland, Ostrobothnia, Southern Ostrobothnia, Tampere region, Southern Savonia, Tavastia Proper and Häme region. Since then, the new projects on sustainability issues in tourism sector has been launched by Jamk and other Finnish tourism developers. The latest national collaboration contribution led by Jamk was the project for educating individuals to learn contents on responsible tourism. Five higher education institutes co-created a totally digital responsible tourism education forum for individuals working within tourism industry was developed and tested together with potential customers. (Jamk University of Applied Sciences, 2022c.) Jamk also collaborates with regional tourism organization, and the newest project-based publication by Partanen and Riekkinen (2022) show directions to other developers of tourism regions in Finland. For example, cyber security in tourism is now launched with the handbook advice to tourism companies (Visit Jyväskylä Region, 2021) and the tips for tourism service providers in communicating responsible actions (Ahonen, Holopainen & Tunkkari-Eskelinen, 2021). Tourism activities by Jamk is highly appreciated by several tourism sector actors in Finland.

A WORKING GROUP ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

In November 2020, the Rectors' Conference of Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences Arene published a common 'Programme for the sustainable development and responsibility of universities of applied sciences'. The goal of the programme is sustainable, responsible and carbon-neutral universities of applied sciences by 2030. Jamk is also committed to these goals. Jamk's work on sustainable development and responsibility is based on the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and the programme of universities of applied sciences. A Working Group on Sustainable Development (KEKE in Finnish) promotes generally sustainability and responsibility at Jamk. (Jamk University of Applied Sciences, 2020.)

In keeping with its strategy, Jamk will take responsibility into account in all its operations and act in an ecologically, socially and economically sustainable manner. The impact of universities of applied sciences is created especially by competence produced for society, particularly through education and RDI activities. Handprint refers to impacts on changing society and working life achieved through the competence produced by education as well as research, development and innovation activities. The aim of the universities of applied sciences is to increase their handprint to build a sustainable future for society and to reduce the footprint of their activities. (Jamk University of Applied Sciences, 2020.)

Jamk has set the goal of being carbon neutral in 2030, and the work on achieving this goal has begun. Jamk has launched measures to reduce its carbon footprint:

- Factoring in carbon neutrality to ensure that procurements are compatible with the sustainable development goals.
- Reducing the carbon footprint of business travel.
- Increasing the use of digital and virtual operating models with the aim of reducing travel and commuting.
- Decreasing the carbon footprint of staff and student lunches and reducing waste in cooperation with companies providing catering services.
- Improving the recycling of waste on Jamk's campuses.
  (Jamk University of Applied Sciences, 2020.)

STAKEHOLDERS' ENGAGEMENT

As in responsible tourism, also in sustainable development work tight cooperation with all the stakeholders involved in the industry is needed. It is not enough that some of the personnel are committed to the work, both the personnel and students must be part of the development work. This requires good communication and also effective engagement work.

In 2020, Jamk conducted a survey to examine students' views of three issues: What factors in students' everyday life cause the greatest environmental impacts? What about the activities of the university of applied sciences? What more should Jamk do for the environment? Jamk has already taken measures related to catering services and recycling of waste on campuses.

This survey was part of a project funded by the Ministry of Education and Culture in 2018–2020 aiming to increase circular economy competence at

universities of applied sciences (KiertotalousAMK, 2022). Also in the future personnel engagement for the sustainable development issues becomes more and more important. This work is still on-going process aiming to bring up responsible leadership in tourism industry.

Jamk University of Applied Sciences signed the Glasgow Declaration on Climate Action in Tourism on 13.7.2022 and is the first Finnish higher education institution (HEI) to participate in the declaration.

At the COP26 climate conference in Glasgow in November 2021, the tourism industry's own climate declaration, the Glasgow Declaration on Climate Action in Tourism, was made. For the first time in the history of the tourism industry, hundreds of international tourism operators joined forces to reduce emissions from the sector. The signatories to the declaration commit to halving their carbon dioxide emissions during this decade and aim to achieve carbon neutrality before 2050. (One Planet, 2021.)

The declaration has been drawn up within the framework of the UN-supported international One Planet network's sustainable tourism programme, and the declaration has already been signed by more than 500 parties around the world, of which about 60 are from Finland. All signatories can be found on the One Planet website. (One Planet, 2021.)

