

Perspectives on proximity tourism in Fryslân

Jelmer Hendrik Gerard Jeuring

ISBN: 978-90-367-9830-3

ISBN (E-publication): 978-90-367-9829-7

Design and photography: Jelmer Jeuring

Printed by: Print Service Ede

© **J. H. G. Jeuring, 2017**. All rights reserved. Save exceptions stated by the law, no part of this publication may be reproduced in any form, by print, photocopying, or otherwise, without the prior written permission from the author.



university of
 groningen

Perspectives on proximity tourism in Fryslân

PhD thesis

to obtain the degree of PhD at the
University of Groningen
on the authority of the
Rector Magnificus Prof. E. Sterken
and in accordance with
the decision by the College of Deans.

This thesis will be defended in public on

Tuesday 6 June 2017 at 14.30 hours

by

Jelmer Hendrik Gerard Jeuring

born on 16 December 1979
in Amersfoort

Supervisors

Prof. D. Strijker

Prof. T. Haartsen

Assessment committee

Prof. P.P.P. Huigen

Prof. V.R. van der Duim

Prof. J. Saarinen

Wat binne wy moai fuort net?



Content

Chapter 1	Introduction Pages 11-36
Chapter 2	Discursive contradictions in regional tourism marketing strategies: The case of Fryslân, The Netherlands Pages 37-78
Chapter 3	Pluralizing touristic production and consumption roles of residents? An SME perspective on proximity tourism Pages 79-118
Chapter 4	The challenge of proximity: the (un)attractiveness of near-home tourism destinations Pages 119-158
Chapter 5	Destination branding by residents: The role of perceived responsibility in positive and negative Word-of-Mouth Pages 159-194
Chapter 6	Weather perceptions, holiday satisfaction and perceived attractiveness of domestic vacationing in The Netherlands Pages 195-234
Chapter 7	Conclusions Pages 235-260
	Summary/Samenvatting Pages 261-284
	Dankwoord Pages 285-286

Chapters

Five chapters included in this thesis are reprints of publications. They are the following:

Chapter 2

Jeuring, J. H. G., (2016). Discursive contradictions in regional tourism marketing strategies: The case of Fryslân, The Netherlands. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 5(2), 65-75.
doi:10.1016/j.jdmm.2015.06.002

Chapter 3

Jeuring, J. H. G., Pluralizing touristic production and consumption roles of residents? An SME perspective on proximity tourism. Submitted to an international peer-reviewed journal.

Chapter 4

Jeuring, J. H. G., & Haartsen, T. (2017). The challenge of proximity: the (un)attractiveness of near-home tourism destinations. *Tourism Geographies*, 19(1), 118-141. doi:10.1080/14616688.2016.1175024

Chapter 5

Jeuring, J. H. G., & Haartsen, T. (2017). Destination Branding by Residents: The Role of Perceived Responsibility in Positive and Negative Word-of-Mouth. *Tourism Planning & Development*, 14(2), 240-259.
doi:10.1080/21568316.2016.1214171

Chapter 6

Jeuring, J. H. G., (2017). Weather perceptions, holiday satisfaction and perceived attractiveness of domestic vacationing in The Netherlands. *Tourism Management*, 61, 71-80. doi:10.1016/j.tourman.201701018

Chapter 1

Introduction



Chapter 1

1.1 Tourism 'under the radar'

When thinking of a summer holiday destination, what comes to mind first, a Mediterranean beach or the shores of a lake fifteen kilometers away from where you live? And what about a weekend trip to a city; Paris, the capital of France, or a city in your region of residence? Arguably, the warm and sunny beaches of Spain and the streets of Paris are likely to be seen as more typical tourist places than the lakeside or cities near home. The latter might seem all too familiar to be even considered as 'real' holiday destinations.

The abovementioned 'obvious' distinctions between places belonging either to the extraordinary realm of tourism or to the ordinary everyday reflect a hegemonic narrative of tourism, which has been reconfirmed and facilitated throughout many decades of increasing global mobility and connectivity (Govers, Van Hecke, & Cabus, 2008). The culture of touristic mobility is hereby rooted in imaginaries of escaping everyday life routines, of discovering the unknown and unfamiliar (Salazar, 2012), epitomized in Urry's 'tourist gaze' (Urry & Larsen, 2011). Consequentially, this logic is also embedded in strong associations with and behavioral practices of traveling (long) physical distances (Larsen & Guiver, 2013). The further from 'home' the more exotic or even 'real' a touristic trip is. The ordering of tourism (Van der Duim, 2005) forms a complex and arguably political entanglement of hegemonic and marginal discourses, imaginaries, materials, activities and experiences in which some are favored at the expense of other.

It would then appear that touristic travel and experiences are by definition impossible near home, within a person's country, region or city of residence. Indeed, tourism is defined as "the activity of visitors taking a trip to a main destination outside their usual environment, for less than a year, for any main purpose, including business, leisure or other personal purpose,

other than to be employed by a resident entity in the place visited" (EUROSTAT, 2014a). Mainly for statistical purposes, this geographic-temporal-behavioral demarcation provides a convenient basis for getting some grip on the complexity of tourist behavior on rather low spatial resolutions and along indicators that are relatively easily available (e.g., international arrivals/departures, overnight stays). However, this definition unjustly puts emphasis on the act of travel, almost as a *pars pro toto* for tourism. Also, uncritical reconfirmation of this definition has resulted in a narrow understanding of what tourism *is* and constrains what tourism *can be*. Hereby, a false ontological security is sustained along "fixed dualisms between the life of tourism and everyday life: extraordinary and ordinary, pleasure and boredom, liminality and rules, exotic others and significant others" (Larsen, 2008, p. 21). So, there is an inherent tension between simplifying quantified approaches and the complex social constructions of tourism.

This observed tension is rooted in a wider theorizing about the relational, subjective nature of tourism and the interdependence of the exotic and the mundane. For example, tourism has been 'de-exoticized' (Larsen, 2008) by pointing to how touristic activities are embedded in and shaped by routines, just as the everyday life from which tourism claims to provide an opportunity to escape. Similarly, everyday life, including the geographical notion of 'usual environment' is far from homogeneous, habitual and ordinary (Govers et al., 2008). Everyday life is just as well a realm for discursive and behavioral creativity and manipulation (de Certeau, 1984), not the least directed at the spatial conventions which attempt to control the meanings and performances of tourism. Furthermore, as stated by Franklin and Crang (2001, p. 10), "touristic culture is more than the physical travel, it is the preparation of people to see other places as objects of tourism, and the preparation of those people and places to be seen." Tourism meanings, practiced in discourses, behaviors and

experiences are thus dispersed across places that are both familiar and exotic, usual and novel. This hybrid character of socio-spatial meanings of tourism aligns with what Bourdeau calls 'after-tourism': a change of the status of tourist areas and practices along a "transcendence of the scope of thought, structuration and practice of tourism" (Bourdeau, 2012, p. 200).

Tourism itself, instead of being delineated by socio-spatial boundaries, thus is a space for negotiating boundaries between the 'exotic' and the 'everyday'. Nevertheless, touristic dualisms have become part of a self-justifying discourse in which narrow understandings of tourism along objective indicators conceal the subjective content of tourism. This powerful dynamic leaves little room for interpretations and meanings that do not align with them. This is problematic, for example when traveled distances between home and destination are small and occur within or between meaningful spatial anchors (e.g., regions or cities) in a way that they remain 'under the radar' of the physical delineations used in conventional tourism definitions. Acknowledging this, reducing the distance threshold between the touristic and the usual environment has been proposed (Smith, 1999). This however would merely serve the same statistical purposes from which the disconnect with subjective understandings of touristic mobility have grown. What still remains is a lack of understanding of and attention for the hybrid nature of tourism and the usual environment, which is particularly evident on small geographical levels. Here, the meanings attributed to and derived from spatial anchors (e.g., nation states, regions and cities) can conflict and contradict, or complement and enhance each other (Jessop, Brenner, & Jones, 2008).

There is a bias in tourism studies toward international tourism and a lack of insight in and understanding of the micro dynamics of domestic tourism (Canavan, 2013; Eijgelaar, Peeters, & Piket, 2008), even though most people spend vacations within their countries of residence (EUROSTAT, 2014b; UNWTO, 2008, 2014). As a result, relatively little research has

attempted to better understand how and to what extent the ambiguity of 'here' and 'elsewhere' is shaping and shaped by tourism practices on the small level of regions within nation states. The nexus of spatial familiarity and tourist experiences is often avoided as if it were the Bermuda triangle (talking of institutionalized exotic imaginaries...). Such knowledge is timely though, given that the significance of regions as meaningful spatial units that contest conventional territorial boundaries has recently been growing (Paasi, 2009). The significance of regions is not the least reinforced by tourism development itself, increasingly being seen as tool for enhancing regional revitalization (Zimmerbauer, 2011). More generally, the attributed importance of regions is embedded in the context of (and in a response to) globalizing dynamics of networks and flows of people, goods and meanings (Jones & Paasi, 2013; Van der Duim, 2005).

This gives rise to various questions. When a globalized tourism industry has enabled people to anticipate upon and experience the whole world as a potential destination, hereby increasingly familiarizing people with places and people 'elsewhere', could the usual environment itself –the everyday, near home environment and activities– just as well provide opportunities for (re)discovery and hereby have potential *touristic* value? How do meanings of home and away, institutionalized in global tourism discourses, relate to the subtle meanings of (un)familiarity and touristic attractiveness within the localities of a region and vice versa? And to what extent do various stakeholders reinforce or contest certain touristic meanings that shape socio-spatial identities? These notions open up opportunities for (and even necessitate) an exploration of the 'in-between-ness' (Bourdeau, 2012) of tourism, on small geographical levels and by recognizing tourism as simultaneously being an economic, social and cultural phenomenon (UNWTO, 2010).

By being explicitly concerned with the ways how tourism's subjective boundaries between home and away shape and are shaped by people's

socio-spatial identities, the main objective of this thesis then is ***“to better understand how discursive, behavioral and experiential practices of socio-spatial identification depend on and augment/constrain touristic consumption/production of places near home.”***

This aim needs some further embedding in both a theoretical approach and in a specific geographical context, in order to make possible an operationalization of more detailed research questions. Therefore, in the following sections I develop the notion of *proximity tourism*, argue for its relevance and introduce the Dutch province of Fryslân as suitable setting for the purpose of this thesis.

1.2 Proximity tourism: the paradox of experiential and spatial (un)familiarity

In the definition of tourism provided earlier, the ‘usual environment’ plays an essential role in the ‘othering’ of tourism: it is referred to as “the geographical area, though not necessarily a contiguous one, within which an individual conducts his regular life routines” (EUROSTAT, 2014a).

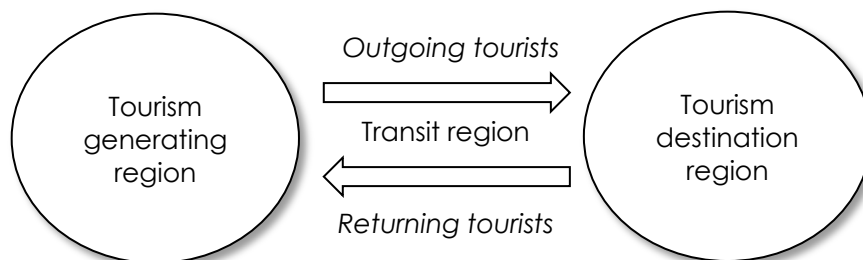


Figure 1.1 Whole Tourism System model (Leiper, 1990).

Analogous to definitions of tourism, “defining ‘usual environment’ through average distances traveled, as is suggested by many national tourism authorities or statistical agencies, lacks theoretical embedding in current views on geography” (Govers et al., 2008, p. 1058). Illustrative for the

conceptual problem of a distinction between tourism and the usual environment on small geographical levels is the spatial differentiation depicted in Leiper's (1990) model of Whole Tourism Systems (Figure 1.1). The model discerns between geographical regions which generate tourism (i.e., where people reside when they are not engaged in a tourist activity), regions which receive visitors from elsewhere (i.e., people's holiday destinations) and transit regions, which pertain to the places traversed while travelling. In the context of the increasingly fluid spaces of flows (Govers et al., 2008) however, this distinction does not always hold and, certainly when travel distances become smaller, there is a need for alternative approaches when tourism generating regions, transit regions and destinations overlap.

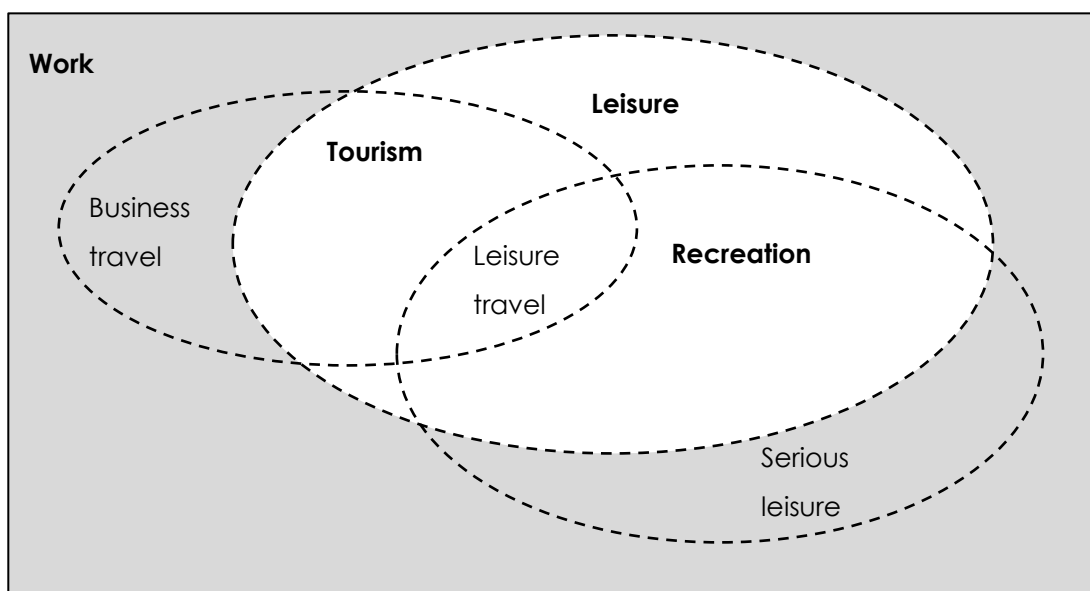


Figure 1.2 Discerning between work, tourism, leisure and recreation (Hall & Page, 2014).

Similarly, distinctions made between recreation and tourism in order to emphasize certain temporal and spatial characteristics of people's activities (Figure 1.2) are historically based on differences between

concerns with public (recreation) and private (tourism) undertakings (Hall & Page, 2014). Since these realms are increasingly blurred, meaningful distinction between recreation and tourism in current (western) societies is largely irrelevant and artificial. Recreation and tourism are better understood as being part of the same “related to differences in temporary mobility in time [...] and space” (Hall & Page, 2014, p. 10) and therefore strict distinction between them suffers from the same conceptual problems described earlier. In the context of this thesis therefore tourism and recreation are understood as concepts pertaining to similar gradations of temporal and spatial mobility.

That is not to say that all touristic practices are equal and interchangeable. From a phenomenological perspective, tourist experiences can vary considerably in their intensity of *out-there-ness* (Elands & Lengkeek, 2012). Also, when geographical distance is decoupled from experiential otherness (Boschma, 2005; Diaz-Soria & Llurdés Coit, 2013; Kastenholz, 2010), this opens up the possibility for tourism to contribute to the experience of places in multiple ways and for people to play different roles within the same environment and vice versa. As such, this thesis is concerned with gaining an understanding of meanings, behavior and experiences of ‘*proximity tourism*’, which pertains to the consumption/production practices which transgress the boundaries between home and away (Bourdeau, 2012) through the paradoxical experience of touristic otherness within places that feel familiar.

It is important to note that proximity tourism thus strongly builds on a *relative perspective* in a physical spatial sense, as it positions touristic otherness as relatively nearby (even within) the usual environment. Similarly, touristic experiences are relatively unexpected and counterintuitive due to assumed associations of familiarity with the ‘usual’ geographical space, and because its ontology is relatively different from the societal norms for ‘appropriate’ touristic activities. Also, it builds on the notion that the

practices through which proximity tourism are *consumed and produced* are contingent with each other in an ongoing circulation (Ateljevic, 2000). These aspects will be further elaborated upon in section 1.3.

Important also is to realize that the emphasis on relativity certainly does not mean that conventions, dualisms and dichotomies are abandoned. Rather, this thesis seeks “how they can be employed in a multiplicity of ways to understand our increasingly fluid and mobile world” (Jeuring & Diaz-Soria, 2017, p. 7). I hereby align with de Souza Bispo, who states that “it is important to note that criticism is not levied on these terms [dichotomies] when they are used as a synecdoche, i.e., as key features of a phenomenon to refer to it. Rather, the problem occurs when a concept or a term is used as the opposite of another as a means of creating controversial boundaries among them” (2016, p. 172). In other words, the “neo-situationism” (Bourdeau, 2012, p. 199) of proximity tourism becomes possible *only because of* prevailing dichotomies that differentiate between tourists and residents, hosts and guests, home and away. So, without the acknowledgement of such dualisms, proximity tourism would lose the socio-spatial anchors from which it can develop its character of relativity. This way, established meanings always provide space for a converting capacity of in-between-ness to highlight the latent unfamiliarity embedded in small differences (as opposed to large contrasts) or the possibility for surprise embedded in the mundane (as opposed to the unusual).

Indeed, proximity tourism can be seen as a cultural artifact of the global-local paradox, as a form of localization and a performance of territorial identification, simultaneously enabled by and motivated to counter the homogenizing processes of globalization (Govers et al., 2008). As such, the institutionalized associations with everyday and tourist places embedded in assumptions of (un)familiarity (and related notions mentioned throughout the thesis) provide a fertile ground for a re-valuation of how

tourism is currently involved in socio-spatial identification processes (and vice versa) on the regional level.

1.3 Tourism as cultural phenomenon

It follows that for proximity tourism to exist, to be a meaningful concept, it needs to be recognized, discursively, behaviorally and experientially, by the stakeholders inhabiting a certain geographical space. Therefore, a theoretical approach is needed which takes into account the relativity, relationality and subjectivity of how such practices relate to socio-spatial identification. In other words, an approach is required that can uncover the meaning-making struggle of cultural survival and justification in which any person, object or activity is continuously involved. For this, the 'Circuit of Culture' (Du Gay, 1997; Hall & Evans, 2013) provides an appropriate metaphorical starting point (Figure 1.3).

According to Du Gay (1997, p. 13), culture pertains to "the production and circulation of meaning". The Circuit of Culture offers a framework to grapple with the ways shared meanings between members of a society are produced and circulated. The Circuit has been employed to describe a large variety of material objects, but can also be used to understand the significance of meanings pertaining to immaterial 'artefacts', particularly when they shape people's way of living. It is easy to argue that tourism in modern societies plays a major role in how the "whole way of life" (Du Gay, 1997, p. 13) is organized: where and how we travel provides a certain status, depends on and shapes social relations, and has become a symbol of societal progress and welfare. Thus, tourism can and should be seen as a cultural phenomenon (or 'artefact').

However, Du Gay at the same time points to the need to realize that certain meanings do not only pertain to the *content* of certain ways of life, but also to the *significant practices* through which these meanings are produced, shared, contested, are inscribed with power and depend on

perceptions of similarity and difference. As he puts it: "It is hard to define 'night' except in relation to its opposite - 'day'. Another way of saying this is that meaning is relational. If there were no differences between them, it would be hard to distinguish between them[:] It is difference which signifies" (Du Gay, 1997, p. 17). What 'is' and what 'is not' is thus tightly interwoven and interdepend. It is through this double dependency on difference that an ongoing tension exists between established, dominant meanings and the destabilizing potential of their contestation that grows from their hegemony.

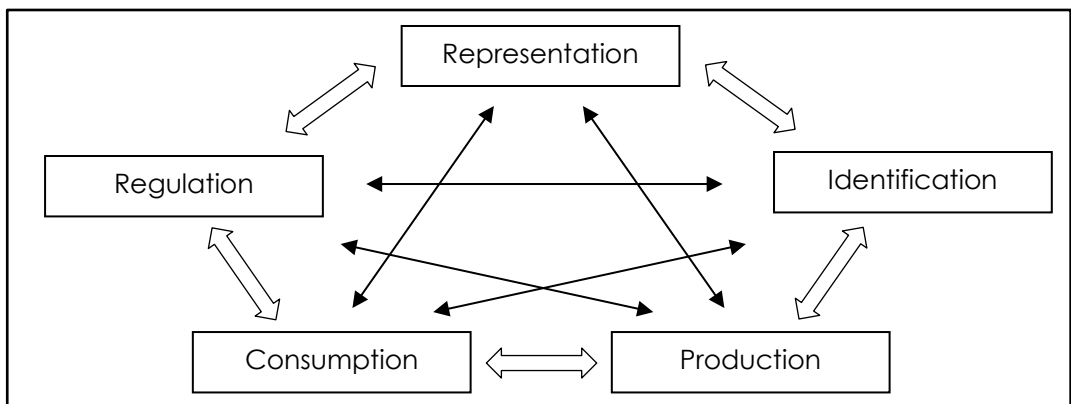


Figure 1.3 The Circuit of Culture (Du Gay, 1997).

According to the Circuit of Culture, any cultural artefact is to be studied through five processes which become connected in articulated moments: contingent relations between different processes of 'representation', 'identification', 'production', 'consumption' and 'regulation'. Regulation pertains to the practices which attempt to favor or delimit certain ways of consumption and production over others. Representation is the symbolic use of signs and language. Identification pertains to the internalization of meanings by individual persons or groups. Production is the process through which images of an object are

represented to others, while consumption is the interpretation of the objects.

It is from this dynamic of circulation of meanings attributed to tourism and the significant practices through which its meanings are produced and contested, that particular research questions can be posed and studies can be developed that can shed light on the significance of 'proximity tourism'.

1.4 Rationale behind the research

But what would be the value of a study that contests definitions and meanings which actually seem to help structuring a blurred world where spatial and temporal meanings are increasingly challenged? Three arguments are provided.

A first argument for an exploration of this blind spot in tourism has already been partly addressed above, as it pertains to the globalized connectivity of hypermobile societies, signified by spaces of flows (Castells, 2002) in which geographical distance and proximity are decoupled from meanings of (un)familiarity. As put by Govers et al. (2008, p. 1058), this results in a "growth of 'tourism reflexivity' that ensures that increasing numbers of places around the world monitor, evaluate, and develop their 'tourism potential'..". Consequentially, tourism has become one of the main ways through which meanings are produced within "'host-guest-time-space-cultures' that stabilize certain places as 'places to play'.." (2008, p. 1058). This requires an understanding of how geographical concepts and definitions both produce and are being produced through meaning-making processes, and what this implies for people's perceived belonging to and attractiveness of places in terms of 'home' and 'away'. For example, what are the ethical implications for residents when the places they call home are framed as tourism destination? To what extent can they

participate in touristic consumption within these places, when they are framed as usual for some and non-usual for others?

Second, travelling brings along important challenges with respect to sustainability. In the current era of peak-globalization (Curtis, 2009), awareness is growing about the limitations and downsides of globalized connectivity and competitiveness, simultaneously nourished by and feeding touristic consumption and production. Tourism is by some even understood as being a force of 'destructive creation' (Büscher & Fletcher, 2016). While sustainability issues affect many aspects of tourism, in the context of this thesis it pertains particularly to tourism mobility/transport. Long haul travel modes (e.g., air travel) significantly contribute to mankind's carbon footprint (Dubois, Peeters, Ceron, & Gössling, 2011), in turn enhancing global warming and its destructive ecological and societal consequences. The current way tourist travel is organized is therefore highly unsustainable and major (technological) changes are needed in order to reduce the environmental impact of physical tourism mobility.

However, next to the need for technological innovations facilitating a transition toward low carbon tourism, there is also need for a paradigmatic transition in tourism thinking toward an approach that takes away the authority of distance and economic growth and provides opportunities for (re)valuing proximity, exemplified by notions of 'de-growth' (Bourdeau, 2012) and 'steady state tourism' (Hall, 2009). Knowledge is needed that can contextualize and goes beyond the attitude-behavior gap which is identified to be impeding the implementation of sustainable behavior in tourism (Hibbert, Dickinson, Gössling, & Curtin, 2013). For example, to what extent are residents living relatively nearby considered as (potential) touristic consumer by tourism entrepreneurs? How can perceived familiarity of nearby places be re-framed in order to find 'new' ways for people to build relations with the places where they live, through tourism? How can people's needs to temporarily escape their routines be

fulfilled without travelling long distances? Promising discursive, behavioral and experiential starting points for such a transition should therefore be explored in order to translate a theoretical potential into actual interventions through entrepreneurship, policies and public action.

A third argument follows from the two previous in that opportunities for societal change increasingly depend on and grow from interaction and collaboration between various stakeholders (Kavaratzis, 2012; Paasi, 2012b). This general dynamic also concerns the role of tourism as a social force and the idea that tourism should be available to all (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2006). The power to influence socio-spatial development is increasingly decentralized and territorial legitimacy is often contested (Zimmerbauer & Paasi, 2013) or enhanced (Lugosi, 2014) by bottom-up processes, for example giving voice to residents. Individual experiences and opinions can become authoritative resources for decision making through 'informal' communication such as Word-of-Mouth (Chen, Dwyer, & Firth, 2014), while bottom-up participation in policy making has become an acknowledged tool for citizen engagement (Rehmet & Dinnie, 2013). The notion of proximity tourism can help understand how tourism stakeholders, in their varying capacities (e.g., as residents, tourists, entrepreneurs, policymakers) deal with the politics of decentralization and citizenship in relation to the increasing capitalization on the 'tourism potential' (Govers et al., 2008) of places. For example, does building on citizen engagement in tourism development imply that residents have a responsibility to 'become' tourists and travel within the region in which they live? How does becoming a tourist within a familiar environment relate to the multiple roles and identities people develop in relation to the places they inhabit? What are the implications for the relations between various tourism stakeholders? While finding answers to all these questions lies beyond the possibilities of this thesis, together the arguments provide a robust rationale for the aims of this research.

1.5 Geographical context

The geographical focus of this thesis is principally concerned with Fryslân, a province in the North of The Netherlands (Figure 1.4). In light of the aims of this thesis, Fryslân makes for a particularly suitable frame of reference for a variety of reasons.

First of all, Fryslân is one of the twelve provinces of the Dutch nation state and hereby is an official administrative territory. As one of the twelve Dutch provinces it provides a home to about 650.000 people. Its surface covers about 575.000 km², of which over 40 percent is water. As such it is a relatively small meaningful geographical unit on the regional level, within the confines of the larger administrative territory of The Netherlands. However, Fryslân has also more subjective (cultural) meanings, which are particularly relevant within the Dutch context. These meanings result for example from it being home to the nation's second (and only other) official language. The Frisian language is one of the signifiers of a strong 'Frisian identity' (Betten, 2013; Duijvendak, 2008). This regional identity is rooted in a long history of territorial and socio-spatial changes. Furthermore, within Fryslân a heterogeneous mix of spatial identities exists (Pietersen, 1969): various dialects and a strong rivalry between the province's two major football clubs exemplify this. Already without considering any touristic meanings, this results in considerable room for multiple interpretations of Fryslân as being a (un)usual environment. Various non-linear relations between absolute and subjective notions of distance/proximity, home and away, familiarity and otherness can be expected to circulate within the various meanings attributed to Fryslân, across different layers of regional identification (Boisen, Terlouw, & van Gorp, 2011).

Second, tourism is an important economic resource within the province and various efforts are made to capitalize on its touristic potential. Around seven percent of the total jobs in Fryslân is in the 'tourism and recreation sector' (CBS, 2012), while the Dutch average sits just above five

percent (NRIT, 2016). Since the early 19th century tourism activity has slowly developed, while growing fast after World War II. Among other things, this has resulted in a particular organization of the province as a whole and of smaller parts within it as tourism destination(s) in terms of infrastructure and touristic meanings. Interestingly, most visitors are Dutch and 82 percent of the daytrips of Frisian residents was situated within the province (CBS, 2012). These numbers align with a tendency in other European countries: 76 percent of Europeans spend their holidays within their own country (EUROSTAT, 2014b). Moreover, they illustrate the demand for a better understanding of the phenomenon of tourism near home.



Figure 1.4 The province of Fryslân in The Netherlands.
(Source www.nl.wikipedia.org)

Finally, since regions have been under increased attention and scrutiny as 'new' meaningful geographical units (Jones & Paasi, 2013; Paasi, 2012a), an understanding about their cultural significance from various perspectives is needed. This concerns not the least the context of tourism (UNWTO, 2010), particularly since tourism development is for many cities and regions a simulacrum of prosperity and success. Therefore it is currently a popular but tool for regional development, but with mixed results (Jóhannesson & Huijbens, 2010; van Rekom & Go, 2006), which in Fryslân is illustrated by the difficulties to establish a long-term destination marketing strategy. In sum, the context of Fryslân is a favorable 'living lab' for studying socio-spatial identification in and through tourism, in which various notions of 'home' and 'away' are produced and contested.

1.6 Research questions and outline of the thesis

Du Gay states that it is the full circuit through which "any analysis of a cultural text or artefact must pass if it is to be adequately studied"(p.3). However, I do not claim that in this thesis this criterion is met, as such an analysis is not the purpose here. Rather, the main use of the Circuit of Culture in this thesis pertains to its relational epistemology of how meanings about tourism as cultural artefact are produced and circulated. As such, the five cultural processes of the circuit provide a coherent structure for this thesis to make inferences across and beyond the different studies: the interdependent relation between consumption/production is not studied in isolation, but as a process for which its meanings are contingent on the relations with practices of regulation, representation and identification.

The core of this thesis consists of five studies (Chapter 2-6). In these Chapters, three stakeholder perspectives are addressed (Policy and marketing, Chapter 2; Tourism entrepreneurs, Chapter 3; Residents, Chapter 4-6). Chapter 2, 3 and 4 attempt to understand how each stakeholder group perceives and negotiates proximity tourism in the context of Fryslân

as tourism destination. Chapter 5 and 6 turn to specific cases in which practices of socio-spatial identification by residents of Fryslân and The Netherlands are related to particular production and consumption activities of proximity tourism (Table 1.1; Figure 1.5). The main research questions per chapter are as follows.

Table 1.1 Stakeholder perspectives, circulation processes and practices per research question and chapter.

Chapter	Research question	Stakeholder perspective	Meaning-making processes affecting touristic consumption/ production in Fryslân	Practices of socio-spatial identification
2	1	Marketing/Policy	Regulation & Representation	Discursive
3	2	SMEs/Entrepreneurs	Identification & Representation	Discursive Behavioral
4	3	Residents	Identification & Representation	Discursive Behavioral Experiential
5	4	Residents	Regulation & Representation	Discursive Behavioral
6	5	Residents	Identification & Representation	Experiential

Research question 1: *How is Fryslân positioned as tourism destination in regional tourism marketing strategies and what are the implications of certain destination positioning discourses for Fryslân as a potential place for proximity tourism?*

This research question is discussed in Chapter 2 and pertains to the perspective of tourism marketing and regional policy making in Fryslân. Using a qualitative approach, the chapter is concerned with the power of

discursive representation in relation to regulation, particularly in that, through destination positioning, certain socio-spatial identities are commodified (i.e. produced), shaping imaginaries of Fryslân as a tourism destination that is privileging some people, places or roles above other.

Research question 2: *Which touristic roles do tourism entrepreneurs in Fryslân attribute to residents of Fryslân and to what extent do they see residents as potential consumers?*

Complementing the policy perspective in Chapter 2, this research question forms the basis for Chapter 3 and is concerned with the perspective of tourism businesses. Employing a qualitative approach, it explores how stakeholders who are directly gaining income from tourism consumption negotiate the different potential roles of residents living in Fryslân in relation to their tourism businesses. As such, this chapter is explicitly building on the interdependence of production and consumption and provides insights in their connection with identification processes, particularly in terms of role attributions. Extending the knowledge gained in Chapter 2, the findings point to how the meanings attributed to tourism and to Fryslân enable or limit touristic participation of residents and their collaboration with entrepreneurs. Next, chapter 4-6 shift to the perspective of residents themselves and are concerned with the ways they make meaning of Fryslân as destination for proximity tourism.