The Glasgow Declaration is the broadest and most comprehensive position paper on climate change in the tourism sector. The declaration contains a framework that, for the first time, brings together all actors in the tourism sector around common commitments in five different ways: by measuring and reducing carbon dioxide emissions, by reforming policies, by increasing cooperation and by ensuring the necessary funding for development. (One Planet, 2021.) Jamk as the first actor in educational sector in Finland calls for other educational institutes to join in announcing.

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Chapter 3

Proactive management of tourism

This chapter only scratches the surface of digital tourism which is, however, relevant topic for proactive tourism development. They are two extended abstracts presented in ICRT conference as research work-in-progress case studies from Iceland, and they reveal the need for proactive approach in tourism. These case studies interestingly make the bridge over the next Jamk publication of responsible tourism which promotes practical cases in Nordic countries.

RESPONSIBLE STRATEGIES AND PRACTICES IN DIGITAL TOURISM – CASE DESTINATION FINNISH LAPLAND

Päivi Hanni-Vaara, Petra Paloniemi & Outi Kähkönen

ABSTRACT

Advances in digital technologies have dramatically transformed hospitality and tourism over the past few decades. Digitalisation is an important element in tourism as technology is increasingly mediating experiences and customer service in destinations. Digitalisation must respond to the requirements of responsible tourism in many aspects to be successful. The goal of this study is to explore the current state of digital strategies and operations in the Lappish tourism destinations to provide responsible tourism experiences. The key interests are the strategies and practices in tourism destinations providing digital tourism services to meet the customers' expectations. The study discusses what needs to be considered strategically and operationally when developing the responsible digital destination environment and the roles of the service providers operating there.

Lapland offers an interesting example of a peripheral region where the tourism industry is well established, highly developed, and innovative by nature. Lapland has been among the pioneers in Finland in trying to meet the responsible tourism requirements also in digital service encounters. Despite some challenges and obstacles, more and more services are being implemented in online encounters. This may save and direct resources more effectively as customers are expecting more services and experiences online. It is important to identify the roles of and the balance between digital and physical services and experiences. Future requirements of responsible tourism are related to concepts such as changing customer needs and expectations, safety, inclusiveness, and regenerative tourism in the destinations.

Keywords: digitalisation, online services, responsible tourism, destination, Lapland

INTRODUCTION

Recent advances in digital technologies have dramatically transformed hospitality and tourism industry. The previously supplier-oriented business has become more customer-, co-creation- and collaboration-oriented where responsible acts as for environmental, economic, and socio-cultural aspects are valued (Buhalis & Law, 2008; Pesonen, 2020). Furthermore, digitalisation of services offers possibilities to develop and even enhance the tourism experience as technology is increasingly mediating experiences to meet the customers' needs.

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the transformation of digital services. Mobility restrictions stimulated the development of new online trends in tourism, such as virtual experiences. Travelling was not possible, but people wanted to have travel-like experiences. Technological innovations and the development of online services also contribute to the emergence of new modes of traveling – offline and online. Virtual tourism offers the possibility to meet people from the other side of the world and learn from other cultures.

Globally, digital development has been recognized as a prerequisite for tourism businesses to keep up with the competition. It seems that virtual tourism and digital services have come to stay. Furthermore, to empathize with the customer and create value for and with the customer, the tourism destinations need to be responsible in answering to the needs and expectations of the customers. (McKinsey &Company, 2020; OECD, 2020; Sievers, 2019, 18.)

The goal of this study is to explore the responsible practices in digital encounters in tourism in Lapland. What are the key practices in providing digital tourism services to meet the customers' expectations? What needs to be considered when observing the destination environment and the roles of the service providers operating there? What are the key contents when developing digital services in the Lappish tourism destinations? Especially, we are interested in the current state of empathy and value creation elements provided with digital service practices in the Lappish destinations. The study is part of the EU-funded project (ERDF Regional Council of Lapland, Leverage from the EU) "*eHospitality – Empathy and Value Creation in Digital Service Encounters in Tourism*".

LITERATURE REVIEW

The digital content and functionality of service solutions, chains, and networks create new value by combining customer insight and technology. When technology as an enabler mediates experiences, the focus might stay on technology and there is a threat that the customer is forgotten. On the other hand, technology may help the tourism service provider to concentrate on the essentials and save resources in the end. For example, a social robot (chatbot) can be programmed to answer the most typical questions customers ask. Obviously, the tourism industry needs an understanding of a holistic combination of the elements that are equally and responsibly considered relevant when developing and providing digital experiences. The elements of technology, human nature, and empathetic customer insight form a combination that enables accessible, personalized, and frictionless digital pre-experience, onsite experience, and post-experience (Miettinen, Rytilahti, Vuontisjärvi, Kuure & Rontti, 2014; see Oncioiu & Priescu, 2022).

Understanding how value is created and co-created continues to be an important research topic in marketing (Echeverri & Skålén, 2011; McColl-Kennedy & Cheung, 2018). Value is always determined by the customer, not the service provider (Vargo & Lusch, 2017; McColl-Kennedy & Cheung, 2018). Some studies (e.g., Morosan & DeFranco, 2016; Neuhofer, Buhalis & Ladkin, 2012) have specifically explored mobile technology-supported value co-creation in hotel and destination environments (Johnson & Neuhofer, 2017). As Genesys (2020) proposes, empathy helps in recognizing, assessing, and understanding the true value of each customer's expectations for the digitalised service. Furthermore, empathy can assist in analysing the online customer journey, the touchpoints, and the service moments with a focus on the elements that the customer finds inspiring and appealing (Mattelmäki, Vaajakallio & Koskinen, 2014). It is important to understand that empathy is not an emotion, but a person's reflective reaction to another agent's emotions (Powell & Roberts, 2017). In this study, we study cognitive empathy, which signifies the service providers' ability to perceive and react to customers' online experiences and emotions along the digital customer journey. Practically, the service provider walks the digital customer journey in the customer's shoes by reacting to the customer's experiences and emotions (Powell & Roberts, 2017). The aim of the service provider is to assimilate the customers' internal state and react to meet the needs and expectations that the customer is thinking, feeling, and experiencing (Kamas & Preston, 2020; Zaki & Ochsner, 2012).

The categorization of digital service concepts of eTourism, Smart Tourism, and Metaverse Tourism describe the elements that form a combination of technology and human nature (Koo, 2022). In the eTourism concept, the service provider or the tourist is the one to operate the functional transaction while in the Smart Tourism, the platform economy requires multiple users and operations, for example, the customers sharing and co-creating with each other or with the service provider in tourism-related discussions and reservations (Koo, 2022). Augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) are practical examples of the Metaverse Tourism as they deliver an immersive multisensory digitally mediated experience that may take place at any touchpoint and service moment along the customer journey (Neuhofer et al., 2012; Reichstein & Härting, 2018; Yung, Khoo-Lattimore & Potter, 2020; Stankov & Gretzel, 2021; Koo, 2022).

Moreover, it is significant to understand the empathy perspective in online service environments. Here, empathy is involved in all touchpoints and service moments when the customer is using multiple senses instead of relying only on imagination (Shin, 2018). Therefore, it is crucial to understand how empathy and value are created with and for all the participants in the online service environment. Customers' expectations for less overcrowding and decarbonization might increase, at least partly, their interest in digital service experiences and responsible tourism products (Fennell, 2020).

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a qualitative approach. The method used was a qualitative inductive content analysis to analyze the collected data. The data was collected through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with eleven participants in tourism, such as destination management organizations and tourism entrepreneurs. The first and second authors conducted data collection between February and April 2022. Some of the interviews were conducted face to face in the destination and some via Microsoft Teams. Of the eleven interviewees, 10 were female and 1 was male. The interviews ranged between 60 and 120 minutes and were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. The study was performed in accordance with the general principles of research ethics and good scientific practice established by the National Advisory Board on Research Integrity (TENK, 2022). All research participants gave their informed consent to the study.

A qualitative thematic analysis was conducted to analyze the empirical data and to explore the responsibilities in destination strategies and operational

practices in online encounters (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). The Nvivo 12 Pro software was used for the data analysis. The data was analyzed by following the thematic analysis framework suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006). The role of the researchers was to compose suggestions interplaying with theory and practice to interpret visible and latent findings in the data (Graneheim, Lindgren, & Lundman, 2017). First, we familiarized ourselves with the empirical material by reading and re-reading the transcripts. Second, we organized the data by coding each segment of data that was related to responsible strategies and operational practices practices in online encounters. Third, we organized the codes into empirical themes. Fourth, after reviewing the themes identified, we defined those that illustrate the responsible strategies and practices in online encounters.