Research question 3: *To what extent do subjectivities of distance and proximity affect the image and attractiveness of destinations that are physically close to home?*

In Chapter 4 subjective understandings of both distance and proximity in relation to perceived attractiveness of and touristic behavior in places near

home are scrutinized, from the perspective of residents living Fryslân. Using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, the study sheds light on how Fryslân as 'proximity tourism' destination is constructed, endorsed and appreciated (or not). The chapter highlights the relative, temporally sensitive ways that people negotiate distance and proximity in their perceptions of being at home and away.

Research question 4: *To what extent do residents of Fryslân feel responsible to engage in promoting the province as tourism destination?*

Chapter 5 again takes on the perspective of residents living in Fryslân, by focusing on the relation between processes of socio-spatial identification and citizen engagement in tourism development. Employing a quantitative study, it explores word-of-mouth communication as practice of citizenship behavior and examines the extent to which residents feel responsible for communicating destination images within their social network.

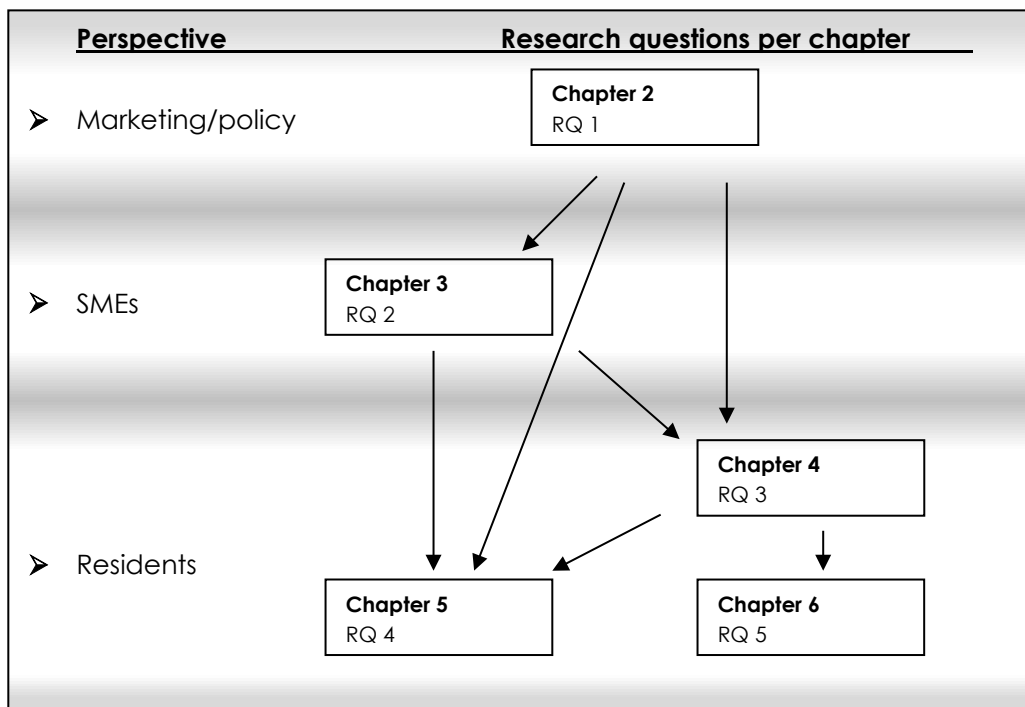
Research question 5: *How do weather perceptions relate to the image and attractiveness of domestic holidays and which role do weather experiences play in experiences of (un)familiarity?*

This research question follows up on findings in previous chapters, particularly Chapter 4. There, the weather was attributed a major role as signifier of 'home' and 'away' and an important attribute shaping the image and attractiveness of tourism destinations. In this chapter a quantitative study is employed among domestic camping tourists in Fryslân, scrutinizing linkages between identification and representation processes, affected by weather perceptions. Hereby, the chapter highlights how physical experiences, as qualitative aspects of places, inform socio-spatial

identification and affect perceptions of (un)familiarity across various spatial levels.

Finally, Chapter 7 synthesizes the findings from Chapters 2-6. It draws conclusions on the significance of proximity tourism as underpinning for socio-spatial identification in the context of Fryslân. A number of theoretical and practical implications are discussed, which can inform an augmented understanding of tourism, in which everyday life and touristic otherness are rather mutually inclusive instead of opposing. This way, proximity is embraced as potential commodity for tourism development. In turn, this approach provides a perspective on tourism that is based on multiplicity and circulation and in which the societal opportunities of proximity tourism can become more strongly embedded in regional development.

Figure 1.5 Connections between chapters.



References

- Ateljevic, I. (2000). Circuits of tourism: stepping beyond the 'production/consumption' dichotomy. *Tourism Geographies*, 2(4), 369-388.
- Betten, E. (2013). *De Fries. Op zoek naar de Friese identiteit*. Leeuwarden: Wijdemeer.
- Boisen, M., Terlouw, K., & van Gorp, B. (2011). The selective nature of place branding and the layering of spatial identities. *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 4(2), 135-147.
- Boschma, R. (2005). Proximity and innovation: a critical assessment. *Regional studies*, 39(1), 61-74.
- Bourdeau, P. (2012). Visiting/living (in) the Alps: towards a tourist-residential convergence? *Di chi sono le Alpi?: appartenenze politiche, economiche e culturali nel mondo alpino contemporaneo*, 195-204.
- Büscher, B., & Fletcher, R. (2016). Destructive creation: capital accumulation and the structural violence of tourism. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 1-17.
- Canavan, B. (2013). The Extent and Role of Domestic Tourism in a Small Island: The Case of the Isle of Man. *Journal of Travel Research*, 52(3), 340-352.
- Castells, M. (2002). Local and global: cities in the network society. *Tijdschrift voor economische en sociale geografie*, 93(5), 548-558.
- CBS. (2012). *Toerisme en recreatie in cijfers*. Retrieved from The Hague/Heerlen:
- Chen, N., Dwyer, L., & Firth, T. (2014). Effect of dimensions of place attachment on residents' word-of-mouth behavior. *Tourism Geographies*, 16(5), 826-843.
- Curtis, F. (2009). Peak globalization: Climate change, oil depletion and global trade. *Ecological Economics*, 69(2), 427-434.

- de Certeau, M. (1984). *The practice of everyday life*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- de Souza Bispo, M. (2016). Tourism as practice. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 61, 170-179. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2016.10.009>
- Diaz-Soria, I., & Lluordés Coit, J. C. (2013). Thoughts about proximity tourism as a strategy for local development. *Cuadernos de Turismo*, 32, 65-88.
- Du Gay, P. (1997). *Doing cultural studies: The story of the Sony Walkman* (Vol. 1): Sage.
- Dubois, G., Peeters, P., Ceron, J. P., & Gössling, S. (2011). The future tourism mobility of the world population: Emission growth versus climate policy. *Transportation Research Part A: Policy and Practice*, 45(10), 1031-1042. doi:10.1016/j.tra.2009.11.004
- Duijvendak, M. (2008). Ligamenten van de staat? Over regionale identiteit en de taaiheid van de provincie. *BMGN-Low Countries Historical Review*, 123(3), 342-353.
- Eijgelaar, E., Peeters, P., & Piket, P. (2008). *Domestic and international tourism in a globalized world*. Paper presented at the International Conference of International Tourism, International Sociological Association, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India.
- Elands, B. H., & Lengkeek, J. (2012). The tourist experience of out-there-ness: theory and empirical research. *Forest Policy and Economics*, 19, 31-38.
- EUROSTAT. (2014a). Statistics explained. Retrieved from <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Glossary:Tourism>
- EUROSTAT. (2014b). Tourism trips of Europeans. In. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.
- Franklin, A., & Crang, M. (2001). The trouble with tourism and travel theory. *Tourist studies*, 1(1), 5-22.

- Govers, R., Van Hecke, E., & Cabus, P. (2008). Delineating tourism: Defining the usual environment. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 35(4), 1053-1073.
- Hall, C. M. (2009). Degrowing Tourism: Décroissance, Sustainable Consumption and Steady-State Tourism. *Anatolia*, 20(1), 46-61. doi:10.1080/13032917.2009.10518894
- Hall, C. M., & Page, S. J. (2014). *The geography of tourism and recreation: Environment, place and space*: Routledge.
- Hall, S., & Evans, J. (2013). *Representation : cultural representation and signifying practices*. Los Angeles [etc.]: SAGE [etc.].
- Hibbert, J. F., Dickinson, J. E., Gössling, S., & Curtin, S. (2013). Identity and tourism mobility: an exploration of the attitude-behaviour gap. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 21(7), 999-1016.
- Higgins-Desbiolles, F. (2006). More than an "industry": The forgotten power of tourism as a social force. *Tourism Management*, 27(6), 1192-1208.
- Jessop, B., Brenner, N., & Jones, M. (2008). Theorizing sociospatial relations. *Environment and planning. D, Society and space*, 26(3), 389.
- Jeuring, J., & Diaz-Soria, I. (2017). Introduction: proximity and intraregional aspects of tourism. *Tourism Geographies*, 19(1), 4-8. doi:10.1080/14616688.2016.1233290
- Jones, M., & Paasi, A. (2013). Guest Editorial: Regional World(s): Advancing the Geography of Regions. *Regional Studies*, 47(1), 1-5.
- Jóhannesson, G. T., & Huijbens, E. H. (2010). Tourism in times of crisis: Exploring the discourse of tourism development in Iceland. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 13(5), 419-434.
- Kastenholz, E. (2010). 'Cultural proximity' as a determinant of destination image. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 16(4), 313-322. doi:10.1177/1356766710380883
- Kavaratzis, M. (2012). From "necessary evil" to necessity: stakeholders' involvement in place branding. *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 5(1), 7-19.

- Larsen, G. R., & Guiver, J. W. (2013). Understanding tourists' perceptions of distance: a key to reducing the environmental impacts of tourism mobility. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 21(7), 968-981.
- Larsen, J. (2008). De-exoticizing tourist travel: Everyday life and sociality on the move. *Leisure Studies*, 27(1), 21-34.
- Leiper, N. (1990). Tourist attraction systems. *Annals of tourism research*, 17(3), 367-384.
- Lugosi, P. (2014). Mobilising identity and culture in experience co-creation and venue operation. *Tourism Management*, 40(0), 165-179. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2013.06.005>
- NRIT. (2016). *Trendrapport toerisme, recreatie en vrije tijd 2016*. Nieuwegein: NRIT Media/CELTH/NBTC Holland Marketing.
- Paasi, A. (2009). The resurgence of the 'Region' and 'Regional Identity': theoretical perspectives and empirical observations on regional dynamics in Europe. *Review of International Studies*, 35, 121-146.
- Paasi, A. (2012a). Regional Planning and the Mobilization of 'Regional Identity': From Bounded Spaces to Relational Complexity. *Regional Studies*, 1-14.
- Paasi, A. (2012b). Regions are social constructs, but who or what 'constructs' them? Agency in question. *Environment and Planning A*, 42(10), 2296-2301.
- Pietersen, L. (1969). *De Friezen en hun taal: Een onderzoek naar de lees- en spreekgewoonten in Friesland en naar de houding ten aanzien van het Fries*. Drachten: Laverman.
- Rehmet, J., & Dinnie, K. (2013). Citizen brand ambassadors: Motivations and perceived effects. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 2(1), 31-38.
- Salazar, N. B. (2012). Tourism Imaginaries: A Conceptual Approach. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 39(2), 863-882.

- Smith, S. (1999). How far is far enough? Operationalizing the concept of "usual environment" in tourism definitions. *Tourism Analysis*, 4(3/4), 137-143.
- UNWTO. (2008). World Tourism Barometer 2008. In (Vol. 6). Madrid: UNWTO.
- UNWTO. (2010). *International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics 2008*: United Nations Publications.
- UNWTO. (2014). UNWTO annual report 2013. In. Madrid: World Tourism Organization.
- Urry, J., & Larsen, J. (2011). *The tourist gaze 3.0*. London: Sage.
- Van der Duim, V. (2005). *Tourismscapes: an actor-network perspective on sustainable tourism development*: Wageningen Universiteit (Wageningen University).
- van Rekom, J., & Go, F. (2006). Being Discovered: A Blessing to Local Identities? *Annals of Tourism Research*, 33(3), 767-784.
- Zimmerbauer, K. (2011). From Image to Identity: Building Regions by Place Promotion. *European Planning Studies*, 19(2), 243-260.
- Zimmerbauer, K., & Paasi, A. (2013). When old and new regionalism collide: Deinstitutionalization of regions and resistance identity in municipality amalgamations. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 30(0), 31-40.

Chapter 2

Discursive contradictions in regional tourism marketing strategies: The case of Fryslân, The Netherlands¹

Jelmer H. G. Jeuring

¹Reprint of:

Jeuring, J. H. G. (2016). Discursive contradictions in regional tourism marketing strategies: The case of Fryslân, The Netherlands. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 5(2), 65-75.



Chapter 2

Abstract

Discourses in tourism destination marketing play an important role in constructing and consuming tourism destinations. However, various discursive contradictions can emerge, potentially limiting or facilitating tourism development. This paper has two objectives. First, it aims to identify discursive contradictions embedded in the positioning statements of regional tourism marketing strategy documents. Second, it intends to highlight how such contradictions simultaneously prioritize and destabilize certain destination identities. Employing the case of the Dutch province of Fryslân, discourse analysis of tourism marketing documents was conducted. Findings revealed contradictions emerging along five themes: place branding, identity claims, target groups, roles and collaboration. Regional Frisian tourism marketing appears to prioritize external orientations and homogenizing identities, with limited consideration of geographically proximate markets and a selective perception of internal stakeholders' roles in tourism. Possible implications of such destination positioning are discussed and suggestions are made to balance various positioning orientations in regional place branding.

2.1 Introduction

Tourism marketing strategies can have significant implications in terms of the social construction of tourist regions and the opportunities and limitations for stakeholders to engage in tourism. Importantly, tourism marketing as a policy tool aims to influence representations of tourism destinations (Cousin, 2008; Kavartzis, 2012). Destination identities may therefore be politically charged (Dredge & Jenkins, 2003) and attributed meanings may be far from neutral. As such, various interests may underlie the discourse employed in destination positioning statements made in regional tourism marketing.

Regions and tourism destinations alike are socially constructed and derive their meaning and identities from discursive practices (Saarinen, 2004). While discourses do mobilize meanings themselves, they are always incomplete and contested, giving room for the emergence of tensions between attributed meanings (Dredge & Jenkins, 2003). Such tension can result from discursive contradictions and paradoxes, reflecting opposing interests or unrealistic aspirations for tourism development. Marketing strategies then can become contradictory or even counterproductive, communicating conflicting signals. An example is when destination marketing is developed for external visitors only, without considering the consequences for the local environment and residents (Burns, 2004; Choi & Sirakaya, 2005; van Rekom & Go, 2006; Ziakas, 2013).

This is particularly relevant for regions in which tourism mainly relies on markets that are geographically proximate or even within the regions that are branded as destinations. In a context where home and away are geographically proximate, binaries of tourist– host, visitor–resident and consumer–producer become increasingly indistinguishable, which makes them vulnerable to contestation and to contradictions between attributed meanings. Contradictions can become problematic in tourism marketing when they are not acknowledged or wrongly used. At the same time, when consciously used they might form a basis for tourism development by

positioning destinations through otherness and authenticity on various levels, and by constructing and reconfirming differences between and within destinations (Salazar, 2010).

However, the 'intraregional' perspective of tourism and its societal dynamics has for a long time remained largely overlooked. Mainstream understandings of tourism have become almost equivalent to international travel, crossing territorial borders and the mixing of cultures (Salazar, 2010). It is stated that tourism research suffers from an 'international bias' (Eijelaar, Peeters, & Piket, 2008). Much tourism research has ignored touristic activities and experiences near to everyday environments, where tourism is produced and consumed by people living within a region (Canavan, 2013) or a city (Braun, Kavaratzis, & Zenker, 2013). As such, a number of challenges arise when aiming for an improved comprehension of tourism at a regional level.

One challenge pertains to the way everyday experience of places, attractions and regions intermingles with tourist experiences and vice versa (Díaz Soria & Llurdés Coit, 2013). Another challenge is to better understand how regional destination identities are produced and reproduced (Pearce, 2014; Saraniemi & Kylänen, 2011) and how key stakeholders in this process engage in this through the discourse they use. While top-down understandings of tourism development are countered or complemented by bottom-up processes such as word of mouth (Chen, Dwyer, & Firth, 2014; Pan, MacLaurin, & Croots, 2007), governments, destination marketers and policy makers maintain essential players in this process. Therefore, we aim to disentangle various contradictions present in the discourse of regional tourism marketing. Employing the case of the Dutch province of Fryslân, a thematic analysis of destination positioning in tourism marketing strategy documents forms the basis of this paper. As such, the paper is guided by the following research questions:

1. What kind of contradictions emerge in the ways Fryslân is positioned as a tourism destination by regional tourism marketing strategies?

2. What are the possible implications of destination positioning discourse and the concurrent contradictions for Fryslân as a destination for intraregional tourism?

By focusing on the implications of destination positioning discourse for tourism as an intraregional phenomenon, this paper aligns with a small but growing number of tourism researchers who identify a lacuna of academic knowledge on the social, economic and psychological processes involved in tourism on national and (intra)regional levels (Canavan, 2013; Ganglmair-Wooliscroft & Wooliscroft, 2013; Schänzel, 2010; Singh & Krakover, 2015). After further embedding the paper in relevant academic scholarship, we introduce the particular geographical context of the study and outline the methodology and data used. The paper continues with the analysis and findings, followed by a discussion about the implications of discourse in destination marketing, particularly with respect to the various roles of internal stakeholders in relation to tourism and the potential of tourism to (re)create value to everyday life environments.

2.2 Theoretical background

2.2.1 The discursive construction of tourism destinations

The branding of tourism destinations is an important way of giving meaning to regions (Cox & Wray, 2011; Lee & Arcodia, 2011; Ploner, 2009). Similar to regions, meanings of tourism destinations are continuously contested through discourse (Saraniemi & Kylänen, 2011), with an ongoing interaction between hegemonic, emergent and residual meanings (Harrison, 2013) and several phases of institutionalization (Paasi, 2003, 2009; Zimmerbauer & Paasi, 2013).

Representing regions as tourism destinations is increasingly central to regional policy and tourism marketing. Destination positioning, defined as 'establishing and maintaining a distinctive place in the market for an organization and/or its individual product offerings' (Lovelock, 1991, in Pike, 2012, p. 101) is an important part of competitive marketing strategies. The discourse used in tourism marketing, and the ways destinations are positioned, frames identities (Cousin, 2008; Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013) and (re)constructs destination imaginaries (Salazar, 2012). Moreover, discourses have multiple functions, as "language is both a means of attributing authenticating value to the tourist product as well as a means of selling it" (Heller, Pujolar, & Duchêne, 2014, p. 551). Destination positioning is therefore politically charged, reflecting and affecting various interests and rooted in societal issues extending far beyond the realm of tourism itself (Cousin, 2008). As such, tourism marketing and the branding of regional as tourism destinations are important planning tools for regional governments (Dredge & Jenkins, 2003).

However, despite the popularity of destination branding, successful examples are limited and the results of substantial financial investments in marketing campaigns are difficult to identify or absent altogether. Literature points to considerable problems of extrapolating conventional product and corporate brand positioning tools to destinations (Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013; Ren & Blichfeldt, 2011). For example, marketing campaigns initiated by destination marketing organizations (DMOs) or regional governments tend to have difficulties accounting for perspectives and interests of stakeholders such as residents (Burmann, Hegner, & Riley, 2009; Hall, 2008; Zenker & Petersen, 2014). This results in a lack of bottom-up support, despite the increased acknowledgment that 'living the brand' by local stakeholders is essential (Aronczyk, 2008). Moreover, as pointed out by Braun et al. (2013), residents who do not identify with top-down enforced brand positioning claims might engage in 'counter branding' as a form of protest.

Institutionalizing destination identities is therefore far from being a one-way process. Meanings are circulated (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2004) by commodifying both tangible and intangible aspects, for example through the representation of heritage (Ashworth, 2009) or collective identities (Cousin, 2008). In this process, conventional stakeholders such as DMOs increasingly share the arena with other who have obtained a legitimate voice through word of mouth facilitated by travel blogs and customer review websites (Chen et al., 2014; Chu & Kim, 2011; Pan et al., 2007). Place branding thus is a process of co-creation (Oliveira & Panyik, 2015), forcing regional governments, tourism entrepreneurs and DMOs to be even more conscious about their role in destination branding and the ways they attempt to position regions and destinations.

Constructing and transforming tourism destinations is characterized by processes of homogenization and differentiation (Saarinen, 2004). Tourism destinations tend to homogenize both from within and compared to other destinations, aligning with Relph's classic idea of 'placelessness' (Relph, 1985) and Appadurai's 'cultural absorption' (Appadurai, 2011). Differentiation occurs in a rat-race with other destinations, attempting to create a 'competitive identity' (Anholt, 2007). This is done by emphasizing unique features of places, varying from physical assets such as beaches or mountains, to cultural ones such as local food or festivities (Saarinen, 2004). In this vein, regional tourism marketing strategies aim to develop destinations that can compete globally by capitalizing on regional identities, authenticity and local distinctiveness (Dredge & Jenkins, 2003).

Tourism marketing is also strongly spatially structured, often along territorial boundaries on various levels (Dredge & Jenkins, 2003), with possible limitations in the translation to tourism regions and destinations, which tend to be less territorially bound (Messely, Schuermans, Dessein, & Rogge, 2014; Pearce, 2014). This can create contradictions between internal and external orientations of destination marketing, for example

when different municipalities, states or countries attempt to develop tourist regions collaboratively (García-Álvarez & Trillo-Santamaría, 2013; Terhorst & Erkuş-Öztürk, 2011; Thomas, Harvey, & Hawkins, 2013), and where histories and identities have to be aligned.

Tourism marketing can thus be a mobilizing force, connecting and unifying stakeholders (Cousin, 2008), but at the same time a basis for tensions and conflicts (Dredge & Jenkins, 2003; Stepanova & Bruckmeier, 2013) between them. Awareness of how discourses among these stakeholders implicitly and explicitly prioritize some meanings and neglect others, include some stakeholders and exclude others, is necessary because discourse is a linguistic commodification (Heller et al., 2014) of meanings and can in tourism marketing become symbolic capital in itself. Therefore, studying discursive contradictions in destination positioning is important not only in order to understand the critical conditions for tourism marketing, place branding success and policy implementation, but also to critically examine issues of power and stakeholder equity.

2.2.2 Intraregional tourism

Attention for domestic tourism is increasing slowly but still is in its infancy in comparison to the scholarship on international tourism (Singh & Krakover, 2015). While some early research and theorizing on domestic tourism exists (Archer, 1978; Hughes, 1992; Jafari, 1986; Pearce, 1993), attention for tourism as a phenomenon taking place in close geographical proximity to the tourist's home has remained scarce, despite worldwide domestic arrivals (4000 million) greatly exceeding international arrivals (750 million) (UNWTO, 2008). This lack of research on tourism occurring 'close to home' might relate to the economic importance of transportation and travel, and the relatively large financial contribution per capita by international visitors in some destinations (Page & Thorn, 1997). Eijgelaar et al. (2008), however, show that this is not always the case, as domestic tourism generates more

income than international visitors in many countries, particularly in the long term.

Franklin and Crang (2001) recognize that “[t]ourism studies [have] often privileged the exotic and strange, reflecting anthropological legacies, to speak of dramatic contrasts between visitors and locals” (p.8). Yet, various scholars provide evidence for a limited applicability of conventional tourism binaries (Saraniemi & Kylänen, 2011) in view of the blurring of tourism places and everyday places. For example, there appears to be a non-linear relation between (un)familiarity and geographical distance in second-home tourism (Müller, 2006). Similarly, Canavan (2013) shows how residents on the Isle of Man engage in various ‘microdomestic’ tourist experiences in their everyday environment. Further, Díaz Soria & Llurdés Coit (2013) attempt to understand how the everyday environment can be valorized through ‘proximity tourism’, thereby reframing understandings of otherness, tourist experiences and spatial identities. Yet, it seems that the field of tourism has not yet found a more widely accepted terminology to engage with such themes (Singh & Krakover, 2015).

Important in the context of destination marketing, classic taxonomies of tourist, traveler or guest versus resident, inhabitant or host, become increasingly contested and might even lead to the “exclusion and narrow acceptance in destination development and strategic tourism decision making on local, regional, national, and international levels” (Saraniemi & Kylänen, 2011, p. 140). For example, while every individual is a potential tourist for every destination, this does not automatically mean that people do actually go everywhere. When the sky seems to be the limit, it might be forgotten what is actually on the ground; the people who visit destinations may actually be coming from nearby.

These notions have only partly found their way into the field of destination marketing, as has also become clear in Section 2.2.1. It seems that both the mundane of the exotic and the exotic of the everyday tend

to be overlooked, affecting tourists' destination choice, the scope of potential visitor markets among DMOs and the ways cities, regions and countries are positioned as tourism destinations.

Among the challenges of intraregional tourism with which DMOs and tourism entrepreneurs are confronted, dealing with the multiplicity of meanings attributed to places by internal stakeholders is one of the most important. Touristic places are both familiar and unusual, both mundane and different (Díaz Soria & Llurdés Coit, 2013). This blurring of meanings and perspectives brings possible contradictions between tourism practices, stakeholders and meanings attributed to destinations. This makes positioning regions as tourism destinations both for people coming from outside and for people living within the region particularly difficult.

2.2.3 Conceptualizing dimensions of destination positioning discourse

Building on the reasoning above, two important dimensions along which destination positioning discourse and inherent contradictions can emerge can be discerned. The first pertains to homogenization and differentiation, signifying the continuous encounters between the local and the global, the perceived competition between tourism destinations and the struggle for authenticity (Saarinen, 2004). The second concerns internal and external orientations, reflecting contradictions between various co-existing aims underlying the marketing strategies (Terhorst & Erkuş-Öztürk, 2011), and pertaining to the question for whom tourism is developed and where the benefits are located. For example, through an explicit objective to increase incoming tourism, less attention might be paid to returning visitors or intraregional tourism.

This dimension helps to explain the ways binaries such as host–guest and tourist–resident are used, thereby enabling us to particularly focus on the ways intraregional aspects of tourism are considered. By juxtaposing these dimensions (Fig. 2.1), a conceptual quadrant appears with four parts: (i) internally oriented homogenization; (ii) externally oriented homogenization; (iii) internally oriented differentiation; and (iv) externally oriented differentiation. These four parts each imply a different discourse and a particular positioning of a destination. Integrating these two dimensions provides for an explicit framework to analyze destination positioning discourses.

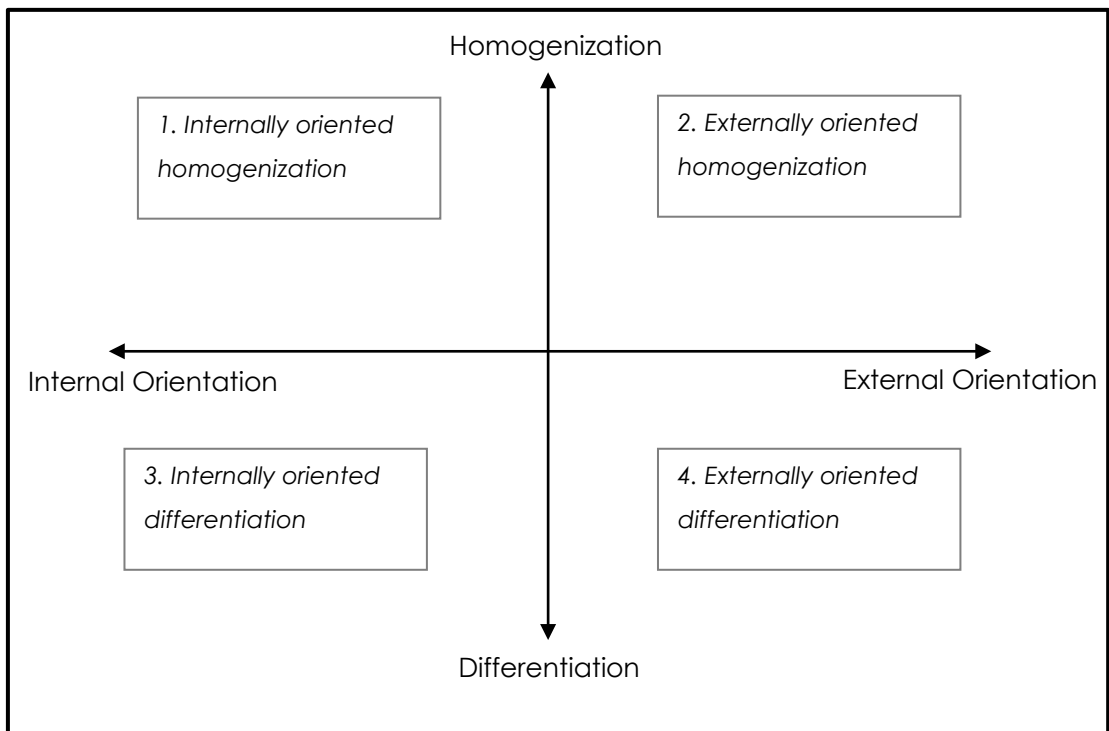


Figure 2.1 Conceptual dimensions for analyzing regional tourism marketing discourse.

2.3 Case study and method

2.3.1 The province of Fryslân

Fryslân is one of the 12 provinces of the Netherlands (Fig. 2.2). With about 650,000 inhabitants, it is considered a relatively rural area. Over 40% of its 574,874 km² surface is water, including a large part of the Wadden Sea and a maze of interconnected fresh water lakes.

Part of the population speaks Frisian, the second official language of the Netherlands. Fryslân and Frisians are signified by a strong regional identity that is rooted in a long history of territorial changes. However, heterogeneous spatial identities exist within the province, and various areas employ their own linguistics (Pietersen, 1969). Similarly, intraregional identities are enacted, for example through the rivalry between Fryslân's two major football clubs SC Heerenveen and Cambuur. This intraregional differentiation exemplifies the layering (Boisen, Terlouw, & van Gorp, 2011) and multiplicity of regional identification.

Tourist activities in Fryslân go back at least to the early 19th century, when an early form of cultural tourism on the Wadden Islands emerged (AFUK, 2013). After the Second World War, a steep increase in tourism activities occurred, with an emphasis on watersports such as sailing at the lakes and beach tourism on the Wadden Islands. Cycling has become another main outdoor tourist activity (ISM, 2010). Currently, tourist accommodation is wide-spread with major tourist regions being the Wadden Islands and the south west of Fryslân (CBS, 2012; ETFI, 2012). Tourism generates almost one billion euros on a yearly basis and around seven percent of the Frisian workforce (19,000 jobs) is employed in the tourism and recreation sector.



Figure 2.2 Municipalities of Fryslân. (A partial reorganization of municipalities took place per 01-01-2014. For the purpose of this paper, borders prior to the reorganization are depicted).

Located on a relatively high latitude, Fryslân enjoys a moderate Atlantic climate. With a weather pattern that is highly variable and significant seasonal differences, tourism in Fryslân peaks during school holidays, particularly in spring and summer season. Similar to other higher-latitude destinations (Denstadli, Jacobsen, & Lohmann, 2011), intra-seasonal variation in weather challenges the local tourism sector in terms of stable income, tourist experiences and destination image (Jeuring & Peters, 2013).

Table 2.1 Daytrips of Dutch inhabitants per province of residence and by visited province in Northern Netherlands (CBS, 2012).

	Total	Destination		
		Groningen	Fryslân	Drenthe
<i>Province of residence</i> x 1.000				
Groningen	31.090	77,2%	4,6%	11,5%
Fryslân	33.710	5,0%	81,6%	3,4%
Drenthe	25.130	13,7%	2,0%	70,4%
Overijssel	55.680	0,5%	0,5%	2,5%
Flevoland	16.200	0,6%	2,0%	1,1%
Gelderland	103.950	0,3%	0,2%	0,4%
Utrecht	67.990	0,1%	0,2%	0,4%
Noord-Holland	148.210	0,5%	0,4%	0,2%
Zuid-Holland	190.460	0,4%	0,1%	0,1%
Zeeland	18.630	0,2%	0,2%	0,2%
Noord-Brabant	140.010	0,1%	0,0%	0,1%
Limburg	75.580	0,1%	0,0%	0,1%
Total	906.640	3,5%	3,5%	2,8%

Most people visiting Fryslân are from the Netherlands, with Germans making up for the largest proportion of foreign tourists. Moreover, 82% of all daytrips of Frisian residents in 2011 took place within the province itself (Table 2.1) (CBS, 2012). This fits within a broader tendency where 76% of Europeans spend their holidays in their home country (EUROSTAT, 2014), emphasizing the importance of near-home destinations in Europe.