FINDINGS

This article presents preliminary findings of the research and samples from the data. The main themes detected from the data were the fundamental differences in the emphasis concerning digital tourism development in the destinations in Lapland. The differences in strategic development concerning, for example, digital tourism development vary from digital customer-centric principles led by the municipality or the destination management organization to the entrepreneurial viewpoints that are steering the development in the municipality and the tourism destinations. The level of emphasis on managing and leading development in Lappish destinations seems to vary considerably.

When analysing the effects of changes in digital tourism marketing in Lapland, the findings show that the region may face challenges due to the fragmentation of its digital presence as a tourism region. For now, the structural change in Lapland's digital marketing is steering the tourism destinations to take their own responsibility in ensuring presence in the global tourism markets. Instead of coordinating Lappish regional digital marketing, the regional efforts are focusing on the investments, for example, in the infrastructure. However, there is a willingness to improve and modernize services in the destinations to meet the customers' digitalized needs. On the other hand, fragmentation is found as a positive phenomenon as well, as it leads to innovative development in digital tourism best practices that are steering the destinations to specialize. For example, one destination focuses on using the resources on digital customer encounters through recognizing the touchpoints and service moments of the online customer journey and targeting at a frictionless customer experience. This can be regarded as a

clear branding action where tourism information service practices are delivered completely online.

However, it seems that there are some obstacles in utilising digital non-human technologies, such as social robots (chatbot), alongside with the digital human encounters. At the same time, another destination takes responsibility in developing mobility and accessibility with the help of digital solutions that support the customer experience and release staff resources in recurring service operations.

Though the destinations have made their strategic and responsible decisions regarding the development objectives, there seem to be some invisible contents behind the scenes that are not openly shared or discussed much. It would be beneficial and even responsible to share and discuss development objectives as it seems that there is a similar kind of interest in some other destinations as well. In the end, open discussion is a responsible practice that should be conducted systematically between the Lappish tourism destinations, and, thus, it could open possibilities for co-creation in sharing resources and risks in joint development.

There seem to be multiple anticipations when analysing the findings on tourism coordination. The responsibility for coordinating tourism development is handed to the municipality authorities, regional development organizations, and the organizations steering tourism nationwide. Moreover, the responsibility in political decision-making is seen as significant in creating ground for tourism industry and its development. Cooperation, collaboration and co-creation with educational organizations are seen as meaningful to fill skills-shortage, bringing knowledge, and resources to destinations. All in all, tourism and its capabilities are seen as a fundamental social phenomenon in Lapland.

We were curious to acquire insights on how the term *eHospitality* is interpreted by the interviewees as the term is one of the key determinants in our project *"eHospitality – Empathy and Value Creation in Digital Service Encounters in Tourism"*. The term itself is found a bit unfamiliar, but it awakens interest and positive feelings in the end. In most cases, the term *eHospitality* is split into two words: firstly, e referring to electronic and digital and, secondly, hospitality. Frequently, the term is associated with politeness and being friendly when interacting digitally: "That word brings to my mind something gentle -- something that comes from a face-to-face encounter. – it sounds like it's specifically non-faceless customer service and interaction." (S4)

Moreover, there are reflections to humanity, and human-to-human contents in understanding each other in a sensitive way: "I would stress that even if it is digital, online, it still retains that kind of human friendliness and through it

comes the customer contact and customer service as a positive experience." (S2)

On the other hand, technology is interpreted to have a role in mediating services: "Digital is just the instrument." (S1) Further, the development of technology is seen as an enabler to provide services in modern ways: "-- modern and meets what the customer needs. Maybe a little ahead of that customer --. Hospitality first, but still modern." (L1)

When analysing the digital accessibility, it seems that the value is found not only in the digital accessibility itself but in the hospitable way of being served digitally. Indeed, the target is in a frictionless customer experience: "Accessibility, so that the customer would receive hospitality digitally. That it is easy to buy that service, find that service and everything that goes with it." (L1)

A need for simplicity and clear communication is underlined as well: "From the customer's perspective in the way that the customer has a feeling that the other understands and does not need to "twist from an iron wire". (K1)