Frisian destination marketing has not been completely straightforward and without struggles. In 1998, the North Netherlands Bureau

for Tourism (NNBT) was set up as a collaborative regional marketing office for the provinces of Fryslân, Groningen and Drenthe. Also in 1996, an independent company named Friesland Holland set itself the goal of promoting Fryslân as a tourism destination and offering tourism products. After early termination of the NNBT in 2003, Fryslân Marketing became its successor. Specifically focusing on Fryslân, it not only aimed at increasing tourism but also attempted to attract businesses and new residents. In 2012, an intermediate DMO called Beleef Friesland took over, from which in 2014 the current marketing organization Merk Fryslân emerged.

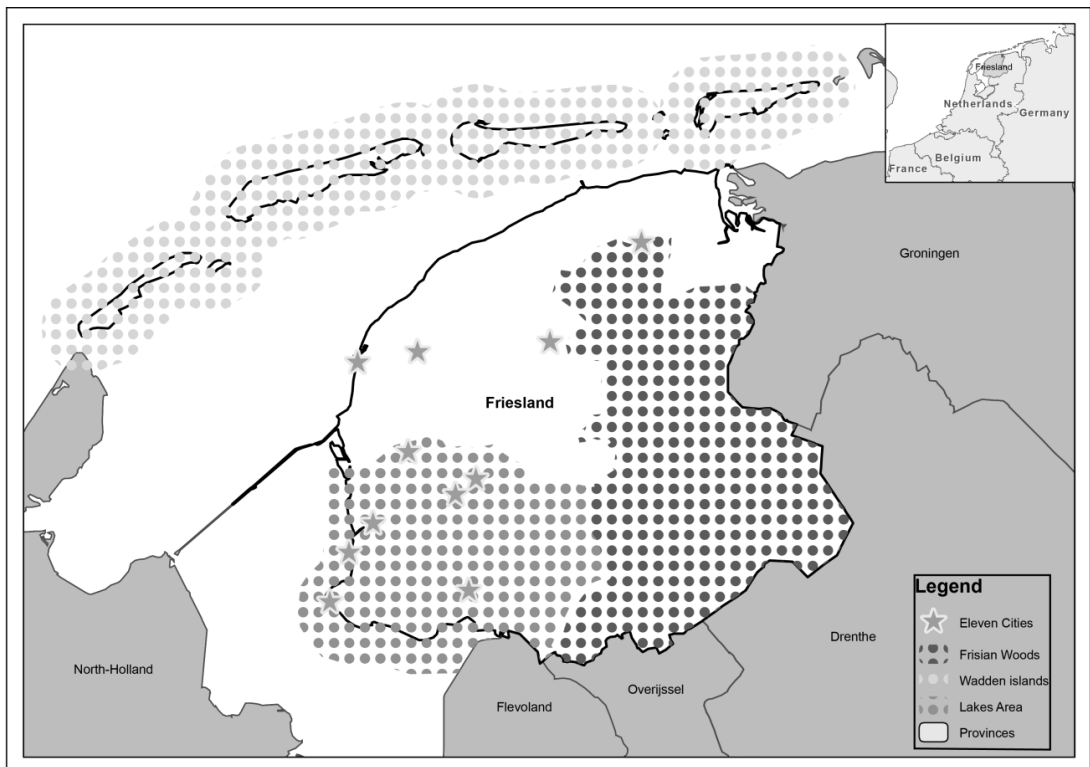


Figure 2.3 Tourist regions in Fryslân.

DMO activities have arguably contributed to the positioning of Fryslân as tourism destination. For example, current destination branding strategies discern four sub-provincial themes along which tourism is promoted: the Wadden Islands, the lakes area, the south-east forests and finally the 11 Cities, referring to the towns that obtained city rights from the 12th to the 15th century (Fig. 2.3).

Table 2.2 Documents included in analysis.

<i>Title</i>	<i>Governmental level</i>	<i>Written in year</i>	<i>Period concerned</i>
1. Marketingplan Fryslân Marketing	Province	2009	2009-2013
2. Uitvoeringsagenda Fryslân Toeristische Topattractie	Province	2010	2011-2013
3. Evaluaasje Provinsjaal Belied Rekreaasje en Toerisme	Province	2011	2002-2010
4. Uitvoeringsagenda Streekplan 'Fryslân, op afstand de mooiste provincie van Nederland'	Province	2011	2011-2014
5. Gastvrij Fryslân. Uitvoeringsprogramma Recreatie & Toerisme	Province	2013	2014-2017
6. Marketingplan Fan Fryslân	Province	2012	2012-2014
7. Uitvoeringsplan Merk Fryslân	Province	2010	2010-?
8. Samen op weg naar één brede regiomarketingorganisatie voor Fryslân	Province	2013	2014-?
9. Trots, trend en traditie in het Noorden	Province	2009	n.a.
10. Toeristische toekomstvisie Terschelling	Municipality	2007	2007-2017
11. 'Koers houden'. Actualisatie beleidsnota Recreatie en Toerisme 2006-2016 gemeente Harlingen	Municipality	2011	2011-2016
12. Visie Toerisme & Recreatie gemeente Súdwest-Fryslân	Municipality	2013	2012-2022
13. Visie Recreatie en Toerisme Gemeente Boarnsterhim	Municipality	2012	2012-?

These choices affect both the external image of Fryslân and its internal identity processes, sometimes sparking discussions around intraregional competitiveness. For example, the Frisian Woods area was added only recently to the key tourism regions that are promoted, following claims from policymakers and tourism entrepreneurs in this area stating to be underprivileged by provincial destination marketing. While tourism is widely seen as an important economic resource for Fryslân, the above

makes clear that tourism is neither undisputed nor evenly spread across the province. Therefore, Frisian tourism marketing makes for an interesting case to explore emerging discursive contradictions in its attempts to position the province as a tourism destination.

2.3.2 Study method

Data analyzed in this paper consist of tourism marketing strategy documents at the provincial and municipality levels. The documents cover two decades of consecutive periods of regional tourism marketing plans, ranging from 2002 up to 2022 and were written between 2007 and 2013 (see Table 2.2). In order to obtain the documents, websites of the province of Fryslân and Frisian municipalities were searched, resulting in 13 relevant documents. Not all municipalities had marketing plans or policy visions, and the nature of the documents varied from commissioned visions to marketing plans written by governmental bodies themselves. The municipalities included were spread across the province, thereby covering various tourism areas (Fig. 2.2).

Using ATLAS.ti software (version 7), the study followed the guidelines of 'the spiral of analysis' (Boeije, 2009), which forms the core of thematic analysis. This methodology provides a structured approach for themes to emerge, along a number of iterative steps. Rooted in Grounded Theory (Glaser, Strauss, & Strutzel, 1968), thematic analysis can be used to generate theories and hypothesis, but it can also be used to generate themes deductively based on previous research or existing theory (Bos, McCabe, & Johnson, 2013), which is the case in this paper.

The first step was concerned with reading all the documents and highlighting pieces of text that signified the discursive construction of Fryslân in terms of homogenization–differentiation and internal–external orientation dimensions (open coding). Selection of text was guided by the following argumentation. The primary spatial unit of interest was 'Fryslân' as a

province, a governmental territory. Therefore, this was the point of departure for selecting various discourses. Homogenization–differentiation discourse was selected when references were found relating to Fryslân in terms of unity and similarity (homogenization), or competition, differences and comparisons (differentiation). Similarly, internal and external discourses were selected when text was found about various stakeholders for whom tourism is developed and where the benefits are located. For example, when marketing documents talk about incoming visitors, this was interpreted as external orientation, while benefits for residents were interpreted as internally oriented discourse.

The second step involved a more abstract categorization of the selected quotes. Several rounds of coding were employed, resulting in more abstract codes and themes (axial coding). The goal here was to find thematic similarities across the selected quotes in terms of how these destination positioning statements were attributing meaning to Fryslân as a tourism destination and to the process of regional tourism development. The themes that emerged from this analysis are discussed below. Quotes are translated from Dutch. Pages and document numbers referring to Table 2.2 are in brackets after the quotes.

2.4 Analysis and findings

Discursive contradictions of homogenization–differentiation and internal–external orientation emerged in five themes. The first theme, place branding, addresses the ways destination marketing highlights characteristics of regions that are employed in the construction of competitive place images. Place branding discourses strongly prioritize outward communications above intraregional orientations. Second, various identity claims are being made, which feed the circulation of hegemonic discourse of what regions and tourism destinations are, what they are not and for whom they are constructed. Third, a focus on different target

groups reveals how Fryslân is seen clearly as a destination for some but not for others. Issues of inclusion and exclusion permeate the discourse of this theme, with consequences for intraregional visitors. The fourth theme is named collaboration and pertains to attempts to achieve integration, participation, co-creation and the formation of networks, either between different stakeholders, entrepreneurs, tourism destinations or territorial regions. Finally, the attribution of roles to tourism stakeholders both shapes and is shaped by tourism discourses, affecting the ways stakeholders can participate in tourism on the regional level. The themes will now be addressed separately, illustrated with exemplary quotes.

2.4.1 Place branding

Place branding has become inherent to regional tourism marketing in Fryslân. Marketing strategies appear highly concerned with the creation of a positive image of Fryslân as a whole, reflected in a homogenizing discourse of a Frisian umbrella brand: *"To successfully develop and promote Fryslân, it is necessary to depart from one common image of Fryslân, usable for all stakeholders, connecting and enhancing all initiatives."* (#7, p.4). At the same time, this holistic image is differentiated by the framing of a number of touristic regions, called Unique Selling Points (USPs): *"The Wadden, the Frisian Lakes and the Frisian Eleven Cities should develop into strong international tourist attractions, our Unique Selling Points."* (#2, p.4). Contrasting between higher-level homogenization and lower-level differentiation appears, however, to be at least partially a conscious strategy: *"As point of departure for collaboration between province and regions we assume: attract on a provincial level and guide on a regional level."* (#8, p.23).

Similarly, on the municipality-level marketing strategies emphasize unique features of municipalities instead of adding to the Frisian umbrella brand: *"South-West Fryslân possesses various unique characteristics. Enough*

munition to strongly position our municipality within Fryslân and Northern Netherlands." (#12, p.33). This contradiction between provincial and municipal interests is also recognized by Dredge and Jenkins (2003), who note that local stakeholders might oppose strongly to homogenizing regional policies. A fear of losing local identities might be rooted in a need for internal differentiation, deemed necessary for stakeholders to give meaning to themselves, their products and their everyday lives.

Further, while place branding is inherently aimed at incoming (international) tourists, internal marketing is discussed, for example to change the 'mentality' of people living in Fryslân: *"Internal promotion –aimed at residents and entrepreneurs– is concerned with changing an introvert mentality that abides to an extent. The Northerner and Northern entrepreneurs should become more modern, open and extrovert."* (#9, p.115). This somewhat surprising and negative quote reflects a discourse that is at the same time internally homogenizing and externally differentiating. It positions a 'Northern mentality' in contrast with mentalities that are supposedly characteristic of entrepreneurs from other regions (i.e. other parts of the Netherlands).

Internally oriented place branding is mentioned as a necessity to deliver externally made promises. This is in line with literature stating that stakeholder involvement in place branding is essential for successful branding and positive tourist experiences (Aronczyk, 2008). Thus, people living in Fryslân have to support and sustain the communicated imaginaries: *"Winning outside, means starting from the inside. It is useless to promote outside what cannot be fulfilled on the inside."* (#6, p.6). Therefore, there is a need *"To create commitment by Frisians (and preferably ambassadorship). The brand belongs to everyone and we can only get results when Frisians are the new brand."* (#7, p.9). This can be done by positive word-of-mouth communication: *"Foreign students play an important role in the promotion and internationalization of touristic Fryslân."*

(#5, p.11). However, holistic brands are difficult to identify with for local residents, who likely have fragmented and multiple identities in relation to Fryslân. As a result, the contradictions between homogenizing, external place branding and the differentiated perceptions, interests and expectations (Eshuis, Klijn, & Braun, 2014; Kavaratzis, 2012; Klijn, Eshuis, & Braun, 2012) of people living within the province make destination management in Fryslân particularly challenging.

2.4.2 Identity claims

Marketing strategies tend to rely strongly on an externally differentiating and internally homogenizing 'Frisian identity', positioning Fryslân as distinctive from surrounding provinces and other destinations. On several occasions, reference was made to 'Frisian characteristics', supposedly typical for Frisian communities and people: *"The Frisian mentality, the Frisian feeling, is crucial for success and will play an important role in the image building."* (#7, p.6).

Contrary to contemporary understandings of identity as a process (Paasi, 2003), these type of identity claims refer to a 'static' identity. The meaning of 'Frisianness' is thus represented as a given, an almost tangible attribute that is self-evident. This homogenized discourse of Frisian feelings, mentality, core values and 'Frisian DNA' are also brought up to establish and 'brand' regional marketing strategy itself: *"The strategy must be 'Frisian' too: Authentic, fresh, surprising, expressing belonging and trustworthiness..."* (#7, p.7). Interestingly, this signifies a rather pragmatic use of supposed regional characteristics of Fryslân and its people: positive here, negative elsewhere. Recall the earlier quote about the typical 'Northern mentality', which was negatively framed.

Language is also an important way to enhance differentiation and functions as a major force through which identities are enacted. For example, Frisian language is seen as an asset to emphasize perceived

otherness among visitors: *"The visibility and creative use of Frisian language next to Dutch, English and German enhances the touristic experience, through which tourists become aware they are in a special region."* (#5, p.11). Similarly, an ongoing discussion about the use of Dutch versus Frisian language in tourism communication signifies how identities are claimed through language use: *"In 2017, 60 percent of Frisian tourism and recreation related information is multilingual, including Frisian and regional languages."* (#5, p.28). Interestingly, various dialects exist within Fryslân, but these intraregional differences are not used in the marketing strategies. This again reflects how priority is given to homogenized representations of Fryslân.

The context of The Netherlands as a nation is obviously important in identity discourses. At this level, Fryslân is represented as a peripheral region, different from the urbanized Randstad area that includes Amsterdam and Rotterdam. This representation strongly refers to dichotomies of urban versus rural, but also frames Fryslân as less progressive and modern: *"There is an image of tradition. Reflected by commercials through images of silent, rural and small village characteristics. Also, this is the image of the down to earth countryside people. A positive image in itself, but also emphasizing the contrast between the dynamic, urban parts of the Netherlands and the traditional, backwards, rural North."* (#9, p.51). Employing such a narrative is useful for creating an image of idyllic rurality, where people can find peaceful villages and quite nature.

Finally, identity claims reflecting an internal orientation tend to be homogenized by calling upon a sense of community ('mienskip') among inhabitants of Fryslân. They are seen as key stakeholders in tourism products, *"have respect for Frisian culture and nature"* (#5, p.21) and form a part of the tourism product that can be externally consumed. Such a discourse creates an image of uncontested commitment to a regional Frisian identity.

2.4.3 Target groups

The identification of potential groups of visitors is an important element of destination management and marketing (Hallab, Yoon, & Uysal, 2003; Yannopoulos & Rotenberg, 2000). An overall tendency to prioritize target groups from outside the province emerges, reflecting an externally oriented discourse of internationalization. While currently relatively few foreigners (except for German tourists) visit the province, tourism marketing emphasizes that future market growth is to be found abroad. As such, Fryslân increasingly aims to strengthen its position as a non-domestic tourism destination: *"We plan to focus on promising countries like Spain, Italy and the U.S."* (#5, p.27).

Target groups reflect strategies of prioritizing certain types of tourists and tourism above other. At the same time, framing target groups might be stereotypical homogenizations, based on generalized demands, behavior or other discerning features. Indeed, a discourse of 'classic' tourism binaries is found, reflecting an external orientation of tourism marketing. Visitors are claimed to be seeking otherness and unfamiliarity: *"Medieval villages: worshiped when abroad, but at home they become all too mundane. Sometimes we forget that our environment and daily life can be someone else's adventure."* (#12, p.14). Hereby a differentiation is made between mobile, excitement-seeking outsiders (visitors) and the immobile, daunting life of residential insiders (Bianchi & Stephenson, 2013).

An internally oriented discourse, pertaining to target groups from within the province is found as well. However, in contrast with external target groups, discourse about internal target groups is shaped around issues of well-being and positive impacts on local infrastructure: *"Development of tourism in Fryslân enhances quality of life in terms of living environment, livability of the countryside, social cohesion of cities and health and well-being."* (#5, p.7). People living in Fryslân are thus considered to be stakeholders who might (indirectly) benefit from tourism

development. Such accounts align well with contemporary ideas of responsible tourism development and stakeholder involvement.

However, a discourse of externally oriented tourism development, aimed at incoming tourists, neglects potential benefits for residents as intraregional tourists. Internal target groups are mentioned mainly as day recreationists and framed around various lifestyle segments. In this way, a clear connection is made with everyday life and people's well-being, *"supporting policy makers and entrepreneurs to meet needs of various recreationists from within the province"* (#5, p.68). Thus, target groups for tourism in Fryslân tend to be framed around a division between tourism and recreation, between the out-of-the-ordinary needs of tourists and the everyday-life needs of residents.

2.4.4 Collaboration

Destination marketers and governmental policymakers increasingly aim to collaborate with other stakeholders. Similarly, provincial destination marketing aims at collaborating with municipalities in order to support local tourism development initiatives: *"The provincial scale is too large as a basis for collaborative, continuous and concrete touristic products. [...] The region is the level where connections and inspiration emerge."* (#2, p.14). As such, the local government is attributed a leadership role as organizer and motivator.

Collaboration in itself can be seen as internally oriented, aiming to create cohesion among participants (Coca-Stefaniak, Parker, & Rees, 2010; Lee & Arcodia, 2011). This aim is also found here, and a homogenizing discourse of unity and shared goals is evident. In line with this, an important motivation to promote collaboration in Frisian tourism is its small scale and spatially dispersed nature, thereby challenging the options for communicating consistent brand information and ultimately providing attractive tourism products: *"Due to the small scale and dispersed*

character of the tourism sector, a collective profile is difficult to attain." (#5, p.24).

However, the challenge of diverging interests among stakeholders is acknowledged as well. This becomes evident in the construction of the Eleven Cities brand, which involves several municipalities: *"Support for developing an Eleven Cities tourism product has proven difficult. Commitment is essential for promoting the Eleven Cities as a whole."* (#2, p.23).

While collaboration has proven to be essential for tourism destinations as a whole to become competitive (Arnaboldi & Spiller, 2011; Olsen, 2003), tensions may arise when internal competition is not acknowledged. For almost any tourism product, particularly when these products are the result of collaboration between various stakeholders, there is a multiplicity of choices for tourists how and where to obtain it. This provides opportunities for competitors to indeed collaborate by passing on customers in busy times, which will *"strongly increase the quality of the tourism product; after all, the customer is not interested in internal competition and rivalry. He wants a successful holiday."* (#10, p.22).

As becomes clear, there is a thin line between competition (differentiation) and collaboration (homogenization) in order to maintain attractive tourism products. Trying to maintain this balance, regional tourism marketing seems to be entangled in a quest to deal with interconnectivity, formal and informal networks, both within and outside of Fryslân.

2.4.5 Roles

Role attributions of stakeholders were made on various occasions. Roles can pertain to responsibilities (Dredge & Jenkins, 2003), for example in the case of governmental organizations; marketing and branding of the province as a destination is explicitly a responsibility of the provincial governmental marketing. Yet internal differentiation occurs when a

distinction is made between marketing aimed at gaining new visitors and the maintenance of the current, established market, which is attributed as a responsibility to tourism entrepreneurs: *"Fryslân Marketing is mainly concerned with attracting new visitors. [...] Enhancing repeat visitation is primarily the responsibility of tourism entrepreneurs."* (#1, p.15).

Based on the idea that repeat visitation is strongly affected by positive experiences during a holiday, entrepreneurs directly interact with tourists and can therefore play an important role in visitor satisfaction. This role division makes sense for incoming visitors: *"Attract on a provincial level and guide on a regional level."* (#8, p.23). Yet for intraregional tourism an approach is needed that takes into account the hybrid nature of people being both residents from and tourists within the same region (Canavan, 2013). It is not clear how roles are attributed in this context.

Next to roles ascribed to governmental organizations, DMOs and entrepreneurs, various roles can be attributed to individual residents. On this level, several contradictions surface in the ways regional tourism marketing understands differences between tourists and residents, how they interact and how they can contribute to regional tourism development. In this respect, residents are mentioned as stakeholders in the production of tourism and the representation of the identity of Fryslân and Frisian destinations within the province (Braun et al., 2013): *"Winning outside is certainly starting from within. Together, over 640,000 potential ambassadors can make great things happen."* (#6, p.17). Referring to ambassador roles of residents is rooted in organization studies (Xiong, King, & Piehler, 2013), and is increasingly popular in branding literature (Andersson & Ekman, 2009; Rehmet & Dinnie, 2013) as a tool for dissemination and institutionalization of destination imaginaries (Salazar, 2012) (see also the Place Branding theme above). Yet such roles assume a certain commitment on the part of residents to a brand and might not do justice to intraregional identifications,

differences between destinations and the personal experiences of residents.

Similarly, in the context of the roles of residents, who produce tourism products for external visitors, a discourse of residential non-mobility and a touristic mobility (Salazar, 2012) emerges: *"Tourists feel a need to be part of authentic villages and be among local inhabitants."* (#5, p.22). While this is a commonly used dichotomy, it does constrain the understanding of potential roles of Frisian residents as they engage in tourism within the province itself. When they visit another area of Fryslân, are they a 'local resident' or a 'tourist'?

The externally oriented imaginaries of homogenized and unified identities are differentiated and even contradicted by intraregional variation and difference within municipalities: *"The villages of the Boarnsterhim municipality all have their own qualities. These are their strength and are shaped by residents, cultural history, authenticity and events."* (#13, p.15). Here, residents are differentiated from each other according to the village they live in, which is more or less contradictory to the previously mentioned unity of Frisian people. This contradiction between homogenized Frisian identities and localized identities further signifies the pragmatic way in which roles are attributed to residents in regional tourism marketing.

2.5 Discussion and implications

2.5.1 Discussion

Discrepancies and paradoxes are inherent to society, particularly when it comes to tourism (Dredge & Jenkins, 2003). Contradictions are not undesirable by definition, as they are part of a learning process, requiring constant evaluation, education and measurement (McLennan, Ruhanen, Ritchie, & Pham, 2012). They do have consequences, however, for how the world is perceived and acted upon. The results of this paper show that the

positioning of Fryslân as a tourism destination is indeed 'politically charged'. Having an important influence on these processes, destination marketers and policy makers thus find themselves challenged to acknowledge the contradictions between co-existing discourses inherent to their work. They need to explore continuously how the discourses they use are not only a possible source of conflict and inequality, but also how they can provide added value for the various stakeholders involved.

Partially contributing to filling the often acknowledged but still existing research gap on tourism taking place in proximity to home and everyday life (Canavan, 2013; Jafari, 1986), the analysis points to a need for different ways of thinking about the meaning of tourism. Such an approach means challenging both academic and practitioner discourses of otherness, destination identities and how relationships are negotiated between people and the places they inhabit (Hauge, 2007; McCabe & Stokoe, 2004; Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996).

The dimensions of homogenization–differentiation and internal–external orientation employed in this analysis provide a useful basis for analyzing the complexities of positioning a region as tourism destination and accounting for both internal and external stakeholders in tourism marketing strategies. In line with other scholars, this study highlights the uneven and unstable (Dredge & Jenkins, 2003) transformation process (Saarinen, 2004) of regional institutionalization (Paasi, 2003; Zimmerbauer & Paasi, 2013).

The study draws on concepts that are not new for tourism research. On the contrary, they address the core of tourism scholarship and practice, the ways destinations are constructed, consumed and gazed at (Urry & Larsen, 2011). Still, it is clear that the various ways homogenizing, differentiating, externally and internally oriented discourses that steer tourism as an industry should be continuously studied and re-interpreted. These forces emerge in multiple ways and on many levels, and the

contradictions that exist between them become particularly clear from the use of this two-dimensional framework.

In the case of Fryslân, an important reason for these contradictions pertains to the target groups in which destination marketing is investing. While various target groups are mentioned, a main focus on external, incoming target groups can be discerned. Fryslân aims to grow quantitatively as a tourism destination, with visitors coming increasingly from abroad. Interestingly though, the vast majority of current tourists visiting Frisian destinations are Dutch or even Frisian. There is little evidence in current Frisian destination marketing documents, however, of a specific strategy for intraregional tourists. Destination marketers and regional governments seem to have a hard time dealing with people being inhabitants at one moment and tourists at another. Tourism is still often approached as something outside of everyday life and potential local benefits of tourism development are mentioned mainly as a positive side-effect of incoming tourism. In this regard, based on the findings in this paper, a number of suggestions can be made.

2.5.2 Implications for regional destination marketing

Tourism in Fryslân tends to be seen primarily as an economic tool. From an intraregional perspective, however, priority should also be given to societal aspects of tourism. Canavan (2013) emphasizes that an active intraregional tourism dynamic characterizes a healthy and attractive region. In line with this, Fryslân might capitalize even more on intraregional benefits such as learning (Falk, Ballantyne, Packer, & Benckendorff, 2012), self-awareness and mutual understanding (Bianchi & Stephenson, 2013): not commodified in monetary terms but as a social force that acts within a region (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2006).

Second, discursive contradictions might result in misunderstandings, contradictory policies or even in tensions and conflicts between

stakeholders. This can pertain to struggles between destinations, but most certainly also within them (Bianchi & Stephenson, 2013). The way stakeholders are represented through discourse in relation to the spaces which they inhabit, use and shape, brings power issues and inequalities to the fore. A key challenge for destination marketers and policy makers, therefore, both in tourism and other fields, is to balance difference and similarity, across people, groups and places. In the case of Fryslân, externally oriented discourses in place branding might suppress the ways contradictions can do their work from an intraregional perspective. For example, to valorize intraregional differences and authenticity (Díaz Soria & Llurdés Coit, 2013), marketing strategies need to incorporate and acknowledge existing differences. One context in which this can be done is the 'regional agendas' (Streekagendas¹), in which sub-provincial policy is developed beyond territorial borders of municipalities¹, but options on other spatial levels are worth exploring too.

Third, in times where regional, social and self-identities become increasingly commodified for tourism purposes (Aronczyk, 2008; Pomeroy, 2013), various intrapersonal roles affected by these practices need also to be considered. Attributing value to identities prioritizes specific role attributions among stakeholders, as if performing tourism on a stage (Edensor, 2001). In this regard, while roles that produce tourism are attributed to internal stakeholders in Fryslân, this is less so for consuming roles. This is a limitation found in current Frisian tourism marketing strategies: tourism could be approached more as contributing to inhabitants' well-being as potential consumers, as tourists themselves. For example, in Fryslân a 'lifestyle' monitor has been developed to assess leisure preferences of its inhabitants². This is a promising start that should find a broader ground in regional tourism development.

The variety of discourses along which tourists are addressed are not necessarily always in opposition with each other, but possible conflicting

interests are not mentioned either. For example, it can be questioned whether the lifestyles of residents comply with demands and travel schedules of international visitors. This can become problematic when place branding and destination marketing strategies aimed at certain groups are interpreted (differently) by other groups. Given the large number of intraregional visitors, there is a need to address how externally oriented measures affect destination identities, perceived attractiveness and tourist behavior among people living within the province. A lifestyle approach seems promising (Sherlock, 2001) but a mere focus on day recreation might not be sufficient.

Fourth, Fryslân has been attributed a strong regional identity rooted in its particular history and enacted in symbols, culture and language. Simultaneously, a sophisticated level of intraregional differentiation exists in terms of languages, identities, landscapes and socio-political processes (Krauss, 2005; Pietersen, 1969; van Langevelde, 1993). While these differences are employed in externally oriented destination marketing to a certain extent, it can be argued that various opportunities could also be taken from intraregional tourism perspective.

For example, as noted elsewhere, regional unity is often challenged (Dredge & Jenkins, 2003) and a strong internally oriented measures are needed before external homogenized imaginaries are 'lived' and made real (Aronczyk, 2008). Flags, slogans and other symbols carry the message only partially and are themselves continuously reinterpreted (Elliott & Wattanasuwan, 1998; Felgenhauer, 2010). Citizens are therefore indispensable in destination branding. Similarly, it is important to approach citizens as potential tourists themselves. For example, by organizing guided city trips for citizens (Braun et al., 2013) and particularly by calling upon a link between self-identities and regional identities.

Successful intraregional tourism destinations, as stated by Canavan, are 'accessible to locals, providing social interest and leisure opportunities,

supporting community infrastructure and industry, and ultimately [are] contributing to social cohesion and civic pride' (Canavan, 2013, p. 349). Obviously, this does not shut the door for external visitors, but the goal to develop tourism destinations not only with but also for residents, enhancing the ways along which they attribute meanings and identities to their everyday environment, surely deserves more attention, both from regional destination marketing and tourism scholars.

2.6 Conclusion

This paper has sought to disentangle some of the discursive contradictions that emerge in regional tourism marketing strategies, by exploring the ways Fryslân is positioned as a tourism destination (Research Question 1). A discourse analysis of regional tourism marketing documents for the Dutch province of Fryslân and four of its municipalities revealed how various discursive contradictions, along dimensions of differentiation versus homogenization and internal versus external orientation, characterize the ways representations and meanings of Frisian tourism are attributed, (re)negotiated and (re)constructed along five themes: place branding, identity claims, target groups, roles and collaboration.

The second aim of the study was to interpret destination positioning discourse and the concurrent contradictions in terms of their potential implications for Fryslân as a destination for intraregional tourism (Research Question 2). One of the main emerging issues pertains to externally oriented destination branding increasingly relying on internal factors, such as Frisian inhabitants and entrepreneurs being brand ambassadors who confirm and are expected to 'live' the externally created brand. Identity claims follow a similar pattern of claiming a Frisian unity, which supposedly represent what Fryslân 'is'.

A contradiction exists between such holistic claims on a provincial level and the complex differentiation between Frisian regions, places,

destinations, intraregional dialects and most importantly the interpretations of people living in Fryslân itself. Ignoring intraregional differences in local languages, regional identities on smaller levels and various perceptions of what it means to live in Fryslân and to 'be Frisian', might limit the extent to which the needs and perspectives of people living in Fryslân are properly considered in destination marketing.

A more refined mix of perspectives is found around collaboration between tourism stakeholders. Bottom-up and decentralized strategies are acknowledged on several occasions, with various notions of involving inhabitants of touristic places and working together with tourism entrepreneurs. Yet an external discourse is again evident: incoming tourists benefit first, which in its turn has potential local benefits. Closely related to the framing of collaboration are the contradictions in the final theme, roles. The various stakeholders are often attributed a single role only. Entrepreneurs are not inhabitants, and inhabitants often are not tourists. This rigid approach is clearly limiting the ways tourism strategies account for inhabitants as potential tourists and creates boundaries between the mobility of being a tourist and the immobility of being an inhabitant.

In sum, it can be concluded that regional tourism marketing strategies in Fryslân rely strongly on internal symbolic, physical and social resources which are often framed as a foundation for a homogenized destination identity that can be communicated in externally oriented branding. Marketing strategies have a priority for external orientations in terms of tourism demands and market growth. The imaginaries created often seem to be dominated by holistic representations of Fryslân as a destination for people from elsewhere. However, this discourse is contradicted in several ways by aims to differentiate locally, create sub-brands and emphasize intraregional destinations. As such, discourses used in marketing strategies reflect a negotiation between spatial scales, socio-cultural contexts and goals along which different expressions of and

attributions to Fryslân are made. Insufficient attention for the various relations between internal stakeholders and the places they inhabit can have negative consequences for the extent to which Frisian residents support policy on tourism development and marketing campaigns, but also limit the positive regional effect of incoming tourism.