The challenge is to create added value with empathy and meaningful emotional experiences to the customer at the interfaces of physical and digital services, and to identify at which touchpoints and service moments technology enables greater value creation, and where human contact is preferred. (Figure 1).
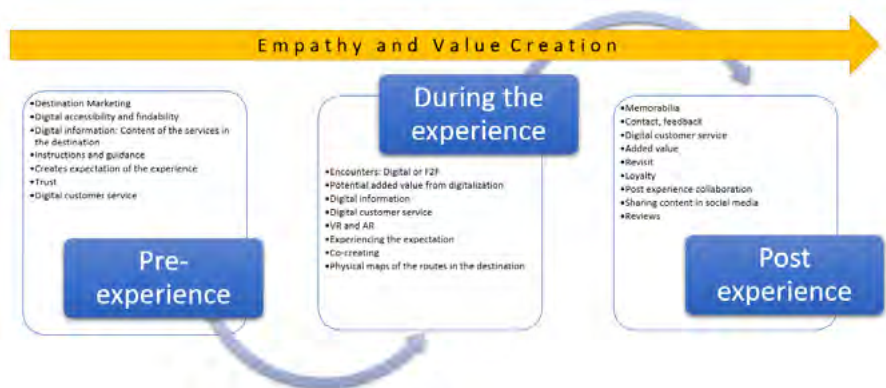

Figure 1. The preliminary findings explain the responsibilities and key contents that the Lappish tourism actors in the destinations face when serving and interacting with the tourists.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The research findings provide tourism developers and service providers in Lapland with better possibilities to respond to the needs and challenges of the changing digital operating environment caused by accelerating digitalisation, globalization, and customer behaviour. The pandemic caused a radical change in the operating environment and accelerated the pace of digitalization.

The main findings of the study are related to the fundamental differences concerning practices of digital tourism in different destinations in Lapland. The differences in practices vary both on the level of strategical digital tourism management and on the grass-root level in the tourism companies and organizations. In some destinations, the digitalization process is managed and coordinated from the destination level while in some destinations, the development practices are driven by the tourism companies and their innovations.

Accessibility, especially digital accessibility is considered one of the most important aspects in all the destinations when it comes to the responsible practices in online encounters. Above all, it is important that the customers are aware of the destinations and the unique value the destinations can provide to the customers. Destination marketing plays an important role in creating value. At each touchpoint and service moment of the customer journey, it is crucial that the customers receive quick, accurate, and empathetic guidance during the online encounters, with a person or a social robot (chatbot). Moreover, it is important that destinations acknowledge the variation of customers' internal states that differ based on customers' feelings, urgency etc. in each service need.

It must be taken into consideration that hospitality practices change and transform when the operating environment changes. Experiences enriched with augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) elements can deliver digitally mediated immersive experiences at any touchpoint and service moment along the traveller's customer journey. Sometimes, the customers may choose a completely virtual experience at home. Also, after the trip, the value co-creation may continue with contacts, feedback, and maybe a revisit. In any case, it is crucial to recognise the most important touchpoints and service moments when value is created or co-created in the process.

The process of empathetic value creation and co-creation is a diverse phenomenon. Value is created and co-developed in a variety of relationships between service providers, customers, and digital platforms. More research on responsible and empathetic value co-creation in online encounters is needed

especially from the customers' perspective. The next phase of the research focuses in applying the categorization of digital service concepts of eTourism, Smart Tourism, and Metaverse Tourism in practices in the digital experimental workshops in the *eHospitality* project. The aim in the workshops is to test new technologies that will help tourism service providers to develop their online services.

In our study, we have recognized some important touchpoints and service moments as practices for more responsible and empathetic value creation in online encounters. Eventually, a good reminder can be reflected in the saying that one should treat the other as one would like to be treated oneself: "even small acts of attention and understanding cause a positive effect, and that kind of good feeling and empathy kind of expands." (H1) As a result, empathetic value creation should be designed as a practice not only in the physical face-to-face encounters but in the online encounters as well. The results support the goals of responsible tourism. Our study reveals the key requirements when developing digital services in the Lappish tourism destinations in a responsible way.