¹<http://www.fryslan.nl/streekagenda>

²<http://ondernemen.touristinfofryslan.nl/mediadepot/34414e7dc6eb/DefinitiefprogrammaGastvrijFryslân2014-201730092013.pdf>

References

- AFUK. (2013). Toerisme op het Wad. De kanon fan de Fryske Skiednis. Retrieved 20 May, 2014, from (<http://www.11en30.nu/de-canon-vensters/toerisme-op-het-wad>).
- Andersson, M., & Ekman, P. (2009). Ambassador networks and place branding. *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 2(1), 41–51.
- Anholt, S. (2007). Competitive identity: the new brand management for nations, cities and regions. *Journal of Brand Management*, 14(6), 474–475.
- Appadurai, A. (2011). Disjuncture and difference in the global cultural economy. *Cultural Theory: an Anthology* (pp. 282–295), 282–295.
- Archer, B. (1978). Domestic tourism as a development factor. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 5(1), 126–141.
- Arnaboldi, M., & Spiller, N. (2011). Actor-network theory and stakeholder collaboration: the case of Cultural Districts. *Tourism Management*, 32(3), 641–654.
- Aronczyk, M. (2008). “Living the brand”: nationality, globality and the identity strategies of nation branding consultants. *International Journal of Communication*, 2(1), 41–65.

- Ashworth, G. (2009). The instruments of place branding: how is it done? *European Spatial research and policy*, 16(1), 9–22.
- Ateljevic, I., & Doorne, S., (2004). Cultural circuits of tourism: commodities, place, and re-consumption In: A. Alan, C. Lew, A. A. Lew, C. M. Hall, & A. M., Williams (Eds.), *A companion to tourism* (pp. 291–302). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.
- Bianchi, R. V., & Stephenson, M. L., (2013). Deciphering tourism and citizenship in a globalized world. *Tourism Management*, 39, 10–20.
- Boeije, H. (2009). *Analysis in qualitative research*. London (UK): Sage Publications.
- Boisen, M., Terlouw, K., & van Gorp, B. (2011). The selective nature of place branding and the layering of spatial identities. *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 4(2), 135–147.
- Bos, L., McCabe, S., & Johnson, S. (2013). Learning never goes on holiday: an exploration of social tourism as a context for experiential learning. *Current Issues in Tourism* (pp. 1–17), 1–17.
- Braun, E., Kavaratzis, M., & Zenker, S. (2013). My city–my brand: the different roles of residents in place branding. *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 6(1), 18–28.
- Burmann, C., Hegner, S., & Riley, N. (2009). Towards an identity-based branding. *Marketing Theory*, 9(1), 113–118.
- Burns, P. (2004). The 1990 Solomon Islands tourism plan: a critical discourse analysis. *Tourism and Hospitality Planning and Development*, 1(1), 57–78.
- Canavan, B. (2013). The extent and role of domestic tourism in a small island: the case of the isle of man. *Journal of Travel Research*, 52(3), 340–352.
- CBS (2012). *Toerisme en recreatie in cijfers*. The Hague/Heerlen: Statistics Netherlands.
- Chen, N., Dwyer, L., & Firth, T. (2014). Effect of dimensions of place

- attachment on residents' word-of-mouth behavior. *Tourism Geographies*, 16(5), 826–843.
- Choi, H.-S. C., & Sirakaya, E. (2005). Measuring residents' attitude toward sustainable tourism: development of sustainable tourism attitude scale. *Journal of Travel Research*, 43(4), 380–394.
- Chu, S.-C., & Kim, Y. (2011). Determinants of consumer engagement in electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) in social networking sites. *International Journal of Advertising*, 30(1), 47–75.
- Coca-Stefaniak, J. A., Parker, C., & Rees, P. (2010). Localisation as a marketing strategy for small retailers. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 38(9), 677–697.
- Cousin, S. (2008). The nation state as an identifying image: traditions and stakes in tourism policy, Touraine, France. *Tourist Studies*, 8(2), 193–209.
- Cox, C., & Wray, M. (2011). Best practice marketing for regional tourism destinations. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 28(5), 524–540.
- Denstadli, J. M., Jacobsen, J. K. S., & Lohmann, M. (2011). Tourist perceptions of summer weather in Scandinavia. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 38(3), 920–940.
- Dredge, D., & Jenkins, J. (2003). Destination place identity and regional tourism policy. *Tourism Geographies*, 5(4), 383–407.
- Díaz Soria, I., & Llurdés Coit, J. (2013). Thoughts about proximity tourism as a strategy for local development. *Cuadernos de Turismo*, 32, 65–88.
- Edensor, T. (2001). Performing tourism, staging tourism: (re)producing tourist space and practice. *Tourist Studies*, 1(1), 59–81.
- Eijgelaar, E., Peeters, P., & Piket, P. (2008). Domestic and international tourism in a globalized world. *Paper presented at the International Conference of International Tourism*. International Sociological Association, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India.
- Elliott, R., & Wattanasuwan, K. (1998). Brands as symbolic resources for the

- construction of identity. *International journal of Advertising*, 17, 131–144.
- Eshuis, J., Klijn, E.-H., & Braun, E. (2014). Place marketing and citizen participation: branding as strategy to address the emotional dimension of policy making? *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 80(1), 151–171.
- ETFI (2012). *Toerismemonitor 2011*. Leeuwarden: European Tourism Futures Institute. Stenden University of Applied Sciences.
- EUROSTAT (2014). *Tourism trips of Europeans*. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.
- Falk, J. H., Ballantyne, R., Packer, J., & Benckendorff, P. (2012). Travel and Learning: A Neglected Tourism Research Area. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 39(2), 908–927.
- Felgenhauer, T. (2010). Regional identity as celebration and routine: 'Mittel-deutschland's' glorification and its taken-for-granted meaning in media content. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 13(1), 63–80.
- Franklin, A., & Crang, M. (2001). The trouble with tourism and travel theory. *Tourist Studies*, 1(1), 5–22.
- Ganglmair-Wooliscroft, A., & Wooliscroft, B. (2013). "Part of me": national parks integration into the extended self of domestic tourists. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 23(4), 360–379.
- García-Álvarez, J., & Trillo-Santamaría, J. M. (2013). Between regional spaces and spaces of regionalism: cross-border region building in the Spanish 'state of the autonomies'. *Regional Studies*, 47(1), 104–115.
- Glaser, B. G., Strauss, A. L., & Strutzel, E. (1968). The discovery of grounded theory; strategies for qualitative research. *Nursing Research*, 17(4), 364.
- Hall, C. M. (2008). Servicescapes, designscales, branding, and the creation

- of place-identity: south of Litchfield, Christchurch. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 25(3–4), 233–250.
- Hallab, Z. A. A., Yoon, Y., & Uysal, M. (2003). Segmentation based on the healthy-living attitude: a market's travel behavior. *Journal of Hospitality & Leisure Marketing*, 10(3–4), 185–198.
- Harrison, J. (2013). Configuring the new 'regional world': on being caught between territory and networks. *Regional Studies*, 47(1), 55–74.
- Hauge, Å. L. (2007). Identity and place: a critical comparison of three identity theories. *Architectural Science Review*, 50(1), 44–51.
- Heller, M., Pujolar, J., & Duchêne, A. (2014). Linguistic commodification in tourism. *JOSL Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 18(4), 539–566.
- Higgins-Desbiolles, F. (2006). More than an “industry”: the forgotten power of tourism as a social force. *Tourism Management*, 27(6), 1192–1208.
- Hughes, G. (1992). Changing approaches to domestic tourism. *Tourism management*, 13(1), 85–90.
- ISM (2010). *Consumentenonderzoek Toerisme 2009*. Leeuwarden: Stenden Instituut Service Management.
- Jafari, J. (1986). On domestic tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 13(3), 491–496.
- Jeuring, J. H. G., & Peters, K. B. M. (2013). The influence of the weather on tourist experiences: analysing travel blog narratives. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 19(3), 209–219.
- Kavaratzis, M. (2012). From “necessary evil” to necessity: stakeholders' involvement in place branding. *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 5(1), 7–19.
- Kavaratzis, M., & Hatch, M. J. (2013). The dynamics of place brands: An identity-based approach to place branding theory. *Marketing Theory*, 13(1), 69–86.
- Klijn, E.-H., Eshuis, J., & Braun, E. (2012). The influence of stakeholder

- involvement on the effectiveness of place branding. *Public Management Review*, 14(4), 499–519.
- Krauss, W. (2005). The natural and cultural landscape heritage of Northern Friesland. *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 11(1), 39–52.
- Lee, I., & Arcodia, C. (2011). The role of regional food festivals for destination branding. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 13(4), 355–367.
- Lovelock, C. H. (1991). *Services marketing*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J: Prentice Hall.
- McCabe, S., & Stokoe, E. H. (2004). Place and identity in tourists' accounts. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 31(3), 601–622.
- McLennan, C., Ruhanen, L., Ritchie, B., & Pham, T. (2012). Dynamics of destination development: investigating the application of transformation theory. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 36(2), 164–190.
- Messely, L., Schuermans, N., Dessein, J., & Rogge, E. (2014). No region without individual catalysts? Exploring region formation processes in Flanders (Belgium). *European Urban and Regional Studies*, 21(3), 318–330.
- Müller, D. K. (2006). The attractiveness of second home areas in Sweden: a quantitative analysis. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 9(4–5), 335–350.
- Oliveira, E., & Panyik, E. (2015). Content, context and co-creation: digital challenges in destination branding with references to Portugal as a tourist destination. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 21(1), 53–74.
- Olsen, M. (2003). Tourism themed routes: a Queensland perspective. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 9(4), 331–341.
- Paasi, A. (2003). Region and place: regional identity in question. *Progress in Human Geography*, 27(4), 475–485.
- Paasi, A. (2009). The resurgence of the 'Region' and 'Regional Identity': theoretical perspectives and empirical observations on regional dynamics in Europe. *Review of International Studies*, 35, 121–146.

- Page, S. J., & Thorn, K. (1997). Towards sustainable tourism planning in New Zealand: public sector planning responses. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 5(1), 59–77.
- Pan, B., MacLaurin, T., & Crofts, J. C. (2007). Travel blogs and the implications for destination marketing. *Journal of Travel Research*, 46(1), 35–45.
- Pearce, D. G. (1993). Domestic tourist travel patterns in New Zealand. *GeoJournal*, 29(3), 225–232.
- Pearce, D. G. (2014). Toward an integrative conceptual framework of destinations. *Journal of Travel Research*, 53(2), 141–153.
- Pietersen, L. (1969). *De Friezen en hun taal: een onderzoek naar de lees- en spreek- gewoonten in Friesland en naar de houding ten aanzien van het Fries*. Drachten: Laverman.
- Pike, S. (2012). Destination positioning opportunities using personal values: elicited through the repertory test with laddering analysis. *Tourism Management*, 33(1), 100–107.
- Ploner, J. (2009). Narrating regional identity in tourism – sketches from the Austrian Danube valley. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 9(1), 2–14.
- Pomeroy, A. (2013). Indigenous identity in the nation brand: tension and inconsistency in a nation's tourism advertising campaigns. *Corporate Reputation Review*, 16(1), 66–79.
- Rehmet, J., & Dinnie, K. (2013). Citizen brand ambassadors: Motivations and perceived effects. *Journal of Destination Marketing and Management*, 2(1), 31–38.
- Relph, E. (1985). Geographical experiences and being-in-the-world: the phenomenological origins of geography In: D. Seamon, & R. Mugerauer (Eds.), *Dwelling, place and environment* (pp. 15–31). Netherlands: Springer.
- Ren, C., & Blichfeldt, B. S. (2011). One clear image? challenging simplicity in

- place branding. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, 11(4), 416–434.
- Saarinen, J. (2004). 'Destinations in change': the transformation process of tourist destinations. *Tourist Studies*, 4(2), 161–179.
- Salazar, N. B. (2010). The glocalisation of heritage through tourism: balancing standardisation and differentiation In: S. Labadi, & C. Long (Eds.), *Heritage and globalisation* (pp. 136–146). London: Routledge.
- Salazar, N. B. (2012). Tourism Imaginaries: a conceptual approach. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 39(2), 863–882.
- Saraniemi, S., & Kylänen, M. (2011). Problematizing the concept of tourism destination: an analysis of different theoretical approaches. *Journal of Travel Research*, 50(2), 133–143.
- Schänzel, H. (2010). Domestic tourism in New Zealand: the Kiwi family holiday. *Pacific News*, 33, 24–36.
- Sherlock, K. (2001). Revisiting the concept of hosts and guests. *Tourist Studies*, 1(3), 271–295.
- Singh, S., & Krakover, S. (2015). Homeland entitlement: perspectives of Israeli domestic tourists. *Journal of Travel Research*, 54(2), 222–233.
- Stepanova, O., & Bruckmeier, K. (2013). Resource use conflicts and urban–rural resource use dynamics in Swedish coastal landscapes: comparison and synthesis. *Journal of Environmental Policy and Planning*, 15(4), 467–492.
- Terhorst, P., & Erkuş-Öztürk, H. (2011). Scaling, territoriality, and networks of a tourism place. *Anatolia*, 22(2), 168–183.
- Thomas, N. J., Harvey, D. C., & Hawkins, H. (2013). Crafting the region: creative industries and practices of regional space. *Regional Studies*, 47(1), 75–88.
- Twigger-Ross, C. L., & Uzzell, D. L. (1996). Place and identity processes. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 16(3), 205–220.

- UNWTO (2008). *UNWTO world tourism barometer 2008*. 6. Madrid: UNWTO.
- Urry, J., & Larsen, J. (2011). *The tourist gaze 3.0*. London: Sage.
- van Langevelde, A. (1993). Migration and language in Friesland. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 14(5), 393–409.
- van Rekom, J., & Go, F. (2006). Being discovered: a blessing to local identities? *Annals of Tourism Research*, 33(3), 767–784.
- Xiong, L., King, C., & Piehler, R. (2013). "Thats not my job": exploring the employee perspective in the development of brand ambassadors. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 35, 348–359.
- Yannopoulos, P., & Rotenberg, R. (2000). Benefit segmentation of the near-home tourism market: the case of upper New York state. *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, 8(2), 41–55.
- Zenker, S., & Petersen, S. (2014). An integrative theoretical model for improving resident–city identification. *Environment and Planning A*, 46(3), 715–729.
- Ziakas, V. (2013). Fostering the social utility of events: an integrative framework for the strategic use of events in community development. *Current Issues in Tourism* (pp. 1–22), 1–22.
- Zimmerbauer, K., & Paasi, A. (2013). When old and new regionalism collide: Deinstitutionalization of regions and resistance identity in municipality amalgamations. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 30, 31–40.

Chapter 3

Pluralizing touristic production and consumption roles
of residents? An SME perspective on proximity tourism¹

Jelmer H. G. Jeuring

¹Submitted to an international peer-reviewed scientific journal



Chapter 3

Abstract

Production and consumption roles in tourism are often attributed exclusively to different stakeholders. However, when touristic consumption and production of 'home' and 'away' blur, stakeholder roles and relationships become entangled in circuits of 're-consumption', making exclusive role attributions problematic and restrictive. This qualitative study explored SME-resident relationships in the Dutch province of Friesland by scrutinizing how tourism SMEs attribute touristic production and consumption roles to residents of this province. Roles were attributed along four themes: 'Being a tourist', 'Discovery and unawareness', 'Life course experiences' and 'Ambassadorship'. Findings signify a potential 'lock-in' of roles: residents were seen as unattractive target group, given their everyday familiarity, but were simultaneously ascribed insufficient awareness of local attractiveness. Pluralized role attributions and interdependent role switching of both residents and entrepreneurs could overcome this impasse and facilitate 'proximity tourism'. Potential ways for tourism SMEs to incorporate multiple roles of residents into business strategies are discussed.

3.1 Introduction

While various studies on tourism stakeholder perceptions have taken on the perspective of tourism SMEs (Small and Medium sized Enterprises) and tourism entrepreneurs (e.g., Hallak, Brown, & Lindsay, 2012; Komppula, 2014; Saarinen & Tervo, 2006), few have focused particularly on their perceptions of the roles that residents may play within the process of producing and consuming tourism places and activities. This is surprising, given that tourism SMEs are not only attributed key roles in destination branding (Jeuring, 2016), they also are important intermediaries between visitors from outside a destination and residents living within these places, and arguably depend on residents for entrepreneurial success in various ways (Braun, Kavaratzis, & Zenker, 2013). Moreover, tourism business activities are shaping the boundaries and conditions for touristic consumption and production. Consequently, the question how “managers, investors, and entrepreneurs negotiate the cultural (con)text in which they make economic decisions” (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2004, p. 299) not the least pertains to how tourism SMEs characterize their relationships with residents and to the ways residents are attributed various touristic roles within their everyday environment.

Based on the multiplicity of roles residents can play with respect to a place as tourist destination, interests behind and consequences of tourism practices can easily contradict or complement each other. This pertains in particular to residents as (potential) touristic consumers, participating in touristic activities within the region in which they live: their experiences of (un)familiarity and touristic otherness arguably differ from those of visitors from further away. Also, because residents can experience a city, region or country both as a tourist *and* as a resident, their consumption roles simultaneously depend on *and* inform production roles (Firat, Dholakia, & Venkatesh, 1995), for example in terms of Word-of-Mouth communication (Jeuring & Haartsen, 2017). However, do tourism SMEs see residents as potential consumers? Do they strategically connect with residents as

producers of tourism products and services? And do tourism SMEs perceive various roles of residents and of themselves to be interdependent?

These questions pertain to an underlying interest in understanding the perceived value of 'proximity tourism' (Diaz-Soria, 2016; Diaz-Soria & Llurdés Coit, 2013; Jeuring & Haartsen, 2017). The idea of proximity tourism revolves around the notion that in a hypermobile world where everybody has become a tourist and every place a destination (Franklin & Crang, 2001), touristic experiences of engaging with the 'Other', negotiating between familiarity and unfamiliarity (Kastenholz, 2010; Szytniewski, Spierings, & van der Velde, 2016) and the general purpose of tourism are relative to each other, strongly embedded in everyday life and decoupled from travelling long physical distances (Jeuring & Haartsen, 2017).

Proximity tourism hereby thus integrates ontologies of touristic experiences and representations (Elands & Lengkeek, 2012; Lengkeek, 2001; Saraniemi & Kylänen, 2011) in a micro-level context (Canavan, 2013) in which the facilitating and restricting conditions are explored for consuming and producing the exotic of the everyday and the mundane of the exotic (Kaaristo & Rhoden, 2016). Importantly, such an approach also alludes to the need for tourism industries to move toward more sustainable (i.e., low-carbon) travel and transport approaches (Dubois, Peeters, Ceron, & Gössling, 2011), while at the same time having to grapple with institutionalized societal dynamics such as attitudes toward (Hibbert, Dickinson, Gössling, & Curtin, 2013) and spatio-temporal experiences of (Dickinson & Peeters, 2014; Larsen & Guiver, 2013) tourist travel.

This study builds on ideas rooted in a sociocultural approach to the construction of tourism destinations, which has gained considerable momentum among tourism scholars in the last decades (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2003b; Forsey & Low, 2014; Pearce, 2014; Pritchard, Morgan, & Ateljevic, 2011; Saraniemi & Kylänen, 2011). Principally, the concept of 're-consumption' (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2004) is used, along which "production

and consumption are seen as complements, feeding off each other in an endless cycle" (Ateljevic, 2000, p. 376), allowing to explore the dialectics of the 'third space' (Amoamo, 2011; Everett, 2012; Hall, 2005) in between the conventional dichotomies of touristic production and consumption, filled and enacted upon by residents in multiple ways. Doing so, the study builds on the contention that "[m]ultiple readings of local residents while working, living, playing, or, in other words, consuming and producing their localities through encounters with tourism should be explored and further revealed" (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2004, p. 299).

In sum, understanding SME perspectives on their relationships with residents is valuable in order to get insight in the peculiar ways production and consumption roles are intertwined. Therefore, within the context of the Dutch province of Fryslân, a coastal region characterized as a rural tourism destination, this study employs a qualitative approach to explore how owners and employees of tourism SMEs perceive their relationships with residents of this province through the attribution of touristic production and consumption roles.

3.2 Theoretical background

3.2.1 Tourism SMEs

Touristic business activities are often characterized by small enterprises, employing a limited amount of people. Together however they can form an important part of the socio-economic structure of regions (Komppula, 2014). Moreover, given their small size, SMEs are flexible in how they employ their business and can therefore play an innovative role in the development of both local tourism industries and the livability of regions. At the same time, tourism entrepreneurs and employees of tourism SMEs often tend to balance the purpose of their activities between income and lifestyle goals (Carlisle, Kunc, Jones, & Tiffin, 2013; Koenig-Lewis & Bischoff, 2005). Hereby, their services and offerings to potential consumers are a result of pragmatic

choices, which might, but not necessarily always do, contribute to regional competitiveness and well-being of residents (Markantoni, Koster, & Strijker, 2014; Markantoni, Koster, Strijker, & Woolvin, 2013).

Carlisle et al. (2013) stress the importance of multi-stakeholder approaches in innovative tourism entrepreneurship in order to be economically viable. For example, collaboration with universities enhances the development and application of specific and localized knowledge. Akkerman et al. (2008) show how SMEs form communities of practice in which meaningful collaboration can enhance their competitiveness and, hereby, that of the region in which they operate. Similarly, cooperation with other SMEs and with local authorities in terms of marketing and promotion (Jeuring, 2016) is essential in order to construct 'umbrella' destination brands (Boisen, Terlouw, & van Gorp, 2011; Hankinson, 2010) that are –ideally– supported by the 'local community' and recognized by (potential) customers. Thus, healthy relationships with spatially proximate stakeholders are essential for tourism SMEs.

Few studies however have focused on how tourism SMEs and residents collaborate and how residents are perceived to contribute to how SMEs are "getting things done" (Jóhannesson, 2012, p. 192). Insight in such perceptions is important from both business and societal perspectives, as Hallak et al. (2012) found that business performance and support for the local community were positively affected by the level of place identity of tourism entrepreneurs. Similarly, when marketing the 'local', community embeddedness appeared a key factor for success (Coca-Stefaniak, Parker, & Rees, 2010). Cheong and Miller (2000) build on the political thinking of Foucault to understand stakeholder roles in tourism development and depict a tripartite system of brokers (i.e., SMEs), locals (i.e., residents) and tourists in which brokers and locals have the biggest influence on (regional) tourism development. By stressing the political nature of tourism stakeholder relationships, the need to understand how SME-resident relationships shape

tourism roles and construct spaces in which these roles can be performed by some and not by others becomes an even more important topic of research.

3.2.2 *Touristic roles of residents*

In depicting tourism as a performance, Edensor (2001) allows for understanding the interactions between stakeholders through various roles, adopted willingly or unwillingly. Many of such roles are continuously re-enacted, hereby contributing to the development of norms and values of touristic performances, navigating them into taken-for-granted assumptions about which actor plays which role, when this is appropriate and how a role should be played. Along this line, residents often are attributed roles that signify spatial immobility, to be passively observed by active, mobile visitors (Salazar, 2012). It follows that such a dichotomization of tourism roles strongly connects with the ways consumption and production of destinations are understood and attributed.

When zooming in on the various performances that constitute tourism production and consumption on an intraregional level, the potential roles of residents in tourism are much more dynamic and hybrid than just depicted. Emphasizing the importance of considering residents in place branding processes, Braun et al. (2013) argue that residents simultaneously play three roles. First, they are part of the place brand through the mere fact of their physical presence by living in a city or region, but also because their social interactions with each other and with visitors shape the (touristic) experience of places. Second, residents are attributed a role as place ambassadors, through what Kavaratzis (2004) calls 'tertiary communication'. By being considered as "informal, authentic and insider sources of information" (Braun et al., 2013, p. 21), residents can function as trustworthy communicators about places. Such a role builds on a felt sense of responsibility among residents for positive image and development of

their everyday environment (Jeuring & Haartsen, 2017). This strongly connects with the third role: residents as citizens. Citizen roles pertain to the legal obligations and rights of residents such as voting, but also to being included in decision making processes about, for example, tourism development (Kavaratzis, 2012). Similarly, as citizens they can obstruct and protest against developments threatening their everyday life needs, for example when they experience tourism overcrowding. All of these roles however pertain also to the wider context of tourism consumption and production (Firat et al., 1995), where various intrapersonal interests come together, depending on which roles are relevant.

Clearly, different roles of residents influence each other and the way they are played out becomes even more complex when considering a fourth role: residents as tourists. Indeed, while being a consumer within one's region of residence is an evident part of being a resident, consuming through tourism entails a role that is considered less regularly, and which brings along some conceptual complexity. This is not entirely surprising, since the role of residents as tourists is slightly paradoxical from the (conventional) perspective where tourism is defined by traveling outside one's everyday environment. However, this paradox is rooted less in the behavioral inability of residents to engage in proximity tourism, than that it emerges from the social conventions of what it means to be a 'tourist'. This is neatly exemplified in research on domestic tourist experiences in Israel (Singh & Krakover, 2015a, 2015b), which highlights the ambiguity of attributing tourism labels along a dynamic interaction between perceptions of national identity, (un)familiarity and othering. They conclude that residents, "being aware of themselves as the producers of the culture that they visit, [...] are unable to acknowledge themselves as the consumers of the culture to which they belong" (Singh & Krakover, 2015a, p. 229). Thus, adopting the role of a tourist in one's familiar environment requires a conscious negotiation of self-identities and place identities in ways that overcome

'uncomfortable familiarity' and enable experiencing a sense of 'comfortable unfamiliarity' (Spierings & van der Velde, 2012).

As such, the study of Diaz-Soria (2016) on the participation and experiences of residents from Barcelona (Spain) in guided city walks, provides evidence of residents who intentionally adopt touristic roles in order to be able to re-value their familiar everyday environment. For these residents, a deliberate act of 'distancing' is self-oriented, to give way for new ways of knowing the places they inhabit, through tourism. Importantly, this both complicates and opens up the variety and interaction of resident roles within the production-consumption process of tourism. Such augmented understandings of resident roles thus imply stakeholder relationships to be multiple and overlapping, informing each other and embedded in a continuous process of consumption and production.

3.2.3 Re-consumption in tourism

The continuous, reinforcing and hybrid nature of tourism consumption and production has been acknowledged both as a theoretical implication of relational thinking and as a conceptual point of departure for tourism studies in a variety of contexts (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2004). Various theoretical frameworks resonate such dynamic rationale. Salazar (2012) analyzes the perpetuation of tourism imaginaries, being re-created in order to maintain and reinforce an image of activities, places, regions or countries. Indeed, touristic ontologies do shape places (Hultman & Hall, 2012), reinforced by a tourism *mythomoteur* (Hollinshead, 2009), and touristic place meanings are closely interacting with everyday place meanings (J. Chen & Chen, 2016).

Similarly, the 'circuit of culture' (Du Gay, 1997) allows for a holistic study of culture through the circulation of cultural artifacts along and between 'positions' of production, consumption, regulation, representation and identity. It is from this framework that Ateljevic and Doorne arrive at the

notions of re-production and re-consumption (Ateljevic, 2000; Ateljevic & Doorne, 2004). In their analysis of lifestyle entrepreneurship they show how “producers themselves are consuming lifestyle, cultural context, or recreational activities in order to perform the act of production. Indeed, through the endless recycling of cultural circuits the act of production can be seen as an act of re-consumption and consumption as an act of re-production” (Ateljevic and Doorne, 2004, p. 292). While this means that re-consumption and re-production are two interactive sides of the same coin (hereafter referred to as ‘re-consumption’), the circular character of this process also highlights how potential touristic roles of stakeholders are strongly interdependent and simultaneously can take different forms (Figure 3.1). As such, role imaginaries can be re-consumed through the relationships and encounters between tourism stakeholders, through performances that are socially constructed, “accepted by those who produce and consume it, socially sanctioned by institutions, customs, rules, ideals and values” (Ateljevic, 2000, p.376).

The political and power-laden nature of the re-consumption of roles is evident. As stated by Ateljevic and Doorne, “...‘producers’ and ‘consumers’ communicate and negotiate between each other in the economic, social, political, and cultural (con)texts they create, constitute, and re-consume, thereby constructing a particular realm of power-knowledge” (2004, p. 298). For example, with globalizing marketing discourses, externally oriented tourism policies and the reconfirmation of external visitors as key consumers, touristic consumption is often primarily attributed to external stakeholders, to visitors from outside (Jeuring, 2016). Such a hegemonic ideology (Avdikos, 2011) of touristic role distributions arguably limits the opportunities for residents to consume their own region as a tourist.

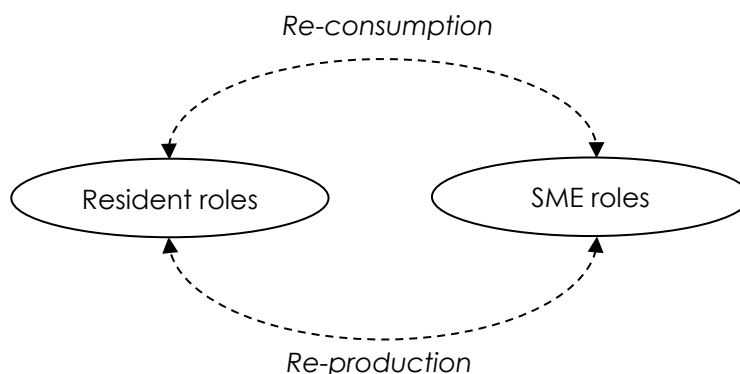


Figure 3.1 Relating resident and SME roles through re-production and re-consumption.

Forsey and Low (2014) emphasize the need to understand how tourism imaginaries are (to be) transformed (as opposed to being merely reconfirmed), in order to account for their normative implications. To that end, it is the opportunity to destabilize the taken-for-grantedness of tourism roles that makes the concept of re-consumption a valuable approach. So, using re-consumption as a theoretical lens permits a critical analysis of the ways tourism SMEs perceive their relationships with residents through the attribution of touristic roles.

3.3 Methodology

Interviews were conducted with owners and employees of profit-oriented tourism companies. Such qualitative methodology allows for an in-depth understanding of individual perspectives (Jennings, 2005), which aligns with the purpose of this study. The empirical focus was on Fryslân, a province in the north of The Netherlands. As such, during the interviews references to residents pertained to people living within this province. While at times participants talked about residents on other spatial levels (e.g. within a city), the initial framing provided a usable default level for discussing SME-resident

relationships that reflected an important construction of spatial identities (Betten, 2013).

Typically a rural tourism destination, people are attracted to Fryslân by its many freshwater lakes, the Wadden Islands and the small villages embedded in a forested or agricultural countryside. Watersports and cycling are popular tourist activities. The province is also famous for its Eleven Cities, including the provincial capital Leeuwarden. Jeuring (2016) and Jeuring and Haartsen (2017) provide a more extensive touristic profile of Fryslân.

Companies were selected to cover a variety of tourism businesses within the province, ranging from watersports and museums to guided tours and tourist information (Table 3.1). The central interest of this study was with the views of tourism SMEs whose main income comes from tourist activities and providing tourist information. As such, tourism accommodation providers (e.g., camping grounds and hotels) were not included in this study. SMEs were contacted via email or phone, explaining the context and purpose of the study. Whenever possible, it was aimed to interview people with a strategic function within the business. A total of twelve people were interviewed, with conversations lasting between 45 and 90 minutes.

The interviews were semi-structured, in order to make sure that a number of intended topics were addressed, but also allowing for a discussion of other issues that could come up during the conversations. The questions evolved around various topics expected to be of relevance from the perspective of tourism SMEs, and at the same time providing a context to discuss participants' ideas about their relations with and roles of residents. The interviews included questions about target groups for the tourism business, promotion and marketing, the local social embeddedness of the tourism company and questions triggering participants to think about their ascribed meanings of tourism.

Table 3.1 Participants' business types and job titles.

Participant	Type of business activity	Function type
1.	Watersports	Manager/owner
2.	Tourism marketing & information	Customer service employee
3.	Watersports	Manager/owner
4.	Museum & heritage	Manager/owner
5.	Watersports	Manager/owner
6.	Museum & heritage	Manager
7.	Museum & heritage	Manager
8.	Guided tours	Tour guide/owner
9.	Tourism marketing & activities	Manager/owner
10.	Guided tours	Manager/owner
11.	Museum & heritage	Marketing & Communication employee
12.	Guided tours	Tour guide

All interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed ad verbatim. This allowed for a further in-depth analysis based on a Grounded Theory approach (Boeije, 2009; Glaser, Strauss, & Strutzel, 1968; Radulescu & Vessey, 2011). Transcribed interviews were read several times and pieces of the conversations that were assumed relevant (i.e., informative about the way interviewees think and talk about resident roles in relation to their tourism companies) were coded. Following the method of qualitative analysis, the coding process allowed for themes to emerge from the data as the coding structure became more abstract. The coding was concluded when all texts were re-read several times but no new quotes were found that complemented or supported the emerged code structure. The qualitative analysis was facilitated by using ATLAS.ti (version 7).

3.3.1 Researcher positionality

As a male, white and relatively young researcher who grew up in Fryslân, but currently does not live there, my positionality with respect to the topics

discussed and to the interviewees was simultaneously that of an insider and of an outsider (Buda, 2016; Lugosi, 2014). This ambivalence was often helpful in that I was familiar with specific localized aspects that came up during the conversations (e.g., villages, areas), facilitating a more in-depth level of discussions. Also, having lived in Fryslân likely helped in gaining trust from the participants and creating an atmosphere for an open discussion. Still, insider advantages did not inhibit the attempt to objectively study the ideas and opinions of the interviewees. Thus, during the main part of the conversations, I consciously positioned myself as an objective researcher (as opposed to a former resident), which is also reflected in writing the results in third person pronouns.

Introducing myself as a PhD researcher however at times resulted in having to negotiate my position as expertized and 'serious researcher' (Buda, 2016), since not all interviewees were familiar with what an academic PhD research entails. For example, some thought it was similar to that of a thesis for a Bachelor or Master degree, hinting at an interesting aspect of researcher-subject power relations. Nevertheless, these positionality aspects reflect the 'double reflexive gaze' (Everett, 2010) through which the data collection, analysis and the emerging results described below became personal, in-depth and situated.

3.4 Findings and discussion

This section provides a qualitative insight into the "multiple readings of local residents" (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2004, p. 299) from the perspective of tourism SMEs, through a lens of re-consumption. The findings display a discursive space where roles often strongly entwine, but sometimes also appear rigidly dispersed. Four major themes emerged from the interviews: 'Being a tourist', 'Discovery and unawareness', 'Life course experiences' and 'Ambassadorship'. Each of the themes will be now be discussed in more detail, illustrated by quotes from the interviews.

3.4.1 Being a tourist

The meanings associated with the label of 'tourist' were explored, since such associations can reflect connotations of touristic roles (Singh & Krakover, 2015a) and the extent to which they are seen as depending on each other. Interviewees were asked whether they would label residents from Fryslân as tourists, when these residents are on vacation within the province. This triggered a wide variety of responses. For many of the participants, what it means to be a tourist reflects a dichotomized understanding of production and consumption roles. For example, understandings of tourists were based on associations with absolute and measurable indicators: "Tourism I think pertains to a period longer than one day. Including an overnight stay. Or a considerable distance." (11). Reflecting a narrative arguably reinforced by the tourism industry (Jeuring, 2016; Jeuring & Haartsen, 2017), these absolute indicators position tourism consumption physically outside of the everyday environment. As a consequence, touristic consumption roles then become unattainable for residents. Another distinction fitting such an ontology pertains to domestic tourists and international tourists:

"I do not believe people would tend to call themselves tourists when being within The Netherlands. But of course you are tourist, because your home address is at another location and you go to another place to visit or experience something, to go on vacation or just relax. But when I go to Lemmer [city] and I visit a church because it has sparked my interest, then I do feel I am a tourist. But I am not comparing myself with the Germans who come there. For me, they are the real tourists. There are Dutch tourists and there are foreign tourists. Where the boundary is, I would not be able to point out." (7)

Some confusion and nuance is evident in this quote however, with more flexible perspectives when it concerns groups people identify with, while more rigid definitions apply for groups being perceived to be different. This indicates the importance of self- and group-identities becoming salient when labelling people as tourists (Singh & Krakover, 2015a).

For other interviewees a more relative and experiential perspective was useful for talking about touristic consumption in geographical proximity of home. They emphasized aspects of unfamiliarity and novelty that define being a tourist:

"People become tourists whenever they do something they would not normally do. It has also to do with discovery, with experiencing something that is not experienced as a resident. So when you never go sailing and then you rent a boat, I think you are a tourist. (9)

Importantly, such a perspective allows for a decoupling of touristic identity from geographical distance, for an ambiguous relation between people, places and activities which entails, more than anything, a personal experience in which novelty and routine are relative to each other. Decoupling from physical geographical distance does not mean however that geographical distance has no experiential meaning. On the contrary, as the following quote makes clear, the experience of being physically 'away' plays a role in how the 'nearby' can be experienced as attractive and unfamiliar, indicating the influence of re-consumption: "There is so much variation [here], you just need to see it. I think when someone explores a region far away, and then he turns his glasses around, he will do the same discoveries right here." (3:28) The consumption of certain places through tourism thus produces opportunities for being a tourist elsewhere, including places which previously seemed too familiar.

However, interviewees show they are very much aware that they are having a business and need to make money. Consequently, tourism SMEs themselves appear to be dealing with tourism meanings in a rather pragmatic way. Consequently, the importance of tourist labels is often substituted by the importance attributed to what it means to be a (potential) consumer. Then, consumption includes touristic consumption but also can pertain to consumption when not fitting conventional tourist labels. This complex relation is highlighted in the context of the marketing strategy of a museum:

"I do not think that a Frisian resident, whether he is a tourist or not, should be approached differently than when he is at home. Yes, we very much try to attract Frisian residents to the museum. But I am not sure if we should discern between Frisian residents on vacation and Frisian residents in general. That would imply to focus on Frisians during the two weeks they are on vacation, while you might as well reach them during all those other weeks. When dividing efficiency by invested money, it might be more profitable to not to see them as tourists but just as residents." (11)

In sum, the perceived opportunities for residents to engage in proximity tourism through consumption roles are contingent with how tourism 'brokers' (Cheong & Miller, 2000) attribute meanings to 'being a tourist'. In this context, the process of re-consumption appears to work in two different ways, both absolute and relative. First, because absolute tourists labels are imbued with associations which residents travelling in their 'own' region or country might not adhere to (Singh & Krakover, 2015a), employing explicit categorizations is delicate and sensitive. As such, the re-consumption of touristic norms and values which imply a segregation of

consumption and production roles limits both ontological and behavioral flexibility. Second, relative meanings based on interaction of and overlap between roles can open up geographically and experientially proximate spaces to be (re)discovered by residents.

3.4.2 Discovery and unawareness

Relations between SMEs and residents, enacted through various performances of consumption and production, are shaped by phenomenological experiences (Cohen, 1979; Lengkeek, 2001) and geographical consciousness (Li, 2000). This implies that a major challenge for proximity tourism is the (perceived) familiarity and mundanity of nearby places and activities among residents (Jeuring & Haartsen, 2017). Indeed, interviewees see these aspects as inhibitor of attracting residents living in Fryslân:

"I think it [perceived unattractiveness among residents] is almost a given. [But] what else can you do than to satisfy the rest of the world population? Or [one should] become even more accessible, hospitable and friendly. What else to think of to [attract] people from...[nearby]? For me it is a given and I think it is like that everywhere." (6)

At the same time, interviewees note that many residents are simply not aware of the touristic attractions and activities available near home:

"I think they [residents] would be the least likely target group [customers] I would focus on. But if I would have to, it comes down to that many people living here just do not know all the possibilities. When you tell them there is a great

mountainbike course in Appelscha [village] and on Texel [island]. Around the corner. They are not aware of that." (5)

From these quotes, an image emerges of a lock-in (Ma & Hassink, 2013) of consumption and production roles, of a 'barrier of proximity' which constrains the variety of SME-resident relationships: producers see residents as unattractive target group because residents are unaware of touristic attractions, while the lack of interest in residents as potential customers reinforces the absence of perceived local attractiveness among residents.

On the other hand, some interviewees noted ways to avoid or overcome such an impasse. For example, a growing awareness of and interest in near home places was associated with perceptions of societal instability abroad, as reflected in this account,:

"I noticed that, this interest is currently emerging, people exploring their own environment. It might be because of the current political situation in Europe. This will likely bring people closer to home. But this idea of: actually I still do not know The Netherlands very well." (12)

Such emerging awareness also aligns with Diaz-Soria's notion of 'distancing' (Diaz-Soria, 2016), an intentional activity through which people psychologically re-position themselves vis-à-vis their everyday environment and which allows them to revalue places and activities valued mundane otherwise. Thus, people can adopt a mindset of curiosity, opening up opportunities for a more dynamic interaction between production and consumption roles. A re-consumption perspective can explain and enable this interaction, for example in the context of residents who are hosting visiting friends and relatives (VFRs) (Griffin, 2016). Hosting friends and family pertains to production roles, when residents provide for various

touristic experiences for their guests (e.g., visiting a museum or joining a guided walk). At the same time hosting involves ambassadorship roles, since hosts are representing and promoting their region of residence. Importantly however, the wish for touristic consumption among friends and family also produces a stage on which residents become touristic consumers themselves. Such ways of re-consumption appear to be self-reinforcing, when residents host different guests over time:

"Always some local people join [the walking tour]. They have family or friends who visit them and they think let's do something fun. Then they join a guided city walk. And then they see, it is a lot of fun. And they return for another occasion, with family or with their colleagues. I really see this as a target group." (10)

Interviewees discern a strong sense of surprise, positive experiences of discovery and an appreciation of the local knowledge gained through consumption of the nearby:

"I tend to think it surprises them. That is my impression, more and more people are surprised about what there is to be found in their own environment. I am sure people are not very knowledgeable about their own province." (9)

Hosting VFRs and the inherent dynamics of re-consumption thus can help overcoming a mental boundary to visit nearby places. However, from the above it also becomes clear that often a trigger is needed for residents to engage in proximity tourism as consumers. Various interviewees note this highlights the need for destination marketing that builds on the involvement of various stakeholders, in multiple ways (see also Jeuring, 2016). In this

context, the need for SMEs to be 'local experts' is emphasized in that they need to be knowledgeable about what is on offer. Such expertise requires SMEs to have a never ending interest in learning about the local environment:

"You need to be an explorer yourself. The producer most of all needs to be a discoverer and of course have an affinity with his own region. But when you are not curious and you are not an explorer, you might as well quit. You just do not see it then." (9)

In feeding this constant curiosity, SME-resident relationships are essential. Particularly, the interaction between the various roles of both residents and SMEs through multiple ways of 'role-switching', means that producers need to become consumers in order to be able to carry out producer roles, while for residents this means that they should play the role of local ambassador or the producer of tourist experiences for SMEs. This dynamic echoes the core of re-consumption processes (Firat et al., 1995) and is exemplified in the following quote:

" Last year I was in Kollum [village]. I thought, what am I supposed to do here? I have driven around the village for about ten times. Until the manager of the local harbor told me, do you know how beautiful it is here? I told him, this Saturday I will visit you for an hour. And I have been there all day, I was completely surprised. Because this local, he knows everything. And they were working on promoting tourism among their residents. They were the first who should know about all those beautiful houses. When looking at it you would say, this is nothing, but often things remain rather

superficial, and you need to go more in-depth. So you need to find a local, be a Marco Polo." (9)

Thus, role switching seems a promising strategy for tourism SMEs, enhancing community embeddedness and simultaneously gaining competitive advantage through local knowledge (Dann, 2012). Role switching as strategy was implemented by one of the interviewees, working at a tourist information center which organizes daytrips for employees of tourism SMEs in the city, during which they have a chance to visit their colleagues and get up to date information about local tourist attractions:

"Being a host is also taking shape by organizing excursions for employees of local hotels. Because they, too, need to express this hospitability. So we take them around to visit places in their city they have not visited before. We have done this too with parking officers, bed & breakfast owners, restaurant employees. And now I organize it for the local retailers." (2)

In sum, circulation of local knowledge across various stakeholders, while adopting and switching between various production and consumption roles can enhance competitiveness of tourism SMEs and can increase local knowledge among both residents and entrepreneurs, but is strongly dependent on how flexible stakeholders engage with various role behaviors.

3.4.3 Life course experiences

Various life course experiences were mentioned as critical factors for building enduring relationships, implying interactions between various roles. For example, consumption experiences at a young age facilitate

intrapersonal and inter-generational re-consumption on a higher age, hereby enhancing engagement with tourism activities over time:

"In the coming spring holidays we need sailing instructors for a group. Both parents and children have signed up for this. Children have learnt sailing in a family context, while the parents continue as sailing instructor. And the kids are now old enough to become instructors themselves. I think we are currently having the third generation of sailing instructors." (3)

Various interviewees however saw a (temporary) challenge in terms of a discontinued interest among adolescents, signifying the importance of personal preferences in patterns of tourist behavior:

"When confronted with watersports at a young age, they take it with them for the rest of their lives. Then they get a girlfriend, a family and they go sailing more often. But I increasingly miss that dynamic; people do not head for the water at a young age anymore." (1)

Indeed, when children grow up they want to explore the world, tempted by the unfamiliar, repelled by the mundane (Jeuring & Haartsen, 2017). It seems therefore important, while acknowledging this unavoidable tendency, to ensure positive place attachment in multiple ways and at young ages, because when people grow older and start families, they more than once appear to return to the (vacation) return to the regions where they grew up:

"My daughter has made a trip around the world when aged 23. And now she has just discovered Terschelling (one of the

Wadden Islands). I found that very enjoying. Back then, she went to China and wherever. And now she says: we booked a camping spot at Terschelling. We visited them; it was a camping ground where 80 percent was aged 60 or older, like us. And they were the only couple with a child. I said, my God, how do you manage to stay here? And she said; we booked another three days, with the child and the tranquility here. I did not know them this way. And this year they go again. My God. They love it. Then it occurs to you, unaware makes unappreciated. And you could turn it around: unappreciated makes unaware." (8)

Another challenge for tourism SMEs pertained to touristic consumers being of increasingly higher age, the effect of which is strengthened by the declining interest in proximity tourism among teenagers and young adults. This dynamic was also attributed to a lack of consistent and continuous destination marketing and place branding, arguably resulting from destination marketing activities that have "not been completely straightforward" (Jeuring, 2016, p. 68). In this context, one of the interviewees compared Fryslân with Saalbach Hinterglemm, a ski resort in Austria which specifically aims to attract young customers:

"Last week I went skiing in Saalbach. There they are trying very hard to attract young visitors. This results in groups of friends visiting, who eventually also return with their own children. This dynamic is increasingly absent in watersports here, which is more and more an aging market. But when you have fewer younger people, eventually you also end up with fewer older people. You need to invest in the youngsters."(5)

A potential strategy for engaging with residents is the integration of tourism and education. This combination can be attractive from a business perspective, because tourist experiences and learning experiences are closely connected (Bos, McCabe, & Johnson, 2015; Falk, Ballantyne, Packer, & Benckendorff, 2012). One interviewee underlines this:

"What is interesting for a class of children, is also interesting for parents with children during their vacation. When I develop an educational tour, I try to make it as much fun as possible. Learning should be fun, but even more importantly, you should not notice that you are learning. This makes all educational aspects similarly attractive for touristic purposes." (4)

Several of the interviewees confirmed their businesses are having education programs, that they cater for school trips or provide internship positions. Reflecting various re-consumption dynamics, tourism SMEs facilitate local awareness through learning about the home environment and provide a place to learn skills that prepare for production, ambassador and citizen roles (see also the Ambassadorship section). Similarly, young residents, as students on a school trip, become touristic consumers. As such, engagement with the local environment through a tourism-education context at a young age can be a basis for an open-minded attitude towards both the familiar and the unfamiliar.

Thus, connecting the multiple roles of residents through education can enhance production and consumption of proximity tourism. The importance of school trips and education programs in the region therefore needs to be promoted and sustained by the various regional stakeholders such as tourism marketing organizations, tourism businesses and regional governments.

3.4.4 Ambassadorship

Ambassadorship has become an important theme in tourism marketing and communication (Andersson & Ekman, 2009) to the extent that residents, arguably without direct personal gain or top-down triggers, function as independent sources of information for visitors (Braun et al., 2013). In discussing how residents can be involved in such promotion, most of the interviewees acknowledged the potential and importance of Word-of-Mouth (WoM) (N. Chen, Dwyer, & Firth, 2014; Jeuring & Haartsen, 2017). At the same time, various interviewees saw resident WoM as problematic, because of the limited touristic consumption among residents: *"Very few residents of Fryslân rent boats...even most of the customers of the sailing school are from western parts of The Netherlands...the use of residents in WoM is limited."* (5) Also, resident WoM was perceived to be uncontrollable due to the diversified nature of resident interests, making it difficult to implement it in holistic communication strategies:

"We do not actively involve them (residents) in WoM... it is very difficult to employ the local population. WoM is of course the best marketing. But it is very difficult to manage. Everybody has a different opinion. I see WoM as something you like and talk about as recommendation to do. That is very complex to initiate or guide." (11)

From these quotes it permeates that resident WoM is far from a given resource for tourism marketing. Moreover, the perceived lack of potential of residents in WoM communication and the apparent uncontrollability of WoM might also be a sign that tourism SMEs are still coming to terms with these new ways tourism destinations and services are evaluated, how credibility is constructed and how they can usefully employ WoM in their marketing.

Ambassadorship roles also pertain to volunteering activities of residents. Various SMEs depend on volunteers, which enables residents to get active in the production of tourist services. Some of the interviewees worked on a voluntary basis themselves. Volunteering appears to be rooted in citizenship roles, motivated by a personal interest, regional pride or felt need to care for the local environment that extends beyond, but strongly inspires, the will to share the place with visitors. For example, motivations for becoming a volunteer were rooted in a personal interest, as reflected by this tour guide: *"I am very much interested in history. And I think this city is very beautiful and has a rich history."* (12) So, as volunteers, residents are becoming ambassadors of a place, and simultaneously function as an essential part of the tourism product and of the relationship between consumer and producer.

A third way residents are performing ambassadorship roles pertains to engagements with tourism materials (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2003a; van der Duim, Ren, & Jóhannesson, 2013). Maps and souvenirs were mentioned to play an important role in the circulation of knowledge about tourism businesses and local attractions. Residents were seen as important circulators of such materials. The following quote highlights the interaction of residents' local consumption roles and ambassadorship roles in the way tourist maps are used and re-used:

"We have tourist maps, and residents like them too. Because they can obtain them just as easily as tourists can. And [those residents] say this [activity] is fun, and recommend it to someone else. Also by being physically present, with those maps. It seems old-fashioned, but it is growing. We produce more and more of them, 30.000. Of course half the residents of Leeuwarden walk around with them. But that is no problem. You need to make sure those maps contain

something valuable. Then they say, did you know, this cheese shop... This also enhances local tourism within the province."(9)

Likewise, souvenirs containing established Frisian symbols, such as the Frisian flag, are sometimes consumed by residents in order to express their regional identity, both inside and outside the province. This way, such citizenship performances feed into production roles in that the physical presence of these symbols can shape the touristic experience of others. Moreover, souvenirs appear to not only become meaningful in relation touristic consumption, they also are symbolic material expressions of a regional identity, pertaining to ambassadorship roles when these souvenirs travel outside the province:

"A friend of mine who I used to see a lot now lives somewhere else. Last Friday she visited me. She has a dog, and this dog wears this Frisian thing. She likes that. She walks in her town with the dog wearing this Frisian thing. That is recognition [of a regional identity]. People want such things on their caravan or their car. Very chauvinistic."(2)

In a similar way, production roles were connected with ambassadorship roles. Some of the interviewees themselves intentionally collaborate with, and hereby support, local businesses from Fryslân that generate tourism materials such as bicycles and sailing boats. This way, tourism production allows for symbolic consumption of 'Frisianness', through the use of these products. Hereby, the entanglement of consumption and production activities facilitates ambassadorship roles:

"We make money with watersports and bicycling. Just as the province does. Because bikes and boats are manufactured here. I think it greatly reinforces each other. Tourism is promoted, we are an important and excellent tourism destination and the products that are being used are also produced here. That is a double benefit. [...] It [a boat] is a Frisian product, so we also check if it can be made here. And I think it should be made here." (9)

As became clear earlier, hosting family and friends is an important incentive for residents to engage in proximity tourism. As such, aspects of ambassadorship that influence hosting pertain to feelings of place attachment and pride, which motivates residents to show visitors around. Hereby they produce locally embedded tourist experiences, and at the same time reconfirm their place identities: *"Many residents from Fryslân, but also Frisian companies, bring their relations here. Particularly relations from abroad. They are brought in by proud Frisians."* (4)

In sum, ambassadorship is not only important in relation to touristic production roles. The underlying conditions for becoming place ambassadors are at least partly rooted in a combination of citizenship roles and consumption roles. So, when intending to employ ambassadorship as part of a strategy for tourism development (i.e., involve residents as producers), it is vital to simultaneously invest in relationships that account for touristic consumption of residents.

3.5 Conclusion

This qualitative study explored SME-resident relationships by employing the concept of 're-consumption' (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2004). A sociocultural perspective on the construction of tourism destinations and actors (Saraniemi & Kylänen, 2011) allowed for scrutinizing the ways owners and

employees of tourism SMEs in the Dutch province of Fryslân attribute touristic production and consumption roles to residents of the province. Attributions of four types of roles (producers, ambassadors, citizens and consumers) emerged along four themes: 'Being a tourist', 'Discovery and unawareness', 'Life course experiences' and 'Ambassadorship'.

From a business perspective, residents were, overall, not seen as attractive consumers: Fryslân is too familiar for residents to be consumed through tourism. At the same time, residents were attributed a lack of awareness about the attractiveness of their proximate environment. Being an indication of a lock-in (Ma & Hassink, 2013), arguably rooted in institutionalized and hegemonic ideologies about tourism (Avdikos, 2011), to this end SME-resident relationships were signified by a limited interaction between production and consumption roles. However, various interactions indicative of a pluralized and interdependent approach to touristic roles (Firat et al., 1995), feeding into each other through re-consumption (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2004) emerged too and, importantly, these interactions give rise to several opportunities to counter and overcome a production-consumption lock-in.

Thus, to enable an augmented inclusion of residents in tourism, interviewees acknowledge that conscious efforts are required from SMEs, regional government *and* residents, reflecting the paradigmatic approach to tourism as a three-way communication process (Dann, 2012). To this end, an important finding of this study pertains to the facilitating dynamic of interdependent role-switching between various stakeholders (Figure 3.2), which aligns with a socio-cognitive approach to role enactment (Lynch, 2007): tourism SMEs should adopt touristic consumer roles themselves, and residents should become the producers, feeding them with local touristic knowledge and experiences (Firat et al., 1995). In turn, residents becoming producers implies an enriched approach to citizen and ambassador roles,

incorporating a sense of responsibility to engage in touristic discovery in their residential environment.

Future research on touristic role interactions could enhance the integration of tourism and regional development strategies, which increasingly build on ideas of co-creation (Eshuis, Klijn, & Braun, 2014; Oliveira & Panyik, 2015). For example, integrating education and tourism, while considering variations in touristic preferences across the life course, is seen as a major facilitator for proximity tourism and as an important requirement for various other role performances and SME-resident interactions. Some SMEs had already implemented this in their business models. Also, hosting family and friends (VFR) was a trigger for residents to engage in touristic activities (Griffin, 2016), while materials such as tourist maps and souvenirs depended on the consumption and circulation by residents, through which various symbolic imaginaries were communicated to other stakeholders (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2003a). This latter dynamic where

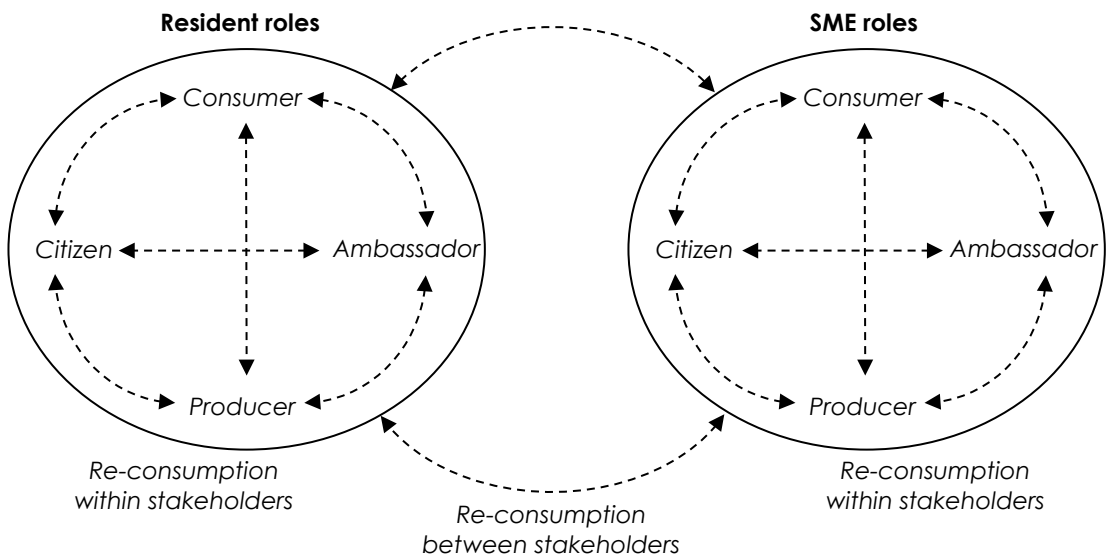


Figure 3.2 Pluralized role interactions within/between residents and SMEs.

tourism materials circulate and hold agency to act echoes an Actor Network perspective (van der Duim et al., 2013), complicating the various meanings attributed to physical objects by their dependency on stakeholder roles.

While regional governments and tourism marketing organizations are attributed an important mediating task in facilitating SME-resident relationships, primary interest of destination marketing is often with incoming visitors, reflected in a homogenizing and externally oriented destination branding discourse (Jeuring, 2016). Such narratives overlook the multiple, profound and detailed relationships residents can have with their region of residence. These ways of destination marketing, consequently, are unlikely to contribute to, nor benefit from, the reinforcing potential of pluralized touristic roles of residents. For example, since residents appear to be willing to engage in positive WoM about their region (Jeuring & Haartsen, 2017), it would be advisable to prioritize the facilitation of residents' consumption roles from which WoM acquires its experiential content, especially given the perceived uncontrollability of resident WoM among interviewees in this study.

A conceptual limitation of this study's approach pertains to the relative meaning of proximity and distance. While the province of Fryslân was used as geographical demarcation of who is a resident and what is proximity tourism, it is acknowledged that personal understandings of what is nearby and far away likely varies and depends on context and scale level. Future research could look into how these relative perceptions of 'local' and 'regional' affect understandings of proximity tourism (Jeuring & Haartsen, 2017) and the relevance of various resident roles in relation to different perceptions of distance and proximity. The relatively small sample of participants is by no means (intended to be) representative of all tourism SMEs in Fryslân, or other regions. Future research therefore needs to focus on different touristic contexts or embed the findings of this study in insights from

other than SME perspectives (e.g., residents or policymakers) or focus on relationships between a wider variety of stakeholders.

To conclude, this study shows that looking at stakeholder role attributions is a useful approach for understanding how interests, responsibilities and perceptions embedded in various touristic roles are relating to, complementing or obstructing each other. Moreover, being aware of how knowledge about and meanings of tourism places and actors circulates and is re-consumed provides promising openings for integrating the notion of proximity tourism in regional tourism development.

References

- Akkerman, S., Petter, C., & de Laat, M. (2008). Organising communities-of-practice: facilitating emergence. *Journal of Workplace Learning*, 20(6), 383-399.
- Amoamo, M. (2011). Tourism and hybridity: Re-visiting Bhabha's third space. 38(4), 1254-1273.
- Andersson, M., & Ekman, P. (2009). Ambassador networks and place branding. *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 2(1), 41-51.
- Ateljevic, I. (2000). Circuits of tourism: stepping beyond the 'production/consumption' dichotomy. *Tourism Geographies*, 2(4), 369-388.
- Ateljevic, I., & Doorne, S. (2003a). Culture, Economy and Tourism Commodities: Social Relations of Production and Consumption. *Tourist Studies*, 3(2), 123-141. doi:10.1177/1468797603041629
- Ateljevic, I., & Doorne, S. (2003b). Unpacking the local: A cultural analysis of tourism entrepreneurship in Murter, Croatia. *Tourism Geographies*, 5(2), 123-150. doi:10.1080/1461668032000068270
- Ateljevic, I., & Doorne, S. (2004). Cultural circuits of tourism: Commodities, place, and re-consumption. In A. A. Lew, C. M. Hall, & A. M. Williams

- (Eds.), *A companion to tourism* (pp. 291-302). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.
- Avdikos, V. (2011). Local hegemonic blocs: The case of tourism in Rhodes. *European Urban and Regional Studies*, 18(1), 77-92.
doi:10.1177/0969776410374416
- Betten, E. (2013). *De Fries. Op zoek naar de Friese identiteit*. Leeuwarden: Wijdemeer.
- Boeije, H. (2009). *Analysis in Qualitative Research*. London (UK): Sage Publications.
- Boisen, M., Terlouw, K., & van Gorp, B. (2011). The selective nature of place branding and the layering of spatial identities. *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 4(2), 135-147.
- Bos, L., McCabe, S., & Johnson, S. (2015). Learning never goes on holiday: an exploration of social tourism as a context for experiential learning. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 18(9), 859-875.
doi:10.1080/13683500.2013.790878
- Braun, E., Kavaratzis, M., & Zenker, S. (2013). My city–my brand: the different roles of residents in place branding. *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 6(1), 18-28.
- Buda, D. M. (2016). Tourism in Conflict Areas: Complex Entanglements in Jordan. *Journal of Travel Research*, 55(7), 835-846.
doi:10.1177/0047287515601253
- Canavan, B. (2013). The Extent and Role of Domestic Tourism in a Small Island: The Case of the Isle of Man. *Journal of Travel Research*, 52(3), 340-352.
- Carlisle, S., Kunc, M., Jones, E., & Tiffin, S. (2013). Supporting innovation for tourism development through multi-stakeholder approaches: Experiences from Africa. *Tourism Management*, 35(0), 59-69.
doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2012.05.010

- Chen, J., & Chen, N. (2016). Beyond the everyday? Rethinking place meanings in tourism. *Tourism Geographies*, 1-18.
doi:10.1080/14616688.2016.1208677
- Chen, N., Dwyer, L., & Firth, T. (2014). Effect of dimensions of place attachment on residents' word-of-mouth behavior. *Tourism Geographies*, 16(5), 826-843.
- Cheong, S.-M., & Miller, M. L. (2000). Power and tourism: A Foucauldian observation. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 27(2), 371-390.
doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0160-7383(99)00065-1
- Coca-Stefaniak, J. A., Parker, C., & Rees, P. (2010). Localisation as a marketing strategy for small retailers. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 38(9), 677-697.
- Cohen, E. (1979). A Phenomenology of Tourist Experiences. *Sociology*, 13(2), 179-201. doi:10.1177/003803857901300203
- Dann, G. M. (2012). Remodelling a changing language of tourism: from monologue to dialogue and triologue. *Pasos: Revista de turismo y patrimonio cultural*, 10(4), 59-70.
- Diaz-Soria, I. (2016). Being a tourist as a chosen experience in a proximity destination. *Tourism Geographies*, 1-22.
doi:10.1080/14616688.2016.1214976
- Diaz-Soria, I., & Llurdés Coit, J. C. (2013). Thoughts about proximity tourism as a strategy for local development. *Cuadernos de Turismo*, 32, 65-88.
- Dickinson, J. E., & Peeters, P. (2014). Time, Tourism Consumption and Sustainable Development. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 16(1), 11-21. doi:10.1002/jtr.1893
- Du Gay, P. (1997). *Doing cultural studies: The story of the Sony Walkman* (Vol. 1): Sage.
- Dubois, G., Peeters, P., Ceron, J. P., & Gössling, S. (2011). The future tourism mobility of the world population: Emission growth versus climate

- policy. *Transportation Research Part A: Policy and Practice*, 45(10), 1031-1042. doi:10.1016/j.tra.2009.11.004
- Edensor, T. (2001). Performing tourism, staging tourism: (Re)producing tourist space and practice. *Tourist Studies*, 1(1), 59-81.
- Elands, B. H., & Lengkeek, J. (2012). The tourist experience of out-there-ness: theory and empirical research. *Forest Policy and Economics*, 19, 31-38.
- Eshuis, J., Klijn, E.-H., & Braun, E. (2014). Place marketing and citizen participation: branding as strategy to address the emotional dimension of policy making? *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 80(1), 151-171.
- Everett, S. (2010). Lessons from the field: reflecting on a tourism research journey around the 'celtic' periphery. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 13(2), 161-175. doi:10.1080/13683500902853502
- Everett, S. (2012). Production Places or Consumption Spaces? The Place-making Agency of Food Tourism in Ireland and Scotland. *Tourism Geographies*, 14(4), 535-554. doi:10.1080/14616688.2012.647321
- Falk, J. H., Ballantyne, R., Packer, J., & Benckendorff, P. (2012). Travel and Learning: A Neglected Tourism Research Area. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 39(2), 908-927.
- Firat, F. A., Dholakia, N., & Venkatesh, A. (1995). Marketing in a postmodern world. *European Journal of Marketing*, 29(1), 40-56.
- Forsey, M., & Low, M. (2014). Beyond the production of tourism imaginaries: Student-travellers in Australia and their reception of media representations of their host nation. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 44, 156-170. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2013.09.008
- Franklin, A., & Crang, M. (2001). The trouble with tourism and travel theory. *Tourist studies*, 1(1), 5-22.