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THE PATH TO RESPONSIBLE CRUISE TOURISM IN ÍSAFJÖRÐUR

Ása Marta Sveinsdóttir & Ulrika Persson-Fischier

Cruise tourism in the Arctic has been growing rapidly in recent years. Tourists rush to experience the dramatic natural environment and the Arctic communities' unique culture and scenery as climate change accelerates (Maher, et al., 2014; Palma, et al., 2019). Remote coastal communities can become somewhat dependent on the accrued benefit of cruise tourism. The industry can generate economic growth, job creation, infrastructure development and business opportunities, which can be especially beneficial for small and vulnerable remote communities (Huijbens, 2015; Olsen, Hovelsrud & Kaltenborn, 2019). Despite the important economic role that cruise tourism has for some of these communities, social and environmental issues linked to the cruise industry have been heavily criticised. Air, water, flora, and fauna are threatened by a rising influx of cruise vessels, as well as the coastal communities by way of overcrowding, intrusion of privacy and competition for resources (Friðriksson, Wise & Scott, 2020; Ren, James, Pashkevich & Hoarau-Heemstra, 2021). Sparsely populated areas are especially vulnerable to social stressors (Brida & Zapata, 2010; James, Olsen & Karlsdóttir, 2020; Olsen et al., 2020). Cruise tourists come in as "tidal waves" and sparsely populated towns suddenly become overcrowded with visitors that stop for a limited amount of time, leaving again after a few hours. This makes everyday life for residents in these places logistically complicated and not entirely pleasant. Even though these "tidal waves" are highly seasonal due to climate, the overall infrastructure, with everything from docks, electricity, roads and medical care, needs to be dimensioned to fit the peaks, rather than the towns' population, which may be a strain on local finances. Cruise tourism balances on the fine line that any type of tourism needs to vary of not crossing – destroying the very reason to visit, in this case, fragile nature. Cruise tourism in the Arctic risks becoming a true 'last chance tourism'. A phenomenon that has emerged as a result of changing climates: when tourists rush to experience areas that are irreversibly changing (Palma, et al., 2019). The scope of cruise tourism overrides many ecological thresholds, while at the same time creating problems in terms of waste and water usage. In short, Arctic cruise tourism generates a number of sustainability challenges.

These challenges generate several crucial questions that need to be addressed. How do local communities perceive cruise tourism? To what extent do they feel able to control the situation? What types of sustainability challenges do they experience? What do they think works well and not? What would constitute responsible cruise tourism to arctic communities and how do they think this can be achieved. In this paper, we will explore these questions from the point of view of one case.

The Icelandic Tourism Research Centre, together with Uppsala University, is currently involved in a multinational research project called *Sustainable Arctic Cruise Communities: from practice to governance*, where the aim is to develop a toolkit for sustainable cruise tourism development and find a way for small Arctic communities and the cruise tourism industry to co-exist. Stakeholders´ practises are analysed with the objective to develop responsible solutions to cruise-related troubles coastal towns are facing. With this research, we are including community stakeholders in strategic planning for destination development. In this paper, case examples from Ísafjörður, a small town located on the Westfjords peninsula in Iceland, are used to describe challenges faced by Arctic cruise communities. Analysis of these challenges gives direction for responsible cruise tourism.

Ísafjörður has experienced an excessive growth in cruise visits and is today the third busiest cruise port in Iceland. The town's population on busy cruise ship days during high season can sometimes triple which causes stress on infrastructure, an environmental strain on attractions due to overcrowding, and a disruption of the daily life of residents. These challenges can be problematic for small towns like Ísafjörður where lack of infrastructure and services hinder destination development. Ísafjörður thus constitutes a suitable case to explore the sustainability dimensions of Arctic cruise tourism.

Ísafjörður has been studied by a multimethod qualitative approach, including two field visits, and thirteen semi-structured interviews with stakeholders within cruise tourism in Ísafjörður. Preliminary results indicate that Ísafjörður town is putting great efforts into developing cruise tourism. This is evident, for example, by the fact that a new, larger dock is currently being built at Ísafjörður, making the port accessible for more and larger ships. Ísafjörður thus finds it relevant to invest a lot of public funding into this kind of infrastructural project to meet the need of the cruise ship industry and to increase the port's revenue.