- Glaser, B. G., Strauss, A. L., & Strutzel, E. (1968). The Discovery of Grounded Theory; Strategies for Qualitative Research. *Nursing Research*, 17(4), 364.
- Griffin, T. (2016). Immigrant hosts and intra-regional travel. *Tourism Geographies*, 1-19. doi:10.1080/14616688.2016.1169314
- Hall, C. M. (2005). Reconsidering the Geography of Tourism and Contemporary Mobility. *Geographical Research*, 43(2), 125-139. doi:10.1111/j.1745-5871.2005.00308.x
- Hallak, R., Brown, G., & Lindsay, N. J. (2012). The Place Identity – Performance relationship among tourism entrepreneurs: A structural equation modelling analysis. 33(1), 143-154.
- Hankinson, G. (2010). Place branding research: A cross-disciplinary agenda and the views of practitioners. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 6(4), 300-315.
- Hibbert, J. F., Dickinson, J. E., Gössling, S., & Curtin, S. (2013). Identity and tourism mobility: an exploration of the attitude–behaviour gap. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 21(7), 999-1016.
- Hollinshead, K. (2009). 'Tourism State' Cultural Production: The Re-making of Nova Scotia. *Tourism Geographies*, 11(4), 526-545. doi:10.1080/14616680903262737
- Hultman, J., & Hall, C. M. (2012). Tourism place-making: Governance of Locality in Sweden. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 39(2), 547-570.
- Jennings, G. R. (2005). Interviewing: A focus on qualitative techniques. In B. W. Ritchie, P. Burns, & C. Palmer (Eds.), *Tourism research methods: Integrating theory with practice* (pp. 99 –117). Wallingford: CABI.
- Jeuring, J. H. G. (2016). Discursive contradictions in regional tourism marketing strategies: The case of Fryslân, The Netherlands. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 5(2), 65-75.
- Jeuring, J. H. G., & Haartsen, T. (2017). Destination branding by residents: the role of perceived responsibility in positive and negative word-of-

- mouth. *Tourism Planning & Development*, 14(2), 240-259.
doi:10.1080/21568316.2016.1214171
- Jeuring, J. H. G., & Haartsen, T. (2017). The challenge of proximity: the (un)attractiveness of near-home tourism destinations. *Tourism Geographies*, 19(1), 118-141. doi:10.1080/14616688.2016.1175024
- Jóhannesson, G. T. (2012). "To Get Things Done": A Relational Approach to Entrepreneurship. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, 12(2), 181-196. doi:10.1080/15022250.2012.695463
- Kaaristo, M., & Rhoden, S. (2016). Everyday life and water tourism mobilities: Mundane aspects of canal travel. *Tourism Geographies*, x(x), xx.
- Kastenholz, E. (2010). 'Cultural proximity' as a determinant of destination image. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 16(4), 313-322.
doi:10.1177/1356766710380883
- Kavaratzis, M. (2004). From city marketing to city branding: Towards a theoretical framework for developing city brands. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 1(1), 58-73.
- Kavaratzis, M. (2012). From "necessary evil" to necessity: stakeholders' involvement in place branding. *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 5(1), 7-19.
- Koenig-Lewis, N., & Bischoff, E. (2005). Seasonality research: the state of the art. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 7(4/5), 201-219.
- Komppula, R. (2014). The role of individual entrepreneurs in the development of competitiveness for a rural tourism destination – A case study. *Tourism Management*, 40, 361-371.
doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2013.07.007
- Larsen, G. R., & Guiver, J. W. (2013). Understanding tourists' perceptions of distance: a key to reducing the environmental impacts of tourism mobility. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 21(7), 968-981.

- Lengkeek, J. (2001). Leisure Experience and Imagination: Rethinking Cohen's Modes of Tourist Experience. *International Sociology*, 16(2), 173-184.
doi:10.1177/0268580901016002003
- Li, Y. (2000). Geographical consciousness and tourism experience. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 27(4), 863-883.
- Lugosi, P. (2014). Mobilising identity and culture in experience co-creation and venue operation. *Tourism Management*, 40(0), 165-179.
doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2013.06.005
- Lynch, K. D. (2007). Modeling role enactment: Linking role theory and social cognition. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 37(4), 379-399.
- Ma, M., & Hassink, R. (2013). An evolutionary perspective on tourism area development. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 41, 89-109.
doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2012.12.004
- Markantoni, M., Koster, S., & Strijker, D. (2014). Side-activity entrepreneur: lifestyle or economically oriented? *Agglomeration, Clusters and Entrepreneurship*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 132-156.
- Markantoni, M., Koster, S., Strijker, D., & Woolvin, M. (2013). Contributing to a vibrant countryside? The impact of side activities on rural development. *Tijdschrift voor economische en sociale geografie*, 104(3), 292-307.
- Oliveira, E., & Panyik, E. (2015). Content, context and co-creation : Digital challenges in destination branding with references to Portugal as a tourist destination. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 21(1), 53-74.
- Pearce, D. G. (2014). Toward an integrative conceptual framework of destinations. *Journal of Travel Research*, 53(2), 141-153.
- Pritchard, A., Morgan, N., & Ateljevic, I. (2011). Hopeful tourism: A new transformative perspective. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 38(3), 941-963.

- Radulescu, C., & Vessey, I. (2011) Analysis of Current Grounded Theory Method Practices. In. *Business Information Systems working papers* (pp. 1-11). Sydney: The University of Sydney.
- Saarinen, J., & Tervo, K. (2006). Perceptions and adaptation strategies of the tourism industry to climate change: The case of Finnish nature-based tourism entrepreneurs. *International Journal of Innovation and Sustainable Development*, 1(3), 214-228.
- Salazar, N. B. (2012). Tourism Imaginaries: A Conceptual Approach. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 39(2), 863-882.
- Saraniemi, S., & Kylänen, M. (2011). Problematizing the Concept of Tourism Destination: An Analysis of Different Theoretical Approaches. *Journal of Travel Research*, 50(2), 133-143.
- Singh, S., & Krakover, S. (2015a). Homeland Entitlement: Perspectives of Israeli Domestic Tourists. *Journal of Travel Research*, 54(2), 222-233.
- Singh, S., & Krakover, S. (2015b). Tourist experience at home – Israeli domestic tourism. *Tourism Management*, 46, 59-61.
- Spierings, B., & van der Velde, M. (2012). Cross-Border Differences and Unfamiliarity: Shopping Mobility in the Dutch-German Rhine-Waal Euroregion. *European Planning Studies*, 21(1), 5-23.
- Szytniewski, B. B., Spierings, B., & van der Velde, M. (2016). Socio-cultural proximity, daily life and shopping tourism in the Dutch–German border region. *Tourism Geographies*, 1-15.
doi:10.1080/14616688.2016.1233289
- van der Duim, R., Ren, C., & Jóhannesson, G. T. (2013). Ordering, materiality and multiplicity: Enacting ANT in Tourism. *Tourist Studies*.

Chapter 4

The challenge of proximity: The (un)attractiveness of near home tourism destinations¹

Jelmer H. G. Jeuring & T. Haartsen

¹*Reprint of:*

Jeuring, J. H. G., & Haartsen, T. (2017). The challenge of proximity: the (un)attractiveness of near-home tourism destinations. *Tourism Geographies*, 19(1) 118-141.



Chapter 4

Abstract

Imaginarities of touristic otherness have traditionally been closely related to geographical distance and travel far away from the everyday. But in today's context of sustainable tourism, a moral and behavioral shift may be expected, toward traveling near home. Distance may actually become a disadvantage and proximity a new commodity. This implies a need to disentangle subjective understandings of both distance and proximity in relation to perceived attractiveness of and touristic behavior in places near home. Thus, it is aimed to shed light on how 'proximity tourism' is constructed, endorsed and appreciated (or not). An online survey (N=913) was administered to residents of the Dutch province of Friesland, exploring their attitudes toward their home province as tourism destination and representations of proximity and distance in relation to preferred vacation destinations. We grouped respondents into four categories, reflecting destination preferences: (1) proximate, (2) distant, (3) intermediate and (4) mixed. These groups were differentiated and characterized using quantitative and qualitative analyses. The 'proximate' and 'distant' preference groups, respectively, were most and least engaged in proximity tourism. However, the perceptions of proximity and distance expressed by the 'intermediate' and 'mixed' preference groups were associated in a nonlinear way with appreciation of the home region as a tourism destination. Additionally, respondents used proximity and distance in various ways as push, pull, keep and repel factors motivating their destination preferences. Interpretations of both proximity and distance were thus important for determining engagement in proximity tourism. This implies that tourism development in the region will require a balanced consideration of the relative, temporally sensitive ways that people negotiate distance and proximity in their perceptions of being at home and away. Our results advance the discussion about imaginaries of travel, distance and proximity, and their impact on regional tourism.

4.1 Introduction

Tourism is imbued with imaginaries of escaping the mundanity of everyday life and engaging with otherness (Salazar, 2012). This dynamic has received extensive attention in tourism scholarship and is arguably hegemonic in the social discourse about and the meanings attributed to the phenomenon of tourism (in Western societies and quickly spreading beyond). By stressing economically attractive international destinations and overnight stays, the tourism industry (still) conveys a narrative of going abroad (i.e. international travel and crossing nation-state borders) and exploring unfamiliar territories. Yet, looking closer, a more nuanced picture emerges. Most people spend vacations relatively near home, within their countries of residence (UNWTO, 2008). Also, while the exotic is not always physically distant, otherness is not always sought; it is sometimes even consciously avoided (Mikkelsen & Cohen, 2015).

The subjectivity of distance and proximity plays an important role in the spatial distribution of tourists, destinations and touristic activities. Distance and proximity not only represent physical parameters, but the subjectivities attached to them influence which places travelers appreciate as attractive and which are perceived as unattractive to visit. This is particularly informative in the context of the 'competitive identity' of destinations (Anholt, 2007). Not only may too-distant destinations be arguably less attractive, but too-proximate destinations might also be seen as unfavorable. Places near home may seem too familiar and mundane to serve the needs associated with being on vacation.

However, various scholars maintain that tourism without long travel distances is necessary, given the limited supplies of fossil fuels and negative effects in terms of transport costs and carbon footprints (Becken & Hay, 2007; Dubois, Peeters, Ceron, & Gössling, 2011; Peeters & Dubois, 2010). Hall (2009) called for a 'steady state tourism' paradigm with less emphasis on growth or gross domestic product (GDP), more attention to qualitative

development and a balance between (ecological) costs and (economic) benefits. Among other things, this implies less emphasis on long-haul travel. It seems unlikely, though, that people will refrain from travel for environmental reasons, as that contradicts the hedonic value of touristic behavior. Moreover, Larsen and Guiver (2013) found that people develop a need for distance, in which travel is functional, as the journey itself becomes important in order to experience difference and 'get away from it all.'

Conversely, and despite (or thanks to) few places remaining unaffected by the powerful effects of commodification (Cole, 2007), a broader social counter-dynamic may emerge characterized by revived attractiveness and importance of local production and consumption (e.g. in food choices) (Feagan, 2007; Haven-Tang & Jones, 2005). In line with this tendency, tourism scholarship has increasingly refocused on the benefits of the mundane, the familiar and the proximate, through which everyday life and tourism intermingle (Franklin & Crang, 2001; Pearce, 2012). For example, Mikkelsen and Cohen (2015, p. 20) argued that tourism studies should now also turn to 'everyday contexts where tourism and the mundane intersect, and to the diversity of experience within them.' Canavan (2013) noted, however, that many studies on domestic tourism lack sensitivity to micro-level processes, due to which a "detailed understanding of and nuances within domestic tourism may go unremarked, unexplained, and unaddressed" (Canavan, 2013, p. 340). Many aspects of what can be called 'proximity tourism' (Díaz Soria & Llurdés Coit, 2013) are therefore still relatively little understood, though its most extreme form –the 'staycation' in which people spend their vacation at home– has received some attention (Alexander, Lee, & Kim, 2011). This concept of vacation near home has been arguably triggered by the economic crisis that emerged in the first decade of this century. Still, much is left to be discovered about whether and to what extent familiar and physically proximate places can be or become attractive tourism destinations. Similarly, we might question

whether proximity tourism could be prompted or promoted by a drive to behave responsibly, by acting locally near home (as opposed to acting locally far away), enhancing one's own regional economy, local culture and social networks.

Therefore, there is a need to disentangle the ways that subjectivities of distance and proximity affect the image and attractiveness of destinations that are physically close to home. This paper aims to do just that, guided by the following research questions:

- 1. How do people with varying preferences for vacation destination proximity differ in terms of sociodemographic characteristics, attitudes toward proximity tourism and intraregional tourism behavior?*
- 2. How are proximity and distance represented in motivations for engaging (or not engaging) in proximity tourism among people with various preferences for vacation destination proximity?*

The paper is structured as follows. First, a theoretical argument is presented for the relevance of subjective perceptions of proximity and distance for understanding tourist motivations, destination attractiveness and tourism behavior. After providing details on the research context, methodology and sample, the quantitative and qualitative results are presented. Quantitative data provide insight on the relationship between preferences for proximity or distance in vacation destinations and sociodemographic characteristics, attitudes towards proximity tourism and intraregional touristic behavior (RQ1). Qualitative data focus on people's motivations for spending a vacation within their province of residence or somewhere more distant, and the different ways that people understand and use proximity and distance to justify their choices (RQ2). Based on

these results, implications for both the academic study of tourism and tourism practice are presented and discussed.

4.2 Literature review

4.2.1 Distance and proximity in a tourism context

Given the importance of travel in tourism, it is no surprise that distance between people's everyday dwelling and their vacation destination has received much attention. While objective measures of physical distance (e.g. Euclidian distance) are a popular way to conceptualize spatial differences, for example, in transport models (Peeters & Dubois, 2010) or analyses of destination accessibility (Celata, 2007), these approaches typically neglect the contextual and relational aspects of distance. Yet, the subjectivity of distance and proximity is an important factor in destination choice, tourist behavior and tourist experiences, and it determines how physical distance is translated into actual experiences and place narratives.

Helpful in linking the objective and subjective aspects of distance and proximity are Larsen and Guiver's (2015) three 'layers' of distance. The first layer is objectively measured spatial separation. The second layer involves the relational aspects between objects across space; it is through this layer that physical separation becomes relevant. In the third layer, relationships across physical space are contextualized, hereby suggesting meanings of relationships between places and allowing people to interpret distance and proximity in various ways. It is particularly through these relational second and third layers that distance becomes meaningful and is experienced.

Importantly, the way these contextualizations are represented in people's experiences can take different, interrelated forms (Larsen & Guiver, 2013). First, distance is a resource and interpreted in terms of the time and financial cost of traversing physical divides. Second, the fact of distance is experienced, for example, in the sensation of moving or

perception of changing scenery and climate (Jeuring & Peters, 2013). Moreover, traveling can induce a sense of liminality and 'in-betweenness' (Olwig, 2005). Third, ordinal interpretations are discerned (e.g. a place being perceived as 'near' or 'far') (Larsen & Guiver, 2013). These are often relative too, for example, with one destination perceived as 'farther away' than another. Fourth, a zonal sense is inherent to being 'here', or 'not here', highlighting the importance of spatial separation (e.g. between home and away) without any particular geographical reference.

Such representations profoundly impact how people engage in touristic behavior and encounter the (un)familiar other, which is not just physically, but also culturally proximate or distant (Kastenholz, 2010; Ryan, 2002). There appears to be an optimal level of cultural proximity in terms of positive destination image (Kastenholz, 2010). This was substantiated by a study in the Netherlands on the images Dutch residents held of the country's different regions (Rijns & Strijker, 2013). People living near the Veenkoloniën region, for instance, were less positive about the region than both residents of the region and people living farther away, suggesting a means of 'othering' from places and groups that seem too nearby.

In the context of tourism, interactions between place and self are likely complicated by the different roles associated with being a tourist and a resident. Such roles may be maintained and magnified by stereotypes and imaginaries aimed at attracting incoming tourists, while not taking into account the perceptions of local visitors. This was highlighted by a study in Israel that found people vacationing in their home country were forced to negotiate between different self-identities (Singh & Krakover, 2015). These tourists, though acknowledging being engaged in touristic activities, resisted being labeled tourists. Culturally embedded aspects thus likely play a role in the extent that people appreciate their home environment as attractive for tourism and the ways that perceptions of place, purpose and identity interact.

4.2.2 Distance, proximity and travel motivations

Perceptions of difference, cultural proximity and otherness are closely related to people's motivations for traveling across distances and escaping everyday mundanity. The motivations for going on a vacation, while varying between people, are less widespread than the ways people can meet their vacation needs and the destinations they can visit. Meeting and experiencing the Other in various touristic activities is well studied and is a major trigger for tourism travel, even though much tourism is constructed around routines and normative conventions (Edensor, 2013). Moreover, some tourists appear to go on a vacation to create an environment in which familiarity and routine play an important role (e.g. Mikkelsen & Cohen, 2015). More generally, it has been theorized that people prefer a comfortable balance between familiarity and unfamiliarity (Cohen, 1979; Edensor, 2007), with certain destinations and activities falling within people's *bandwidth of unfamiliarity* (Spierings & Van Der Velde, 2008) and others not. Thus, there is a delicate interaction between perceptions of a place being suitable for tourism purposes or for everyday purposes. Some people travel far to arrive in a place where they expect to meet their needs, while others prefer to stay at or close to home. Important motivational forces affecting mobility are push and pull factors (Prayag & Ryan, 2010), "denoting perceptions of physical-functional and socio-cultural differences between places at home or 'here' and on the other side or 'there'" (Spierings & van der Velde, 2012, p. 10). Push factors are associated with a current dwelling (i.e. home) that is perceived to be unattractive, while pull factors pertain to a perceived relative attractiveness of another place (i.e. a tourism destination). Additionally, keep and repel factors (Spierings & van der Velde, 2012) are motives for immobility, respectively, pertaining to the perceived attractiveness of 'here' and the perceived unattractiveness of 'there' (Figure 4.1). Various push, pull, keep and repel factors not only affect the comparisons people make between home and a tourism destination,

they also underlie comparisons between destinations. Likewise, such motivational factors affect whether people see places in the proximity of their home as potentially attractive to spend a vacation, either for themselves or for others.

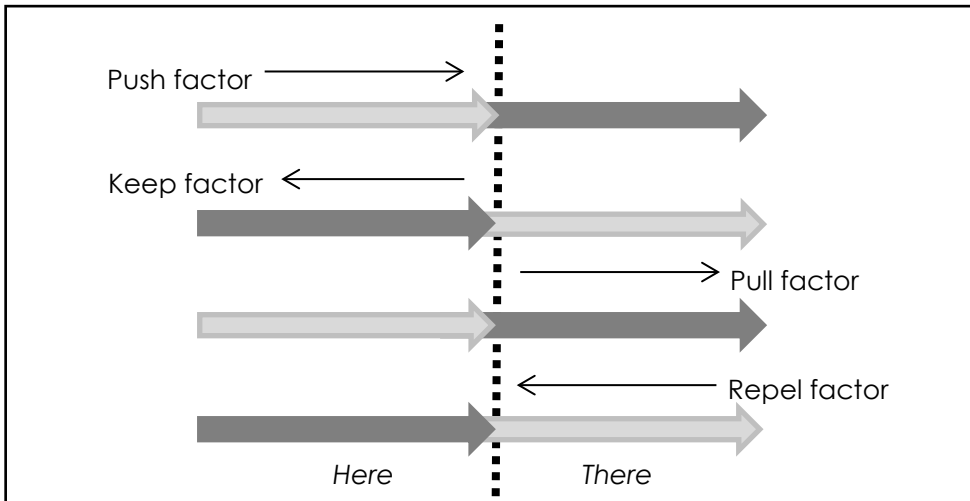


Figure 4.1 Motivational forces for (im)mobility (based on Spierings & van der Velde, 2012).

Similar relational interpretations of distance and proximity have been proposed in a number of studies, across a variety of tourism contexts. For example in cross-border shopping trips people engage with both the familiar and the unfamiliar in close geographical proximity (Spierings & van der Velde, 2012; Szytniewski & Spierings, 2014). The (often only imaginary) state borders enhance experiences of unfamiliarity through experiences, information and the self, in a complex dynamic across time and space. The extensive scholarship on second-home tourism points to a tendency to mix touristic needs and activities with everyday life environments (Marjavaara, 2008; Mottiar & Quinn, 2003; Müller, 2011). The second-home tourism contexts highlights how tourist experiences are possible physically very close to home, while at the same time demonstrating the importance of building

place attachment and a sense of familiarity through tourism, at places other than one's main residence (Wildish, Kearns, & Collins, 2016). In sum, subjectivities of proximity and distance are central to one of the main paradoxes of tourism. Proximity and distance are both polarizing and relational, they attract and oppose, comfort and alienate, motivate and constrain, affecting touristic experiences and behavior in myriad ways.

Though individually expressed, people's experiences and behaviors are shaped by social dynamics, reinforced by tourism imaginaries (Salazar, 2012). Sometimes these are pushed to the limits by tourism marketing (Jeuring, 2016; Pike & Page, 2014; Ren & Blichfeldt, 2011; Warnaby & Medway, 2013), in which socio-spatial identifiers such as nations and regions are used to discern between self and other, between home and away. Uneven capitalization of push and pull factors (i.e. the attractiveness of relatively distant visitors) at the expense of keep and repel factors (i.e. the attractiveness of relatively proximate visitors) may undermine the wellbeing of the more local, familiar stakeholders, particularly residents. Such an imbalance is evident in some destination marketing (Jeuring, 2016), but is often also directly experienced, for example, in the increased pressure tourism exerts on cities (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2007; Neuts & Nijkamp, 2012).

In light of the abovementioned negative externalities associated with touristic travel across physical distances, it has never been more justified than now to wonder how familiar, usual environments might be revalued (Díaz Soria & Llurdés Coit, 2013) and what strategies could be developed to enhance tourism near home (Gren & Huijbens, 2015). In this vein, the nonlinear dynamics between physical and subjective proximity and distance in tourism is a topic meriting further scrutiny, to better understand why some people spend their vacation close to home, while others do not. An initial step is to seek insight into how people come to see their familiar, proximate environment as attractive for tourism and how this relates to preferences for spatially separate destinations.

4.3 Methodology

4.3.1 Study area

Our study centered on the Province of Fryslân in the northern Netherlands. Its population numbers some 650,000 and the largest city is the provincial capital of Leeuwarden, which had 107,800 inhabitants in 2015. The province is known for its strong regional identity, and even has its own officially recognized language. Main touristic attractions are the region's many natural freshwater lakes and the islands along the northern coast and the Wadden Sea World Heritage Area. More inland, Fryslân's mostly rural territory is characterized by interspersed forested and agricultural landscapes (Figure 4.2).

Tourism in Fryslân is mostly seasonal and peaks between June and August. Popular vacation pursuits include watersports and cycling, with camping grounds and caravan parks providing accommodation for many. Both long vacations and daytrips to the Wadden Islands are popular, and culturally oriented visitors seek out museums and pay visits to the 'Eleven Cities', a group of historical towns that obtained their city rights between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries. Increasing numbers of festivals and events are also being organized, with many taking place between April and September.

In regional destination marketing, a clear distinction is made between the Wadden Islands and the Frisian mainland. Similarly, tourism policy is increasingly being executed on a sub-provincial level, discerning five intra-provincial regions: the Wadden Islands and the mainland subregions of South-West, South-East, North-West and North-East Fryslân (Figure 4.2). Tourism plays an increasingly important role in the regional economy (Jeuring, 2016). These subunits aside, the province remains our primary spatial unit of analysis, as Fryslân as a whole embodies key meaningful sociocultural aspects of identity (Betten, 2013). At the same

time, it is an important territorial unit in the context of the Dutch nation-state (Duijvendak, 2008; Haartsen, Groote, & Huigen, 2000).

4.3.2 Sample and procedure

Residents of the Province of Fryslân registered as respondents with Partoer, a socio-economic research organization, were invited to fill out an online survey. A convenience sampling approach was used, as registration with the panel and participation in this specific survey were voluntary. While this could result in overrepresentation of people intrinsically motivated to fill out this survey, or to communicate their opinion on regional issues more generally, we deemed the convenience sample suitable for our conceptual analysis of relations between destination attractiveness,



Figure 4.2 Tourism areas and policy regions in Fryslân.

proximity preferences and proximity tourism behavior. Nevertheless, the results should be interpreted keeping in mind the limitations of this approach.

A total of 913 usable surveys (71 percent response rate) were collected. Some 49 percent of the sample was men, 51 percent was women. Most respondents were older ages, with more than half being 50 years or older and 12 percent being younger than age 40. Some 67 percent of the respondents were married, 23 percent had never been married and 10 percent was divorced or widowed.

The survey provided items for comparing the relative attractiveness of destinations within the province (the intraregional level) and for comparing Fryslân with elsewhere in the Netherlands and abroad (the interregional level). The interregional options involved greater physical distance between home and away, thus implying a greater need for mobility and travel. Respondents were asked to allocate 100 points among three interregional options, with higher numbers of points indicating a stronger preference for that destination. Four patterns of attributing points were discerned. In line with these, we categorized respondents into four groups reflecting particular preferences of geographical proximity between home and vacation destination. This resulted in four proximity preference groups: (1) proximate, preferring to spend a vacation relatively close to home; (2) distant, preferring to spend a vacation relatively far from home; (3) intermediate, preferring to spend a vacation relatively close to home, but not too close; (4) mixed, preferring a variety with some vacations far away and some close to home. Table 4.1 presents details on group categorization.

We used our categorization into the proximity preference groups to compare respondents' touristic attitudes toward and touristic behaviors in their province of residence. Moreover, a number of sociodemographic indicators were measured, allowing us to construct basic socioeconomic

profiles of the proximity preference groups. Attitudinal items explored respondents' perceptions of the touristic attractiveness of Fryslân as destination for themselves ('What is your overall image of Fryslân as tourism destination?') and for the five subregions (respondents were asked to allocate 100 points among the subregions indicating their relative attractiveness as a tourism destination). Next to self-oriented attitudes, their sense of the province's attractiveness to others as a destination was also measured. This was done at the provincial level ('Fryslân is an attractive destination for its residents/for people from other parts of the Netherlands/for people from abroad') and for the five subregions ('To what extent would you recommend each subregion to family and friends as an attractive destination to spend a vacation?'). Normative attitudes to proximity tourism were measured in terms of perceived benefits of engaging in proximity tourism (e.g. 'When I visit touristic attractions in Fryslân, I am supporting the local economy').

Table 4.1 Conditions for grouping respondents based on relative preference for proximity of vacation destinations.

Destination options Preference groups	Combinations of points given ¹			N	%
	<i>Fryslân</i>	<i>Netherlands</i>	<i>Abroad</i>		
1. Proximate	a) >49	-	<49	134	15%
	b) >69	-	-		
	c) 50	50	-		
2. Distant	a) <49	-	>49	485	53%
	b) -	-	>69		
	c) -	50	50		
3. Intermediate	a) -	>49	-	120	13%
4. Mixed	a) >29	-	>31	174	19%
	b) >31	-	>29		

¹A total of 100 points were to be divided between the three possible destinations.

Intraregional tourist behavior pertained to overnight stays and other recreational behavior within the province. For the former, the survey asked, for example, 'In the last five years, have you spent a main vacation in Fryslân?' For the latter, a list of Fryslân's most popular touristic attractions was presented on which respondents were asked to check off those they had visited (see Appendix A). Future intraregional vacation intentions were measured using one item: 'Do you plan to spend a main vacation in Fryslân within the coming two years?' Answer categories were 'yes', 'no' and 'maybe.'

This item was followed by an open-ended question prompting respondents to provide motives for their intention. Answers varied from short phrases to full sentences. Based on the stepwise procedure outlined by Boeije (2009), our analysis of these responses involved several rounds of reading, rereading and coding, to arrive at the abstract level of categories. The coding rounds focused first primarily on identifying references to four motivational drivers of mobility (or immobility) (Spierings & van der Velde, 2012): push and pull factors to travel outside Fryslân (instead of choosing a vacation within the province) and keep and repel factors for staying close to home (i.e. prefer a vacation in Fryslân or prefer to stay at home). See also Figure 4.1. The second step in the coding rounds was to analyze representations of distance and proximity in the responses, according to the four typologies suggested by Larsen and Guiver (2013) (distance as a resource, as an experience, as an ordinal aspect and in a zonal sense). Our analysis, however, extended the application of these categories by applying them not only to distance but also to representations of proximity. The statistical software IBM SPSS Statistics (version 23) was used for the quantitative analyses and Atlas.ti was used to code the qualitative responses.

4.4 Results

This section has two parts. The first presents our quantitative analysis of preferences for and attitudes toward proximity tourism across the four proximity preference groups. These findings provide insight into the sociodemographic characteristics, perceived attractiveness of Fryslân as tourism destination for self and for others, perceptions of social benefits from engaging in proximity tourism in Fryslân and past and future intraregional touristic behavior. The second part reports on our qualitative analysis of motivations for preferences to spend a vacation near home (or spending it far away). These findings center on the different representations of distance and proximity used by the four proximity preference groups, as well as the types of distance and proximity typically used in motivations for either staying close to home or traveling afar.

4.4.1 Preferences for and attitudes toward proximity tourism

Sociodemographic indicators of preference groups

We used chi-square tests to compare the groups regarding gender, income, household type and age (Table 4.2). The proximate preference group contained more lower income households, older respondents and people with low to medium education levels. The distant preference group typically had higher household incomes and higher education levels. Also, this group contained relatively few people in the oldest age category. The group with intermediate preferences resembled the proximate group, except that it contained relatively more medium to high household incomes, a larger share of people in the 31-50 age category and a lower share of those in the 51-65 age category. Finally, people in the mixed group had high household incomes and often higher education levels. Age patterns were similar to the distant preference group, although the youngest and oldest groups were slightly better represented here. No

significant results were obtained when distinguishing between gender and between household types (not reported in Table 4.2).

Table 4.2 Income, age and education level per preference group.

	Preference groups				X ²	Cramer's V
	Proximate %	Distant %	Intermediate %	Mixed %		
Household income (df=6, n=753)	(n=110)	(n=411)	(n=92)	(n=140)	26.60 ¹	0.13
Low (<€31.000)	56%	32%	37%	39%		
Medium(€31.000- €50.000)	21%	31%	40%	31%		
High (>€50.000)	24%	37%	23%	30%		
Age (df=9, n=913)	(n=134)	(n=485)	(n=120)	(n=174)	44.85 ¹	0.13
<30	5%	8%	2%	6%		
30-50	17%	30%	29%	29%		
51-65	42%	45%	33%	41%		
>65	37%	17%	37%	24%		
Education (df=6, n=913)	(n=134)	(n=485)	(n=120)	(n=174)	38.67 ¹	0.15
Low	19%	8%	18%	8%		
Medium	40%	31%	43%	35%		
High	41%	61%	39%	57%		

¹p<0.001

Perceived attractiveness for self

Regarding overall destination image, while on average respondents were rather positive about Fryslân as a tourism destination (M = 7.90, SD = 1.28), significant differences were found between the preference groups. Most positive by far were people in the proximate preference group, while those in the distant preference group had a much less positive overall image of Fryslân (Table 4.3). This suggests that preferences for proximity and distance played an important role in destination image formation.