When discussing the stakeholders' views on the past, present and future of cruise tourism, how it relates to their visions of a sustainable future for Ísafjörður, a quite coherent picture emerges: all agree that cruise tourism is

beneficial for the community of Ísafjörður and is an industry that they would like to see continue in the future. However, the majority agrees that there should be a limit to the number of cruise ships and/or cruise visitors that Ísafjörður can host simultaneously. This overall agreement both in the positive dimensions and threats associated with cruise tourism in turn asks further important questions: if all agree that there "should" be a limit to cruise tourism, why is such a limit not already in place? Who do people think "should" make this happen, and how? Most of our interviewees agree that there "should" be a common discussion on this within Ísafjörður, where the community could reach a consensus on how things "should" be but the question of *who* they think should initiate such a discussion, a straight answer is absent. Different types of actors, public and private, throw this question on one another and tend to think someone else should be responsible for initiating this. Our asking this though, makes them reflect that it would perhaps not be too difficult to get people together to discuss this since Ísafjörður is a small place, with only a few actors involved. This realisation, on the other hand, leads to another unanswered question, of who can and how they could proceed with pushing "the red button" and say no to more cruise ships. Nobody seems to know what systems or actors control this, and, hence, could say no. Some refer to the old-time seafarer rule of never refusing a ship to anchor, which for safety reasons is practised since time immemorial. While people on the other hand realise that itineraries of cruise lines are a rather different matter than this sea men´s code of conduct.

From these results, we draw the tentative conclusion that cruise tourism is a phenomenon that is difficult for individual actors, and even whole destinations to feel ownership over as things that could potentially be controlled and managed. This also points to the fact that cruise tourism is a global phenomenon involving a large number of different big and small actors, over which no one, in the end, has a clear mandate to push a "red button". This in turn leaves small Arctic communities rather vulnerable, and we see a need in future research to develop strategies together with such communities to deal with this highly uncertain and unpredictable situation that hardly can be controlled.

Keywords: Arctic cruise tourism, responsible cruise tourism, Ísafjörður

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"PLEASE, TOURISM, DO NOT RUIN OUR MELRAKKASLÉTTA" TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN A MARGINAL AREA

Þórný Barðadóttir

ABSTRACT

This paper sets focus on tourism development in Melrakkaslétta, a rural peninsula on the northeast coast of Iceland. Melrakkaslétta offers a wealth of natural resources once providing the settings for wealthy farmsteads and a farmers community tracing back for centuries. Natural resources were also the driving force in the creation of the village Raufarhöfn on the peninsula´s east coast. In later years, however, natural, societal, and technical changes have resulted in vast depopulation from the area. Although Melrakkaslétta has remained one of the least visited areas of the country throughout the Icelandic tourism boom of the last decade, tourism has been proposed as one of the possible actions for the area´s development.

The paper draws on ethnographic research conducted in the area, where the conceptual framework is set on the interconnected threads of tourism and other mobilities in a marginal place. Findings reveal differing opinions on the progress of the area's tourism development. For some the several challenges related to the Icelandic systems of mobilities result in an underrepresented and bypassed area on the margin while for others the area is a tranquil haven destined to be preserved as such. Then there are those for whom Melrakkaslétta is on a pertinent steady phase towards a vivid tourism sector.

Keywords: Mobilities, Margins, Melrakkaslétta, Arctic Henge, Iceland

Before the Covid-19 pandemic harshly paused most of the world's travel, overtourism was an emergent buzzword connected to the sector. This was the case for Iceland, where the number of tourist arrivals had grown from under half a million in 2010 to two millions in 2019 (Sæþórsdóttir, Hall & Wendt, 2020). For a few years, tourism was the country's main creator of foreign exchange value (Burns, Haraldsdóttir & Gunnarsdóttir , 2021). However, most tourism

related activities and thereby development and economic effect took place in the southern and southwestern parts of the island (Árnason & Welling, 2019). The southwest, along with the Icelandic Highlands, has therefore been the focus on most research and surveys conducted on the Icelandic tourism sector (e.g., ITRC, n.d.). Besides the research of Lund & Jóhannesson (2012; 2018; 2014; 2016) in the Strandir region in the Icelandic Westfjords, few has been directed towards the less visited areas – the potential destinations on the tourism margins.

This paper follows ethnographic research performed in Melrakkaslétta, a rural peninsula on the Icelandic northeast coast. The research focuses on the entanglements of tourism and other mobilities and the more-than-economic aspects of tourism. The ontological approach taking base in flat ontology follows the interconnections between humans and more-than-humans in social order (Latour, 1998, 2007) – and disorder (van der Duim, Ren, & Jóhannesson, 2013, 2017) – and the role of materials in these processes (Coole & Frost, 2010; Jóhannesson, Ren & van der Duim, 2012; Law & Singleton, 2005).

At the centre is a monument of rocks, the Arctic Henge, built to play with the Arctic light, the Aurora Borealis and the panorama view over Melrakkaslétta's flatland and the surrounding North Atlantic Ocean, furthermore with references to the Icelandic Sagas, Norse Mythology and Celestial movements (Arctic Henge, n.d.; Visit North Iceland, n.d.). Furthermore, as this study reveals, the construction is a counteractive reaction to announced change in the area´s mobility lines.

Transport systems carry an important role in tourism development (Hannam, Sheller & Urry, 2006; Karlsdóttir & Jóhannesson, 2016) and progress in transportation can and has be a driving force in the creations of tourist destinations (Bærenholdt, Haldrup, Larsen & Urry, 2004; Shields, 1991; Urry & Larsen, 2011). Lines of mobility create connections leaving few if any place in isolation (Sheller & Urry, 2006). Still these connections can be both strong and weak and the lanes of mobility fast or slow (Dobbs, 2007; Sheller & Urry, 2006).

In the context of tourism travels, Melrakkaslétta faces various challenges. Its situatedness on the northeast coast means that it is located about as far as possible from the main human gateway into Iceland, the Keflavík International Airport, on the country's south-westernmost tip. For touring Iceland, majority of tourists choose self-drive in rental cars, following some parts of the Icelandic Road 1, the Ring-Road. The traffic decreases as it gets further from the capital area as the ratio of those rounding the country is much lower (Guðmundsson, 2019). As weather, road conditions (Huijbens & Jóhannesson, 2020) and distances strongly affect travels of self-drive tourists (Lundmark & Carson,

2020), another challenge faces Melrakkaslétta in its location far north of the Ring Road.

Melrakkaslétta offers a wealth of natural resources once providing the settings for wealthy farmsteads and a farmers community tracing back for centuries. Due to natural, societal, and technical changes, today few farms are left in drift (Lund, 2016), none on the peninsula´s northernmost flatland. Natural resources were also the driving force in the creation of the village Raufarhöfn on the peninsula´s east coast. Fishing and processing of herring and later demersal fish created the settings for the growing village, with a short-lived peak of residents reaching 500 in the late 1970s (Statistic Iceland, n.d.). From the early 1980s the spiral of depopulation quickly went downwards (Kokorsch & Benediktsson, 2018; Lund, 2016). Although Melrakkaslétta is one of the least visited areas of the country (Óladóttir, 2019, 2020) in an initiative, launched in 2012 to counteract the longstanding outmigration from the area, the residents rated tourism as one of the main possibilities for their homesteads development (IRDI, 2018).

The paper explores the entanglements of the becoming of the Arctic Henge and the mobility lines in – and through – the area. Furthermore, it follows how the role of the monument has been altered with the rise of the Icelandic tourism sector. Findings reveal differing opinions on the progress of the area's tourism development. The regional tourism sector and marketing office see unseized opportunities for further tourism development and call for increased services. The residents, although proud of their monument and the visits it already draws in, generally seem more hesitant towards the idea of Melrakkaslétta becoming a tourist destination. That very idea is then even feared by the summer residents out on the peninsula's northernmost flatland. That fear having to do with the land and the living in the surroundings, the nature of their dwellings and the materialities of Melrakkaslétta´s mobility lines.

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The deviant circumstances of the recent times, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, have hit the tourism industry around the world intensely. Tourism is also challenged by for example climate change and the exceptional global situation and tourism companies are suffering from labour shortage all over the world, which causes long-term economic difficulties. Multidisciplinary research is increasingly topical and important in such a situation. Research can be used to promote proactive planning and cooperation between various actors.

This publication presents studies conducted in the European context. Articles deal with research related to climate change, present the planned and implemented actions to promote responsible tourism in the projects and also gives an overview of the cases in Finnish Lapland and Iceland. The research papers included were presented at 15th International Conference on Responsible Tourism in Destinations – ICRT conference held in Helsinki in June 9–10, 2022.

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