However, this overall image was blurred at the intraregional level, comparing the five subregions (the Wadden Islands and North-West, South-West, South-East and North-East Fryslân) (Table 4.3). Respondents appeared

to agree overall that the Wadden Islands was the most attractive subregion, followed by the South-West (lake area) and the South-East (wooded area). North-West and North-East Fryslân trailed behind at a distance. Interestingly, each of the different preference groups tended to favor a specific subregion. South-West Fryslân was most appreciated by the mixed and proximate preference groups. North-East Fryslân was most popular among the proximate preference group. Similarly, though not substantiated by significant p-values, the Wadden Islands tended to be the favorite among the distant preference group, while South-East Fryslân was relatively more appreciated by those with intermediate preferences.

Table 4.3 Overall destination image and intraregional vacation preferences: mean score differences between preference groups.

	Preference groups ¹				<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	η
	Proximate	Distant	Intermediate	Mixed			
Destination Image ²	8.54 ^a	7.65 ^b	7.92 ^{bc}	8.11 ^c	20.27	0.001	0.25
Sub-regions ³							
Wadden	48.10	54.42	49.33	52.04	1.62	n.s.	
North West	5.67	3.76	3.50	3.74	1.80	n.s.	
South West	21.64 ^{abc}	17.25 ^{ab}	15.92 ^b	24.51 ^c	6.24	0.001	0.14
South East	15.86	13.95	18.88	14.05	2.19	n.s.	
North East	7.99	4.23	5.71	4.51	3.72	0.01	0.11

¹Means with different superscripts are significant at $p < 0.05$ based on Tamhane's T2 post-hoc analysis.

²Destination Image measured on ten-point scale (1 = Very negative; 10 = Very positive).

³Relative preference for sub-regions measured with 100 points to be divided among the five regions.

Perceived attractiveness for others

While destination image and attractiveness often rest on personal preferences, another telling indicator is the expectation that (similar) others would appreciate a particular destination. Two measures were addressed in this regard. First, respondents were asked to what extent Fryslân overall was

an attractive tourism destination for three different groups: residents of the province, residents of the Netherlands and visitors from abroad. The second measure focused on the Frisian subregions, asking respondents how strongly they would recommend a particular subregion to family and friends as a possible destination for their vacation.

All groups considered Fryslân more attractive as a destination for Dutch and foreign tourists than for tourists residing in the province (Table 4). However, the preference groups differed significantly in their perceptions of the province's attractiveness to tourists from within Fryslân. The proximate group was very positive, while the intermediate and, particularly, the distant preference groups were much less so. People in the mixed preference group fell between these opposites. The ambivalent appreciation they expressed of both nearby and distant destinations thus appeared to carry over to their expectations of Fryslân's attractiveness to others.

In line with people's preferences among the subregions for their own vacations, the Wadden Islands and South-West Fryslân were highest recommended (Table 4.4). So, people appeared to recommend to others what they liked themselves. Yet, recommendation scores varied significantly between the preference groups (except for those preferring the South-West). The less 'popular' regions (North-West and North-East), in particular, were relatively unlikely to be recommended by the distant preference group. Also, the South-East was recommended relatively highly by the intermediate preference group, and less so by the distant and mixed preference groups. Finally, the Wadden Islands was less highly recommended by the intermediate preference group.

Perceived benefits of proximity tourism

Benefits of Frisian residents spending time and money through tourism within their home province included three aspects: economic benefits, the value of increasing personal knowledge about one's everyday living environment

and improved social cohesion within the province. Responses on benefit statements thus reflect normative attitudes toward proximity tourism, to the extent that it is seen as a social responsibility to support and explore 'the homeland.'

Table 4.4 Perceived destination attractiveness for potential visitor groups, recommended sub-regions of Fryslân, perceived benefits of proximity tourism: mean score differences between preference groups.

	Preference groups ¹				<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>η</i>
	Proximate	Distant	Intermediate	Mixed			
Fryslân attractive for ²							
Frisian tourists	4.17 ^a	3.20 ^b	3.43 ^c	3.72 ^d	55.33	0.001	0.39
Dutch tourists	4.42	4.22	4.35	4.28	3.34	0.02	0.10
Foreign tourists	4.37	4.23	4.31	4.30	n.s.		
Recommended regions ³							
Wadden	8.53 ^{ab}	8.65 ^b	8.21 ^a	8.55 ^{ab}	2.31	n.s.	
North West	5.41 ^a	4.60 ^b	5.25 ^a	5.11 ^a	6.04	0.001	0.14
South West	7.44	7.11	7.18	7.49	2.20	n.s.	
South East	6.90 ^{ab}	6.56 ^a	7.11 ^b	6.59 ^{ab}	2.59	0.05	0.09
North East	5.76 ^a	4.65 ^b	5.68 ^a	5.23 ^a	11.87	0.001	0.19
Benefits ⁴							
Regional Economy	4.04 ^a	3.87 ^{ab}	3.73 ^b	3.95 ^{ab}	4.59	0.003	0.12
Regional Knowledge	4.01	3.82	3.88	3.89	2.23	n.s.	
Social Cohesion	3.78 ^a	2.94 ^b	3.09 ^b	3.47 ^c	37.06	0.001	0.33

¹Means with different superscripts are significant at $p < 0.05$ based on LSD (Frisian tourists, Wadden, NW & NE) or Tamhane's T2 (Dutch Tourists, SW & SE) post-hoc analysis.

²Attractiveness statements measured on five-point scale (1=Strongly disagree; 5=Strongly agree).

³Recommendation statements measured on ten-point scale (1=Not recommended at all; 10=Highly recommended).

⁴Benefit statements measured on five-point scale (1=Strongly disagree; 5=Strongly agree).

Supporting the regional economy and increasing regional knowledge were considered overall potential benefits of proximity tourism. However, people in the intermediate preference group were significantly

less convinced of the potential benefits for the regional economy, than those in the proximate preference group (Table 4.4). Preference groups also differed significantly in their views on whether increased social cohesion could result from spending time as tourist within Fryslân. While the mixed group and, particularly, the proximate group saw this as a potential benefit, those in the intermediate and distant groups had a neutral stance.

4.4.2 Behavioral aspects of proximity tourism

Respondents were asked whether they had spent a main vacation in Fryslân during the past five years, and also if they had spent other vacations (i.e. outside of their main vacation) in the province. Vacation intention was measured by asking people whether they planned to spend a main vacation within Fryslân in the coming two years.

Chi-square tests (Table 4.5) provided insight into past and future intraregional tourist behavior and intentions among the four preference groups. It became clear that preferences for proximity or distance in tourism destinations were strongly related to both previous destination choice and intention. Over two-thirds of people in the proximate preference group had indeed spent at least one main vacation within the province. Many respondents in both the distant and intermediate groups had not spent a vacation near home. For vacations other than main vacations the relationship was weaker. Interestingly, the distant and mixed preference groups spent other vacations (next to or instead of their main vacation) within the province relatively often. This could indicate that people in these groups were financially more advantaged, but also that they had more control over the way they took and spent leisure time. In terms of intraregional vacation intentions, the pattern was more or less similar to the previous main vacation choice. Particularly interesting here was the relatively small proportion of people in the intermediate group who intended to spend their main vacation within the province. This group,

together with the mixed preference group contained the largest number of respondents who were still unsure whether they would spend a main vacation in Fryslân (Table 4.5).

In addition to overnight stays, respondents were asked about daytrips to touristic attractions in Fryslân. Overall, respondents expressed only moderate agreement with the statement, 'I visit touristic attractions in Fryslân on a regular basis' ($M = 3.54$, $SD = 1.03$). However, significant differences were found between preference groups ($F(909,3) = 4.93$, $p = 0.002$). The mixed ($M = 3.70$, $SD = 0.95$) and proximate preference groups ($M = 3.74$, $SD = 1.05$) indicated visiting near-home attractions significantly more often than those who preferred more distant vacation destinations ($M = 3.46$, $SD = 1.04$).

Table 4.5 Vacation history and intention per preference group.

	Preference groups				χ^2	Cramer's V
	Proximate ($n=134$) %	Distant ($n=485$) %	Intermediate ($n=120$) %	Mixed ($n=174$) %		
Main vacation ($df=3$, $n=913$)					216.22 ¹	0.49
Yes	67%	12%	24%	55%		
No	33%	88%	76%	45%		
Other vacation ($df=3$, $n=913$)					10.73 ²	0.11
Yes	43%	47%	33%	51%		
No	58%	53%	68%	49%		
Intention ($df=6$, $n=913$)					406.21 ¹	0.47
Yes	65%	3%	7%	37%		
Maybe	23%	19%	37%	40%		
No	12%	78%	57%	23%		

¹ $p < 0.001$, ² $p < 0.05$

Furthermore, the survey provided respondents a list of major regional touristic attractions (based on a list from Tripadvisor.com, see Appendix A). They were asked to check off the attractions they had visited at least once.

On average, respondents had visited over half of the 22 listed attractions ($M = 12.36$, $SD = 4.21$). However, those in the mixed preference group ($M = 13.03$, $SD = 3.67$) had visited significantly more attractions than people in the intermediate group ($M = 11.59$, $SD = 4.07$; $F(909,3) = 2.87$, $p = 0.04$), while the differences found between the other groups were not significant.

4.4.3 Motivations for proximity tourism

We now turn to our qualitative analysis of the representations of proximity and distance identified in the statements respondents gave to explain their intention to engage (or not to engage) in proximity tourism. We categorized motivations in terms of push and pull factors for travel across greater distances (i.e. prefer to spend a vacation outside of Fryslân) and keep and repel factors for stays in the proximity of home (i.e. prefer a vacation within Fryslân). The motivations were categorized according to the ways that notions of distance or proximity were conveyed (distance as a resource, as an experience, as an ordinal aspect and in a zonal sense). Combining these two categorizations provided in-depth insight on the link between ideas about distance/proximity and motivations underlying destination choices. First, a number of overall findings are outlined, after which the results are discussed per preference group. To compare the types of qualitative responses given by respondents in the different preference groups, categorizations obtained in Atlas.ti were imported into the SPSS file.

Overall findings

In the motivations expressed for intraregional vacation intentions, 220 references to distance and 311 references to proximity were categorized according to type of motive and type of distance/proximity (Table 4.6). Three key findings emerged, pertaining to all four preference groups. First, distance was primarily used in terms of experiences. Such experiences included the spatial qualities found when away from home (e.g. weather,

Table 4.6

Typical representations of distance and proximity in motivations for (not) planning a vacation in Fryslân, per preference group.

<i>Preference group</i>					
		Proximate	Distant	Intermediate	Mixed
Overall intention to spend vacation near home		++	--	-	+/-
Planning vacation?	<i>Typically used combinations of motivational factors and types of distance/proximity</i>				
Distance	Yes	Repel: resource Keep: experience	-	-	-
	No	Keep: resource	Pull: experience/zonal/ordinal Push: zonal	Pull: experience/zonal	Pull: experience/zonal
	Maybe	-	-	Push: experience Pull: experience/zonal	-
Proximity	Yes	Keep: resource/experience	-	Keep: resource	Keep: resource/experience
	No	-	Push: resource/experience Keep: resource	Push: resource/experience Keep: resource	Push: resource/experience
	Maybe	Keep: resource/experience	Keep: resource/experience	Keep: resource/experience	Keep: resource/experience

mountains), encounters with different cultures or a more general sense of otherness. Second, proximity was primarily used in terms of resources. For example, respondents emphasized the convenience of near-home destinations or the short travel times involved. Thus, distance and proximity seemed to serve different purposes in the motivations expressed. Third, temporal aspects reflecting either proximity or distance were often used, seemingly allowing for flexibility in the way people engaged with spatial proximity and distance. These frequently provided room for adaptation and variation throughout the year or life course. For example, temporal flexibility allowed people to alternate between short trips near home and longer vacations farther away. Similarly, being in a certain life phase (young or old,

with or without children) was mentioned as a reason for traveling to distant destinations or staying near home, either now or in the future.

Temporal distance was also reflected in the motivations expressed by people who did not know yet for sure if they would be spending a vacation near home; the moment to decide where to go on vacation had not yet arrived. Obviously, these general results were found to various degrees within the four preference groups. Variation was particularly evident in the extent that motivations reflected push, pull, keep and repel factors. The sections below discuss per preference group the distinct ways that proximity and distance were represented by each.

Proximate preference group's motivations

Given their preference for proximity, it is no surprise that most people in this group intended to spend a main vacation near home. In explaining this preference, proximity was used exclusively as a keep factor, underlining the perceived positive qualities of proximity. These included proximity as a resource, particularly the short travel time due to the destination being 'close to home,' or in terms of accessibility, as traveling was "*not easy*" with young children or in reference to respondents' being less mobile or ill. Furthermore, various instances of proximity as experience were found. Importantly, people acknowledged opportunities for encountering otherness nearby, stating for example, that in Fryslân there were "*many things still to discover*" and expressing interest in "*getting to know the province better.*"

People used ordinal aspects of distance too, stating that the weather was "*better than at home*" or "*sunnier compared to the rest of the Netherlands,*" particularly when speaking of the Wadden Islands. The weather, thus, was an important comparative aspect, even on such a small geographical scale. Similar sentiments were found in the use of distance as keep factor: while being close to home, people expressed a sense of

"being far away," "in another world." These ways of talking about proximity and distance substantiate a decoupling of experiential distance from physical separation between home and away. Furthermore, some used distance as a repel factor in terms of travel time, with "*making long trips*" cast in unattractive terms. Finally, some respondents had no intention of spending a vacation in Fryslân or anywhere else, as they stated they "*never go on vacation.*" They used distance as a keep factor, positioning themselves away from touristic activities altogether.

Distant preference group's motivations

In contrast to the proximate preference group, the distant group typically used proximity in reference to push factors. This became particularly clear when proximity was understood as a resource, for example, stating that proximate touristic attractions were easily accessible (perhaps too easily) and could be visited either "*throughout the rest of the year*" or "*at some other point in the future.*" Proximity as experience was also employed as a push factor in terms of familiarity, with people indicating, for example, "*knowing the province already.*" Many respondents noted they "*already live*" in Fryslân, implying that a spatial distinction between Fryslân and their vacation destination was a self-evident, logical reality: home is here, therefore, my vacation will be anywhere but here. Choosing to spend a vacation in Fryslân would contradict the idea of being on vacation. Importantly, proximate spatial qualities associated with Fryslân were another strong push factor. This pertained to the weather, in particular, which was described as "*too unpredictable,*" "*lacking sunshine*" and "*too cold.*"

However, not everybody expressed such strong links between the familiar, accessible home and their preference for distant vacation destinations. Some stated that, because they lived in Fryslân, a sense of being on vacation was available and proximate to them throughout the year.

Therefore they did not *"feel the need to go on a vacation,"* thus using experiential proximity as a keep factor. Finally, financial resources were a keep factor for people with distant preferences, forcing them to stay (near) home. Proximity tourism thus became an alternative when destinations far away were also financially distant, a reasoning found particularly among people who were still unsure about their vacation plans.

Distance was often referred to in this group, primarily in the context of pull factors. Not surprisingly, people preferring distance were attracted to distant places, but indeed often because those places were associated with experiential otherness. Strong associations were found between physical distance and relative, experiential distance. These were reflected in references to ordinal aspects or to distance in a zonal sense. For example, main vacations were associated with *"getting away," "going abroad"* and *"traveling afar,"* without necessarily specifying where and why. When people did specify, they noted spatial qualities, such as a mountainous environment, but the weather –again– featured prominently as well. Distant places were cast as different because they were *"sunny and warm"* or provided a *"stable climate,"* compared to Fryslân. Distance as experience was reflected in a desire to *"encounter other cultures"* or *"discover new places,"* hereby exemplifying the conventional ideas of the mundane home and the exotic away.

Intermediate preference group's motivations

Few in the intermediate preference group intended to spend their vacation in Fryslân, although a substantial share was still unsure. People in this group used distance more or less similarly to those with a preference for distance. As a pull factor, distance was associated with attractive differences to be experienced in other places than (near) home. Proximity appeared to be a strong push factor among this group. People were motivated to *"get away from the daily routine."* Temporal aspects were relatively little used in

motivations for destination preferences. However, this group, most of all, described their main vacation as an opportunity to escape. At the same time, a relatively large proportion appeared to be financially constrained, which limited their vacation options, associated with expressions of proximity as a resource in terms of keep factors. However, an intermediate preference for distance also brought an interest in otherness nearby. Thus, some similarities were found between this group and the proximate preference group too, as the discovery of new places near home was mentioned as attractive keep factor (although only by people unsure of their vacation plans). Importantly, keep motivations in this group referred to social proximity in a number of instances, that is, appreciation of having family and friends nearby.

Mixed preference group's motivations

In the group with mixed preferences, proximity was used in little less than two-third of the instances, while just over one-third pertained to distance. Vacation intentions varied widely in this group, and expressions of proximity and distance were therefore rather varied as well. The ways this group used distance aligned with those of the distant and intermediate preference groups. At the same time, this group used proximity somewhat similarly to the group preferring proximity. Thus, this group appeared to appreciate the 'best of both.' Proximity was used to convey keep factors: appreciation of the opportunity to experience difference near home. Accessibility was considered an opportunity, for the future and to rediscover their familiar environment in new ways.

Nonetheless, everyday familiarity remained a push factor for a main vacation abroad. Also, this group appeared to be flexible in allocating time, as they tended to differentiate between near-home daytrips throughout the year and main vacations abroad. The relatively large group that was still unsure expressed proximity as a keep factor in terms of "short

travel time," possibly increasing the likelihood of spending a vacation near home. However, indecision was also motivated by decision moments still being in the distant future.

4.5 Conclusion and discussion

Our study sought insight on people's appreciation of their region of residence as a tourism destination. We employed an online survey administered to a convenience sample of residents of Fryslân, The Netherlands ($N = 913$). Our explicit interest was the role played by perceptions of proximity and distance in determining the attractiveness of vacation destinations and touristic behavior near home. We discerned four preference groups regarding proximity of vacation destinations: (1) proximate, (2) distant, (3) intermediate and (4) mixed. These groups were analyzed based on demographic characteristics, perceptions of the attractiveness of vacation destinations within the home region and intraregional touristic behavior (RQ1). We also analyzed respondents' motivations for engaging (or not engaging) in proximity tourism (RQ2).

Based on the preference group profiles a number of key characteristics were discerned. Respondents indicating a preference for a proximate vacation typically had lower sociodemographic status and higher age. They also had a positive image of their home province as tourism destination and considered Fryslân an attractive destination not only for incoming tourists, but also for people living in Fryslân. This was expressed in positive attitudes toward the benefits of proximity tourism, and a higher number of past and intended main vacations spent within the home region. Proximate preferences were motivated by representations of proximity as a convenient resource and by expressions of distance as an experience of otherness that could also be found near home.

In contrast, people indicating a preference for distant destinations were relatively younger, had higher household incomes and higher

education levels. Having less positive perceptions of their home region as a tourism destination, they differentiated between the attractiveness of Fryslân to incoming tourists and its unattractiveness to residents of Fryslân. Potential local benefits resulting from intraregional tourism were little recognized, and this group hardly participated in intraregional touristic activities. This group expressed its preference for distance in terms of being pushed away, associating proximity with familiarity and bad weather. Respondents indicated being pulled toward distant places, for specific experiences of cultural or environmental otherness or for less specific ordinal aspects or distance in a zonal sense, to just escape and get away from it all.

These two profiles were mediated by people in the intermediate and mixed preference groups. The sociodemographic profile of the intermediate preference group was similar to that of the proximate preference group. Similarly, they somewhat paralleled the distant preference group regarding perceived benefits of near-home tourism, a lower overall image of the home province as a tourism destination and ways of using distance in destination preference motivations. Yet, the intermediate preference group was unique in its appreciation of South-East Fryslân, its lower engagement in intraregional tourism between main vacations and its use of social proximity as a keep factor for spending a main vacation in Fryslân. On the other hand, the mixed preference group was somewhat similar to the proximate preference group in participation in intraregional tourism, while its sociodemographic profile matched that of the distant preference group. Expressions of distance by the mixed group were similar to those in the group preferring distant destinations, while proximity was expressed in terms similar to the proximity preference group. Finally, the mixed preference group distinguished itself in both appreciating and visiting proximate *and* distant destinations. Thus, the four group profiles –representing varying preferences for proximity and distance– were

associated in a nonlinear way with appreciation of the home region as a tourism destination.

Overall we can conclude that preferences for proximity and distance formed a useful basis for studying attitudes towards proximity tourism. Our study has contributed to a better understanding of the often neglected perspective of residents as tourists in their home environment. Based on these findings, a number of themes can be highlighted for better understanding the mechanisms people use to negotiate between home and away.

First, the complex and varied perceptions among residents of the tourism potential of their home region represents a challenge to scholars and tourism stakeholders. Indeed, perceptual and behavioral barriers may inhibit appreciation of otherness and differences found near home, as these are often hidden under a surface of familiarity. We found this to be particularly true among people who strongly associated geographical distance with their vacation needs. Yet, a too-overt focus on otherness could neglect the significance of familiarity in tourism. We found familiar and comfortable social environments to be important to many proximity tourists in Fryslân, in line with findings on camping tourists elsewhere (Blichfeldt, 2004; Collins & Kearns, 2010; Mikkelsen & Cohen, 2015) and second-home tourists (Müller, 2006). Thus, tourism policy should be sensitive to the importance of mundane activities in tourism, doing nothing as a way to 'vacate' (Blichfeldt & Mikkelsen, 2013) and the often strong attachments tourists develop to the destinations they visit. Similarly, travel is still a luxury for some, and limited temporal and financial resources might translate into mobility constraints, often related to personal and life-course circumstances (e.g. couples with young children, older people with small pension incomes and physical limitations imposed by old age). Access to geographically proximate tourism resources will therefore remain an important consideration across all sociodemographic groups, and local residents

should be a key target group in developing regional tourism, as well as in policymaking regarding citizen wellbeing. Similarly, a disproportionate focus among policymakers and tourism marketing organizations on relatively rich, incoming tourists risks stimulating social segregation and resident opposition to regional tourism, as it arguably may make places less attractive to the people residing nearby. A less rigid distinction between residents and tourists –though this is a persistent dichotomy in both tourism research and tourism policy (Jeuring, 2016)– is therefore encouraged.

A second contribution of this study is to advance understanding of representations of proximity and distance in motivations and preferences for tourism destinations. Our results confirm the conceptual usefulness of the keep and repel factors (Spierings & van der Velde, 2012), in addition to the conventional push and pull factors, for understanding the motivations underlying tourism mobility. Indeed, the different roles of proximity and distance in the four motivation types confirm the importance of relative comparisons in destination choices. Choosing among destinations is an interactive comparative process in which attractiveness and unattractiveness are relative. The factors viewed as attractive and unattractive depend on people's personal preferences, embedded in place and time. Our respondents used different representations of proximity and distance as relative anchor points for positioning themselves with regard to their vacation preferences.

An example of such comparison is the way our respondents used the weather and climate in their reasoning. Distant destinations were represented as having stable and warm weather, while bad, unpredictable weather was associated with proximity, home and the everyday. Other studies have found weather conditions at the destination to significantly impact the tourist experience (Jeuring & Peters, 2013) and destination image (Becken & Wilson, 2013). Among our respondents, too, comparisons between home and away often appeared to be based on perceptions of

the weather. Given the temperate, variable climate of Fryslân, which is typical of North-West Europe, future research could further scrutinize how the weather affects (potential) proximity tourists in this region. Locals might, if the weather is nice, choose to remain in the region instead of, or in addition to, conventional (mass) tourism farther away.

Moreover, the role of proximity and distance in vacation motivations is not entirely spatial. We found the use of distance and proximity as push, pull, keep and repel factors to be embedded in a temporal context, diminishing the often polarizing influence of spatial distinctions between home and away. What people find attractive or unattractive, familiar or unfamiliar varies over time, both in the short term of an annual vacation escape and in the longer term of the overall life course. In our study, this was exemplified by the distinction respondents made between their main vacations and the opportunity to explore places near home during the rest of the year. The need to escape the everyday could also be understood as an opportunity to balance associations of unattractive familiarity nearby with attractive unfamiliarity far away (Spierings & van der Velde, 2012). In this light, tourism destinations might focus less on their competitive identity (Anholt, 2007) and more on a complementary identity. To this end, we suggest increased attention for temporal dynamics in tourism research on destination choice and tourist behavior.

Third, our findings support the existence of the attitude-behavior gap identified in other studies (Hibbert, Dickinson, Gössling, & Curtin, 2013): despite a positive attitude toward Fryslân as a touristic destination, vacationing was associated with physical distance between home and destination, and people tended to formulate both their preferences and their destination choices accordingly. Positive attitudes thus were frequently not translated into actual intraregional touristic behavior. This remains an important topic for tourism research, particularly as large carbon footprints are increasingly criticized and transport costs are expected to rise

significantly. Proximity tourism as an alternative might then reflect behavioral responsibility for both the local and the global environment (Gren & Huijbens, 2015).

Fourth, proximity tourism could offer an opportunity for tourism marketing, destination branding and regional development as a whole, to redefine the target audience of touristic attractiveness and how tourism contributes to the wellbeing of residents. Social and normative aspects of identity are particularly influential here (Hibbert et al., 2013), as traveling abroad enjoys a status of affluence. Nevertheless, increasing initiatives illustrate a revaluation of the local and familiar in the context of near-home touristic experiences, thus renegotiating the discourse of home and away and decoupling geographical distance from experienced otherness. An excellent example in this regard is the provision of guided city tours aimed at local residents (Díaz Soria & Llurdés Coit, 2013; Rabotić, 2008). Some regional tourism marketing organizations have acknowledged the value of proximity. For example, in early 2016, the Dutch Province of Flevoland introduced an 'Adventurous Nearby' campaign to raise awareness among residents of the touristic value of their home surroundings.

Finally, while Hibbert et al. (2013) proposed opportunities for 'counter-identities' to overcome the constraints of environmentally sustainable travel, the same logic could be applied to traveling closer to home, for example, building on the notion of a rediscovery of the self through tourism. Presenting familiar places from a new angle enables people to reconstruct their own identities and those of the places they inhabit. Furthermore, framing proximity tourism as a type of citizenship behavior might encourage people to spend vacations near home, to engage with everyday environments in different ways and to develop regional pride and awareness. Eventually, such awareness could induce regional ambassadorship activities, such as word-of-mouth behavior. A good example in this regard is Melbourne, Australia, with its 'Discover Your

Own Backyard' campaign. Another is the recent resident-focused marketing campaign of the Belgian Province of Limburg, building on the idea that locally committed citizens should explore their home region. We expect the momentum of this dynamic to increase in the coming years and hope this study provides input for further innovative tourism development, aimed at raising awareness and appreciation of familiar, near-home environments.

References

- Alexander, A. C., Lee, K. H., & Kim, D.-Y. (2011). Determinants of visitor's overnight stay in local food festivals: An exploration of staycation concept and its relation to the origin of visitors. In *Proceedings of the 16th Annual Graduate Education & Graduate Student Conference in Hospitality & Tourism*, Houston, TX.
- Anholt, S. (2007). Competitive identity: The new brand management for nations, cities and regions. *Journal of Brand Management*, 14(6), 474-475.
- Becken, S., & Hay, J. (2007). *Tourism and climate change: Risks and opportunities*. Clevedon: Channel View Publications.
- Becken, S., & Wilson, J. (2013). The impacts of weather on tourist travel. *Tourism Geographies*, 15(4), 620-639.
- Betten, E. (2013). *De Fries. Op zoek naar de Friese identiteit*. Leeuwarden: Wijdemeer.
- Blichfeldt, B. S. (2004). *Why do some Tourists choose to spend their Vacation Close to home*. Esbjerg: Syddansk Universitet.
- Blichfeldt, B. S., & Mikkelsen, M. V. (2013). Vacability and sociability as touristic attraction. *Tourist Studies*, 13(3), 235-250.
- Boeije, H. (2009). *Analysis in qualitative research*. London: Sage.
- Canavan, B. (2013). The extent and role of domestic tourism in a small

- island: The case of the Isle of Man. *Journal of Travel Research*, 52(3), 340-352.
- Celata, F. (2007). Geographic marginality, transport accessibility and tourism development. In A. Celant (Ed.), *Global tourism and regional competitiveness* (pp. 37-46). Bologna: Patron.
- Cohen, E. (1979). A phenomenology of tourist experiences. *Sociology*, 13(2), 179-201. doi:10.1177/003803857901300203
- Cole, S. (2007). Beyond authenticity and commodification. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 34(4), 943-960.
- Collins, D., & Kearns, R. (2010). 'Pulling up the Tent Pegs?' The significance and changing status of coastal campgrounds in New Zealand. *Tourism Geographies*, 12(1), 53-76.
- Dubois, G., Peeters, P., Ceron, J. P., & Gössling, S. (2011). The future tourism mobility of the world population: Emission growth versus climate policy. *Transportation Research Part A: Policy and Practice*, 45(10), 1031-1042. doi:10.1016/j.tra.2009.11.004
- Duijvendak, M. (2008). Ligamenten van de staat? Over regionale identiteit en de taaiheid van de provincie. *BMGN-Low Countries Historical Review*, 123(3), 342-353.
- Díaz Soria, I., & Lluérdés Coit, J. (2013). Thoughts about proximity tourism as a strategy for local development. *Cuadernos de Turismo*, 32, 65-88.
- Edensor, T. (2007). Mundane mobilities, performances and spaces of tourism. *Social & Cultural Geography*, 8(2), 199-215.
- Feagan, R. (2007). The place of food: Mapping out the 'local' in local food systems. *Progress in Human Geography*, 31(1), 23-42.
- Franklin, A., & Crang, M. (2001). The trouble with tourism and travel theory. *Tourist Studies*, 1(1), 5-22.
- Gren, M., & Huijbens, E. H. (2015). *Tourism and the Anthropocene*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Haartsen, T., Groote, P., & Huigen, P. P. (2000). *Claiming rural identities:*

- Dynamics, contexts, policies*. Assen: Uitgeverij Van Gorcum.
- Hall, C. M. (2009). Degrowing Tourism: Décroissance, Sustainable Consumption and Steady-State Tourism. *Anatolia*, 20(1), 46-61.
- Haven-Tang, C., & Jones, E. (2005). Using local food and drink to differentiate tourism destinations through a sense of place. *Journal of Culinary Science & Technology*, 4(4), 69-86.
- Hibbert, J. F., Dickinson, J. E., Gössling, S., & Curtin, S. (2013). Identity and tourism mobility: An exploration of the attitude behaviour gap. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 21(7), 999-1016.
- Jeuring, J. H. G. (2016). Discursive contradictions in regional tourism marketing strategies: The case of Fryslân, The Netherlands. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 5(2), 65-75.
- Jeuring, J. H. G., & Peters, K. B. M. (2013). The influence of the weather on tourist experiences: Analysing travel blog narratives. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 19(3), 209-219.
- Kastenholz, E. (2010). 'Cultural proximity' as a determinant of destination image. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 16(4), 313-322.
- Kavaratzis, M., & Ashworth, G. J. (2007). Partners in coffeeshops, canals and commerce: Marketing the city of Amsterdam. *Cities*, 24(1), 16-25.
- Larsen, G. R. (2015). Distant at your leisure: Consuming distance as a leisure experience. In S. Gammon & S. Elkington (Eds.), *Landscapes of leisure: Space, place and identities* (pp. 192-201). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Larsen, G. R., & Guiver, J. W. (2013). Understanding tourists' perceptions of distance: A key to reducing the environmental impacts of tourism mobility. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 21(7), 968-981.
- Marjavaara, R. (2008). *Second home tourism: The root to displacement in Sweden?* (PhD thesis). Umeao University, Umeao.
- Mikkelsen, M. V., & Cohen, S. A. (2015). Freedom in mundane mobilities: Caravanning in Denmark. *Tourism Geographies*, 17(5), 663-681.

- Mottiar, Z., & Quinn, B. (2003). Shaping leisure/tourism places-the role of holiday home owners: A case study of Courtown, Co. Wexford, Ireland. *Leisure Studies*, 22(2), 109-127.
- Müller, D. K. (2006). The attractiveness of second home areas in Sweden: A quantitative analysis. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 9(4 5), 335-350.
- Müller, D. K. (2011). The internationalization of rural municipalities: Norwegian Second Home Owners in Northern Bohuslän, Sweden. *Tourism Planning & Development*, 8(4), 433-445.
- Neuts, B., & Nijkamp, P. (2012). Tourist crowding perception and acceptability in cities: An applied modelling study on Bruges. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 39(4), 2133-2153.
- Olwig, K. R. (2005). Liminality, seasonality and landscape. *Landscape Research*, 30(2), 259-271.
- Pearce, P. L. (2012). The experience of visiting home and familiar places. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 39(2), 1024-1047.
- Peeters, P., & Dubois, G. (2010). Tourism travel under climate change mitigation constraints. *Journal of Transport Geography*, 18(3), 447-457.
- Pike, S., & Page, S. J. (2014). Destination marketing organizations and destination marketing: A narrative analysis of the literature. *Tourism Management*, 41, 202-227. doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2013.09.009
- Prayag, G., & Ryan, C. (2010). The relationship between the 'push' and 'pull' factors of a tourist destination: The role of nationality an analytical qualitative research approach. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 14(2), 121-143.
- Rabotic, B. (2008). *Tourist guides as cultural heritage interpreters: Belgrade experience with municipality-sponsored guided walks for local residents*. Paper presented at the International Tourism Conference, Alanya: Cultural & Event Tourism.
- Ren, C., & Blichfeldt, B. S. (2011). One clear image? Challenging simplicity in

- place branding. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, 11(4), 416-434.
- Rijnks, R. H., & Strijker, D. (2013). Spatial effects on the image and identity of a rural area. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 36(0), 103-111.
- Ryan, C. (2002). Tourism and cultural proximity: Examples from New Zealand. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 29(4), 952-971.
- Salazar, N. B. (2012). Tourism imaginaries: A conceptual approach. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 39(2), 863-882.
- Singh, S., & Krakover, S. (2015). Homeland entitlement: Perspectives of Israeli domestic tourists. *Journal of Travel Research*, 54(2), 222-233.
- Spierings, B., & Van Der Velde, M. (2008). Shopping, borders and unfamiliarity: Consumer mobility in Europe. *Tijdschrift voor economische en sociale geografie*, 99(4), 497-505.
- Spierings, B., & van der Velde, M. (2012). Cross-border differences and unfamiliarity: Shopping mobility in the Dutch-German Rhine-Waal Euroregion. *European Planning Studies*, 21(1), 5-23.
- Szytniewski, B., & Spierings, B. (2014). Encounters with otherness: Implications of (Un)familiarity for daily life in borderlands. *Journal of Borderlands Studies*, 29(3), 339-351.
- UNWTO. (2008). *World tourism barometer 2008* (Vol. 6). Madrid: Author.
- Warnaby, G., & Medway, D. (2013). What about the 'place' in place marketing? *Marketing Theory*, 13(3), 345-363.
doi:10.1177/1470593113492992
- Wildish, B., Kearns, R., & Collins, D. (2016). At home away from home: Visitor accommodation and place attachment. *Annals of Leisure Research*, 19(1), 117-133. doi:10.1080/11745398.2015.1037324

Appendix A. Popular tourist attractions and activities in Friesland

Attraction type

1. Nature areas

- Âlde Feanen national park
- The forests in the border area of Friesland and Drenthe (Frisian Woods area)
- Coast along the IJssel lake (between Lemmer and Makkum)
- Sea dike along the mainland Wadden coast (between Harlingen and Lauwersoog)
- One of the Frisian Wadden islands

2. Museums

- Ice-skating museum in Hindeloopen
- Kameleondorp in Terherne
- The new Frisian Museum in Leeuwarden
- Prinsessehof Keramiekmuseum in Leeuwarden
- Eise Eisinga Planetarium in Franeker

3. Festivals & activities

- PC Kaats competition in Franeker
- Oerol cultural festival on Terschelling
- Ice-skating competition in Thialf stadium, Heerenveen
- Balloonfestival in Joure
- Skûtsjesilen (traditional sailing boat competition)
- Renting a boat on the Frisian Lakes

4. Built heritage

- Terp of Hegebeintum
 - Woudagemaal
 - Waterpoort in Sneek
 - City of Stavoren
 - City of Sloten
 - Monument on the Afsluitdijk
-

Chapter 5

Destination branding by residents - The role of perceived responsibility in destination Word-of-Mouth¹

Jelmer H. G. Jeuring & T. Haartsen

¹Reprint of:

Jeuring, J. H. G., & Haartsen, T. (2017). Destination Branding by Residents: The Role of Perceived Responsibility in Positive and Negative Word-of-Mouth. *Tourism Planning & Development*, 14(2), 240-259.



Chapter 5

Abstract

The importance of residents' communication about their home region as tourist destination is increasingly acknowledged in the place branding process. However, the extent to which residents feel responsible for communicating Destination Images (DIs), and how these attributions affect word-of-mouth (WOM) behavior has remained unclear. This paper addresses this topic by reporting a quantitative study (N = 913) among residents of the Dutch province of Fryslân. The results show that responsibility attributions for communicating positive regional images predict, next to Place Attachment and DI, positive and negative WOM behavior (pWOM and nWOM). Particularly attributing responsibility to citizens themselves is a significant predictor of pWOM and nWOM. Further, findings point to the role of age in variation in responsibility attributions and to previous holiday experience as predictor of nWOM. The implications for citizen engagement in destination branding and regional tourism management are discussed.

5.1 Introduction

Residents are increasingly included in regional marketing and place branding (Klijn, Eshuis, & Braun, 2012; Sartori, Mottironi, & Corigliano, 2012). Being acknowledged as important stakeholders (Kavaratzis, 2012), residents' and visitors' communication through informal networks, enhanced by social media, has taken at least part of the power to create Destination Images (DIs) away from destination marketing organizations (DMO's).

Destination marketing tends to construct holistic DIs through umbrella brands, often calling upon a supposedly homogeneous regional identity among residents of a destination (Jeuring, 2016). In this vein, the region as a meaningful, yet contested spatial category (Hurenkamp, Tonkens, & Duyvendak, 2011; Paasi, 2003; Terlouw, 2012) for the construction of Place Attachment (PA) and regional engagement among residents is expected to translate into positive destination word-of-mouth (WOM). However, the ways residents can complement and sustain these images are not automatically lining up with destination branding attempts, as DIs and PA differ between individual people, contexts and geographical levels. Therefore, supporting holistic brands among residents might demand a level of involvement that exceeds individual interests. As such, resident participation in destination branding can be seen as a form of citizenship (Bianchi & Stephenson, 2013; Zenker & Rütter, 2014) with duties and responsibilities at the benefit of the wider community.

Understanding responsibility attributions might be relevant for successfully engaging residents as place branding stakeholders and opinion makers. While PA and DI are known to be affecting various behaviors such as destination choice, loyalty and WOM, little is yet known about responsibility attributions for generating positive regional images among 'bottom-up' stakeholders, such as residents. These links need to be explored

in order to better understand the factors that affect the conditions for and limitations of citizen participation in destination branding.

Therefore, our paper aims to gain more insights into the extent to which residents are inclined to talk about their home region as tourist destination and who they hold responsible for generating positive regional DIs. Do attachment to their province of residence and perceived images of this province as tourism destination affect such WOM intentions? And do residents attribute responsibilities for sustaining positive regional DIs to themselves, to tourism entrepreneurs or to regional governments?

These questions are particularly relevant when considering that citizens have different, simultaneous relations with the places they inhabit. Not only are they residents, but they can also be tourists (Franklin & Crang, 2001), visiting various places within their region and spending holidays at locations that are geographically proximate to their place of residence (Müller, 2006; Singh & Krakover, 2015). This perspective complicates the traditional binaries of host-guest and local-tourist and demands tourism research that takes into account the various ways people experience and talk about places they find important.

To answer the research questions, a digital survey (N = 913) was employed in the Dutch province of Fryslân. Within the Netherlands, Fryslân is known for its strong regional identity (Betten, 2013; Duijvendak, 2008). This regional identity is rooted in an accumulation of political, cultural and natural dynamics. For example, a major (but declining) part of Frisian residents speak Frisian, the second language of The Netherlands. Fryslân is up to today an important source of self-identification for many people in the province, particularly within a context of the Dutch nation state.

Frisian destination branding and tourism marketing rely for an important part on a narrative of a 'Frisian Identity', along which the province is promoted (Jeuring, 2016). Particularly, Jeuring shows how assumptions are made about a homogenizing regional identity that should

translate into a sense of commitment among residents to the administrative space of Fryslân or to Fryslân as tourism destination. For example, residents are envisioned to be hospitable ambassadors of the province, embodying 'Frisianness' in the way they receive visitors or reinforcing the regional tourism brand by positive WOM (pWOM). However, thus far no evidence exists whether this sentiment prevails among residents.

In the following, an overview of relevant literature is given on stakeholder involvement in destination branding, WOM and its antecedents, and citizenship. Next, methods and materials are outlined, followed by the results of the study. Finally, the findings are interpreted, implications for destination marketing practices are given and topics for future research are suggested.

5.2 Theory

5.2.1 Citizen engagement in destination branding

In recent years, destination management and destination branding are being challenged considerably by changing means of attributing values to products and places. For one thing, this is due to the decentralization of knowledge ownership, blurring the construction and contestation of place meanings (Paasi, 2012; Zimmerbauer & Paasi, 2013). Particularly, DMOs and tourism entrepreneurs aim to engage with their (potential) customers on a personal level by attempting to grapple with the informal circulation (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2004) of destination imaginaries (Salazar, 2012). At the same time, informal networks (e.g. travel blogs, review websites) increasingly are acknowledged as trusted information sources for, and ways of communication about touristic expectations, experiences and evaluations (Carson, 2008; Pan, MacLaurin, & Crotts, 2007). In that vein, engagement of 'local' and 'bottom-up' stakeholders is sought after in order to account for successful destination development and branding (Eshuis, Klijn, & Braun, 2014; Rehmet & Dinnie, 2013).

Place branding however has been criticized to be a top-down practice, reflecting the interests of a selected group of powerful stakeholders, such as politicians or boards of directors (Eshuis et al., 2014; Hankinson, 2007). These particular interests might not always align with the interests and ideas of other stakeholders and a more inclusive approach to tourism development is called for (Malek & Costa, 2014), which particularly pertains to practices of destination branding (Braun, Kavaratzis, & Zenker, 2013). For example, important benefits of the involvement of citizens and other local stakeholders that are mentioned by Klijn et al. (2012) include a more clear brand concept (or brand identity, i.e. the communicated meanings attributed to a place) and an increase in attraction of specific target groups. Arguably even more important, involving citizens in various planning practices is key in attempts "to build ties with local stakeholders in order to encourage them to become actively involved in changing conditions that affect the quality of their lives" (Malek & Costa, 2014, p. 1).

Involving citizens in destination marketing has only recently become an explicit topic on the research agenda of tourism scholars (Rehmet & Dinnie, 2013). Thus far, research has mostly built on scholarship in the field of organizational behavior and product marketing, for example aligning with the idea of employees and consumers as brand ambassadors (Xiong, King, & Piehler, 2013). Similarly, ambassador networks (Andersson & Ekman, 2009) have been acknowledged as important ways of supporting institutionalized place marketing efforts. Particular benefits of ambassador networks include an effective and trustworthy means of communication, but also the enhanced competitiveness of a place or destination through the mere existence of an ambassador network (Andersson & Ekman, 2009). As such, the perceptions and activities of internal stakeholders, but also communication and collaboration with them should be an essential part of destination marketing (Choo, Park, & Petrick, 2011). Therefore, citizen engagement is a key factor in delivering externally communicated

promises. Nonetheless, King states that “internal brand management [...] is yet to be thoroughly explored in the context of [tourism and hospitality]” (King, 2010, p. 2).

Building on citizen engagement in place branding implies assumptions on which roles inhabitants play in relation to their place of residence. After all, tourism development and place branding should start with the question ‘for who’s benefit’? As outlined by Braun et al. (2013) for example, city residents have four different yet simultaneously played roles in place marketing. They are the audience receiving messages of place marketing campaigns, but at the same time they are part of the communicated place brand; who they are and what they do is inherently connected to how destinations are experienced by visitors. Third, residents are place ambassadors, who ‘live the brand’ (Aronczyk, 2008) and finally, they play a role as citizens who provide legitimization to any meaning attributed to public places. This approach points out how on a local level traditional tourism binaries such as host-guest and tourist-resident do not apply anymore in the blurred complexity of a ‘glocalized’ world (Ritzer, 2003).

Grappling with the various roles of local residents in relation to the place they live, work, recreate and receive visitors calls for in-depth knowledge on the motivation of people to engage in various ways of circulating place brands and imaginaries of tourism destinations. An important aspect in this is the way residents talk about the places they live in. The next section therefore digs deeper into the holy grail of bottom-up branding, WOM.

5.2.2 Word-of-mouth

Destination marketing, and particularly destination branding activities, aim to construct positive meanings of places, by communicating a selection of physical, emotional and functional attributes of a place (Klijn et al., 2012).

Braun et al. (2013) discern between three ways of place communication. Primary communication occurs through the physical features of a place. Secondary communication pertains to official marketing and public relations. Tertiary communication is the way in which residents of a place talk about their place, thus including WOM behavior.

Summing up assumptions of various scholars, "consumers have far more confidence in the views of friends and acquaintances than in a message that emanates from advertising or corporate spokespeople" (Andersson & Ekman, 2009, p. 43). Thus, WOM is acknowledged as an important means of circulating evaluations of intangible tourism offerings, hereby strongly influencing the success of tourism destinations. WOM has been defined in various ways, with most definitions pertaining to independent, face-to-face communication about products, services or companies between consumers (Chen, Dwyer, & Firth, 2014). Motivations to engage in WOM are rooted in needs for self-enhancement and self-affirmation, but links have also been found with social comparison, social bonding or an intention to help others (Alexandrov, Lilly, & Babakus, 2013).

WOM can take on different forms. For example, conventional WOM is face-to-face, but with the rise of the Web 2.0, electronic WOM (eWOM) has been studied too (Chu & Kim, 2011). Further, Chen et al. (2014) describe how WOM varies according to the number of senders and receivers, differentiating between one-to-one, one-to-many and many-to-many WOM. A more content-based typology is given by Naylor and Kleiser (2000), who studied negative and positive WOM (nWOM and pWOM). Alexandrov et al. (2013) found evidence for different motivations to engage in nWOM and pWOM. Importantly for tourism contexts, this latter distinction can shed light on the amplification of individual experiences into public opinions, for example taking shape through review websites for accommodations, restaurants, events or whole destinations (Carson, 2008; Pan et al., 2007).

WOM and Place Attachment

Place Attachment (PA) plays a central role in understanding people–place relations. Different conceptualizations of PA have been used (Lewicka, 2011). Moreover, the literature seems to lack consensus on a definition for PA and the concept tends to overlap (Lewicka, 2011) with, for example, Sense of Place (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2001) and Place Identity (Rijnks & Strijker, 2013). Similarly, PA has been stated to cover various sub dimensions. For example, Williams and Vaske (2003) employ two dimensions, discerning between affective and functional attachments. Alternatively, other scholars use three or four dimensions (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2001; Kyle, Graefe, & Manning, 2005). Chen et al. (2014) employ six dimensions, which largely overlap with the conceptualization of Jorgensen and Stedman. These are Place Identity (place as a basis for self-determination), Place Dependence (a perceived functional attachment), Social Bonding (social connections within a place), Affective Attachment (an emotional relation between person and place) and two interactional dimensions relating to people's memories about, and expectations of a place. Various scholars provide evidence for a strong link between PA and WOM behavior (Alexandrov et al., 2013; Chen et al., 2014; Simpson & Siguaw, 2008). Indicators of spatial attachment on geographical levels varying from households to continents have been found to predict WOM intention and behavior. Explanations for this link lie in motivations of people to inform others about their experiences with a place, a sense of pride about a place or a wish to support a place by, for example, encourage other people to visit a place (Choo et al., 2011). So, PA appears to be enacted by social communications about a place. Therefore and in line with previous research, we hypothesize that:

H1 - Higher scores on PA concepts result in higher pWOM and in lower nWOM intentions.

WOM and Destination Image

Next to PA, Destination Image (DI) has been studied as WOM predictor in hospitality and tourism contexts (Agapito, Mendes, & Valle, 2010; Qu, Kim, & Im, 2011). Attitudes toward and perceptions about destinations appear important predictors of destination choice, return intentions but also loyalty toward a destination (Rodríguez Molina, Frías-Jamilena, & Castañeda-García, 2012). Moreover, given the self-enhancement and social positioning functions of WOM, talking positively or negatively about a destination is a way of expressing people's DI and of enacting self-identities. As such, WOM is "place branding in action" (Johansson, 2012, p. 3615), emphasizing the societal importance of tourism destinations in terms of performing everyday life identities and enacting a sense of belonging.

Conceptually, DI has a cognitive (functional) and an affective (emotional) component (Agapito et al., 2010). Additionally, a general evaluation of a destination is conceptualized as the Overall Image (OI) (Bigné Alcañiz, Sánchez García, & Sanz Blas, 2009). In some studies affective and cognitive attributes are dimensions of an OI, while in others OI is a more holistic appreciation of a destination (Rodríguez Molina et al., 2012), which forms a separate, third dimension of DI (Ahmed, 1991 in Rodríguez Molina et al., 2012).

Previous research has pointed to a large overlap between concepts of DI and image of large-scale spatial units such as countries and regions (Mossberg & Kleppe, 2005). Similarly, the province of Fryslân as a meaningful region contains numerous social and geographical variations, making it difficult to measure in terms of cognitive image. Moreover, as geographical units become larger or less familiar, their image becomes more holistic (Rijnks & Strijker, 2013) and people base their evaluations on affective associations, since people's image cannot account for all the (functional) intraregional differences. For this reason, regional identification is mainly affective (and less cognitive) (Pan, 2011). Also, in other studies it is argued

that while affective DI is conceptually part of an overall perception of a destination, an OI pertains to an evaluation that is greater than the sum of its parts (Bigné Alcañiz et al., 2009) and can therefore add a significant predictive value in explaining people's behavior, such as WOM. So, DI is measured here in holistic terms of OI and Affective Image (AI) and we hypothesize that:

H2 - Higher scores on Affective Image and on Overall Image predict higher intention of pWOM and lower intention of nWOM.

Citizenship and responsibility

The concept of citizenship originally pertained to notions of belonging and rights within nation states (Bianchi & Stephenson, 2014). This has sparked strong relations with people's identity constructions in terms of the places where they reside (Misener & Mason, 2006). However, current understandings also include relations between individuals and their community, for example in terms of awareness, participation, loyalty and responsibility (Morais & Ogden, 2011).

Responsibility attributions are an important issue in current (Western) societies, as governments are decentralizing their tasks and societies are increasingly regulated by a complex interplay of stakeholders, by others referred to as a 'Big Society' (Flinders & Moon, 2011; Kisby, 2010). As such, perceived responsibility of residents has received attention in various contexts. Important results are gained in the field of ecological behavior (Kaiser, Ranney, Hartig, & Bowler, 1999) and risk communication (Jeuring & Becken, 2013; Mulilis & Duval, 1997), particularly with respect to shared responsibilities between various stakeholders. Typically, stakeholders to whom responsibility can be attributed are individual residents, entrepreneurs and governmental authorities (Lalwani & Duval, 2000). Similarly, as sustainable tourism development builds on the involvement of

multiple stakeholders, consensus about the attribution of responsibilities for various tasks in this process is essential.

Understanding resident involvement in destination branding might benefit from notions of citizenship and responsibility. As Choo et al. (2011) point out, residents are internal customers, and major local tourism benefits pertain to the ways residents can enjoy their local places through tourism and recreation (Canavan, 2013). Also, ideas of bottom-up brand support prevail for some time now in destination branding practice. Local engagement via tourism is linked with brand identification and in turn has been found to positively affect WOM behavior (Chen et al., 2014).

In this vein, local residents behaving responsibly toward their region implies a hospitable, positive attitude, including a general aim for creating and sustaining positive imaginaries about a region. Yet, Rehmet and Dinnie (2013), in a study on motivations of Berlin residents to participate in the 'be Berlin' campaign, found that residents were little triggered by commitment and pride of their city, while expected personal benefits did motivate. So, assuming community feelings among residents as a basis for supporting holistic brands might overlook the importance of responsibility attributions as condition for citizenship behavior in the context of destination branding.

Addressing this issue and linking ideas of regional citizenship and resident engagement with destination branding, the aim is to get an insight in the predictive value of responsibility attributions for sustaining a positive image of Fryslân on WOM among residents of the province:

H3 - Attributions of responsibility predict nWOM/pWOM intentions, when controlled for PA and DI.

To tie up the theoretical basis for the study, the conceptual model as depicted in Figure 5.1 shows the concepts included and hypothesized relationships between them.

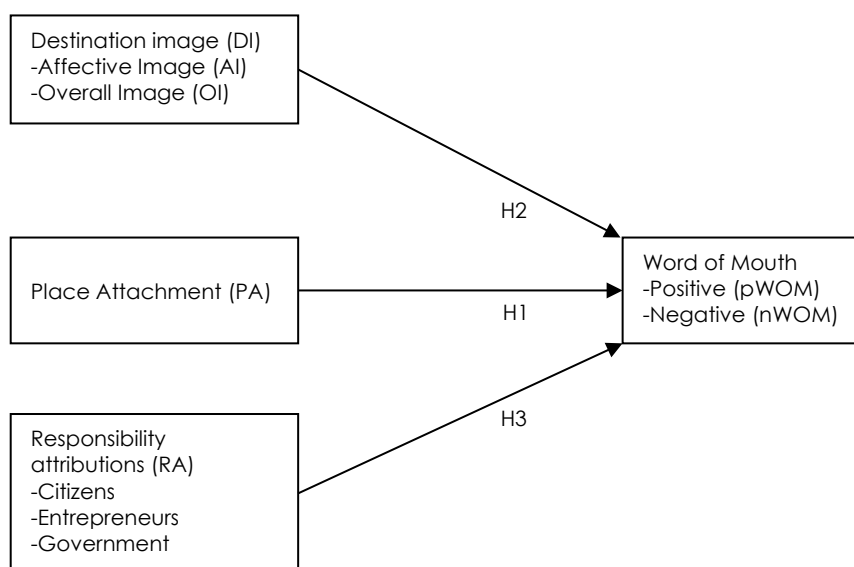


Figure 1. Conceptual model.

5.3 Methodology

A panel survey was conducted among residents of the province Fryslân. Managed by the Frisian research institute Partoer, the panel contained at the time of surveying (September 2015) 1286 people with an age of 18 or older. The panel is consulted every couple of months on various societal issues, ranging from multilingualism to landscape preferences, from health care to tourism. In total, 913 respondents participated (71% response rate), of which 51% were female and 49% were male. The average age of respondents was just over 54 years ($SD = 13.67$). The panel should be understood as a convenience sample, without being representative for, for example, the population of the province of Fryslân. As this study's main aim was to test theoretical relationships and testing hypotheses, our concern was less with generalizing to the Frisian population. Therefore, the use of the panel was held to be appropriate for the purpose of this study. Nevertheless, the results must be interpreted with this limitation in mind.

The items and concepts used for this paper were measured as part of a survey containing a larger number of items about intraregional leisure and tourism. Here, only items and concepts relevant for this study are reported (Table 5.1). Internal consistency (Table 5.1) was measured using Spearman's rho for two-item scales and Cronbach's alpha for multiple-item scales (Eisinga, Te Grotenhuis, & Pelzer, 2013; Vaske, 2008). Data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics 20.

Negative and positive WOM. pWOM and nWOM (i.e. talking positively and negatively with others about Fryslân as tourism destination) were measured with items adapted from Alexandrov et al. (2013). Both scales performed well on internal consistency.

Place attachment. PA was measured with a shortened 12-item version of the scale developed by Chen (2012). Chen's scale intends to measure six dimensions (i.e. Place Identity, Place Dependence, Social Bonding, Affective Attachment, Interactional Potential and Interactional Past, see also Section 2.3). However, factor analysis on the scores of our respondents on the 12 items (with Varimax rotation) did reveal only two dimensions. The first dimension consisted of five items and reflected perceptions of social belonging attributed to the region of Fryslân. The second dimension was formed by four other items, reflecting a perceived continuity and development of self-identity, facilitated by living in Fryslân. Each subscale had sufficient internal reliability (Table 5.1).

DI. In line with Hosany, Ekinici, and Uysal (2007), one item to measure Overall DI was used (1–10 scale, with higher scores indicating more positive impressions): "What is your overall impression of Fryslân as holiday destination?" A semantic differential scale (7-point scale) was used to assess Affective DI. The ten items were partly adapted from previous research by Hung and Petrick (2011) and Kastenholz (2010), complemented by self-constructed items (Table 5.1). Factor analysis (with Varimax rotation) revealed two dimensions. Three items were deleted due to low or

ambiguous factor loadings. The first consisted of five items and pertained to perceptions of being comfortable and feeling 'in place' at the destination. The second dimension consisted of two items, but was excluded from the analysis, due to low internal consistency. Thus, AI was measured with a summated five-item scale.

Responsibility attributions. Three one-item scales measured attributions of responsibility for sustaining a positive regional image for Fryslân. The items were constructed based on the approach of Lalwani and Duval (2000), discerning between attributions of responsibilities to citizens, entrepreneurs and regional government.

Next to these concepts, socio-demographics and previous intraregional holiday behavior were measured. This include age, gender and individual income (low, <€31.000; medium €31.000–35.000; high, €35.000<). Previous holiday behavior was measured with a dichotomous variable, by asking if respondents had spent their main yearly holiday in Fryslân in the last five years (yes or no).

5.4 Results

Descriptive statistics are presented in Table 5.1. Overall, respondents rather likely engage in pWOM about Fryslân and are unlikely to give nWOM. Further, respondents score above scale means on the PA dimensions. Particularly, the Self-Continuity dimension appears important in that respondents feel connected to Fryslân. Similarly, DI scores are high, with an average of 4.46 (SD = .96) on AI and 7.90 on OI (SD = 1.28). Interestingly, responsibility for sustaining a positive regional image was mostly attributed to citizens ($M = 3.87$) and entrepreneurs ($M = 3.75$), and less (although still relatively high) to regional government ($M = 2.84$). Correlation analysis showed that less responsibility attributed to citizens relates to more responsibility attributed to regional government (not in table).

Table 5.1 Scale items of WOM, PA, affective and overall DI, responsibility perceptions: Descriptive and reliability measures (N = 913).

Word-of-Mouth (1=Very unlikely, 5=Very likely)		
<i>How likely would you be to do any of the following...</i>		
pWOM		Mean 4.01, SD .74, Cronbach's Alpha .80
	1. Say good things about Fryslân as holiday destination	
	2. When someone asks advice, recommend Fryslân as attractive holiday destination	
	3. Promote the brand 'Fryslân'	
nWOM		Mean 1.45, SD .62, Spearman's Rho .58
	1. Talk negatively about Fryslân as holiday destination	
	2. Discourage choosing Fryslân as holiday destination	
Place Attachment (1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree)		
Social belonging		Mean 3.66, SD .86, Cronbach's Alpha .81
	1. I feel I am Frisian	
	2. Many of my friends and family live in Fryslân	
	3. My friends and family would regret it when I would move outside of Fryslân	
	4. I miss Fryslân when I have not been there for a while	
	5. I don't care if I live in Fryslân or anywhere else in The Netherlands (reversed)	
Self-continuity		Mean 4.26, SD .86, Cronbach's Alpha .77
	1. I can be myself in Fryslân	
	2. In the future I will enjoy myself as much in Fryslân as I do now	
	3. I am pessimistic about my future in Fryslân (reversed)	
	4. I do not have a lot of good memories about me living in Fryslân	
Destination Image (AI: 7-point semantic differential; OI: 1-10 scale, higher score indicates positive impression)		
Affective Image		Mean 4.46, SD .96, Cronbach's Alpha .87
	1. Depressing - Inspiring	
	2. Interesting – Uninteresting (reversed)	
	3. Monotonous - Varied	
	4. Pleasant – Unpleasant (reversed)	
	5. Distressing - Calming	
Overall Image		Mean 7.90, SD 1.28
	What is your overall impression of Fryslân as holiday destination?	
Responsibility Attributions (1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree)		
Citizens		Mean 3.87, SD .90
	As citizen of Fryslân I am responsible for the image other people have of the province	
Government		Mean 2.84, SD .97
	Promoting Fryslân as tourism destination is mostly responsibility of regional government	
Entrepreneurs		Mean 3.75, SD .89
	Promoting Fryslân as tourism destination is mostly responsibility of tourism entrepreneurs	

Notes: Reliability Measures, when applicable: Spearman's Rho for two-item scales; Cronbach's Alpha for multiple-item scales. All variables are measured on a 1-5 scale, except Affective Destination Image (1-7) and Overall Destination (1-10). Higher scores indicate higher agreement.

The following two sections further assess responsibility attributions and WOM intentions as bottom-up place branding aspects, by comparing scores between different groups of respondents according to demographics and previous intraregional holiday behavior. Next, the results zoom in on findings about the predictive value of responsibility attributions on pWOM and nWOM, when controlling for PA and DI scores.

5.4.1 Regional image responsibility attributions

In order to get some more insights in variations of responsibility attributions for sustaining a positive image, average scores on responsibility attributions were calculated and compared for age, gender, previous intraregional holiday behavior and income (Table 5.2). No significant differences in attributing responsibility for sustaining a positive regional image were found between various age groups. Next, when comparing male and female respondents, male respondents attributed more responsibility to entrepreneurs than did their

female counterparts, but no differences were found for citizens and regional government. Similarly, residents who had spent at least one main holiday in Fryslân in the last five years attributed more responsibility to citizens than respondents who had not, but these groups did not differ in attributing responsibility to entrepreneurs and regional government. Finally, discerning between various income groups did not reveal significant results.

5.4.2 Word-of-mouth

The same groups were compared for their scores on pWOM and nWOM. While the overall tendency was fairly homogenous, a number of significant differences were found (Table 5.3). First, it appeared that younger respondents (between 18 and 39 years old) were significantly less likely to engage in pWOM than older respondents (although scores were still relatively high). At the same time, the youngest age group was also most

Table 5.2ANOVA's and *t*-tests Regional Image Responsibility Attributions

	Citizens				Entrepreneurs				Government			
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F/t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F/t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F/t</i>	<i>p</i>
Age												
18-39 (<i>n</i> =144)	3.93	.79	.67	n.s.	3.78	.82	.89	n.s.	2.84	.99	1.60	n.s.
40-49 (<i>n</i> =145)	3.88	.93			3.67	.86			2.77	.94		
50-59 (<i>n</i> =240)	3.90	.84			3.72	.86			2.75	.97		
60< (<i>n</i> =384)	3.82	.95			3.80	.93			2.91	.98		
Gender												
Female (<i>n</i> =470)	3.86	.86	-.20	n.s.	3.68	.85	-2.64	.008	2.81	.98	-.74	n.s.
Male (<i>n</i> =443)	3.88	.94			3.83	.91			2.86	.96		
Previous long holiday												
Yes (<i>n</i> =272)	4.06	.81	4.34	.001	3.76	.84	.25	n.s.	2.85	.98	.30	n.s.
No (<i>n</i> =641)	3.79	.92			3.75	.91			2.83	.97		
Income												
Low (<i>n</i> =282)	3.89	.85	.19	n.s.	3.78	.84	1.37	n.s.	2.80	1.00	1.81	n.s.
Medium (<i>n</i> =232)	3.87	.88			3.81	.84			2.87	.91		
High (<i>n</i> =239)	3.92	.91			3.66	.99			2.72	.97		

Table 5.3ANOVA's and *t*-tests Positive WOM and Negative WOM

	pWOM ¹				nWOM ¹			
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F/t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F/t</i>	<i>p</i>
Age								
18-39 (<i>n</i> =144)	3.74 ^a	.78	8.82	.001	1.60 ^a	.55	4.18	.006
40-49 (<i>n</i> =145)	4.00 ^b	.73			1.48 ^{ab}	.69		
50-59 (<i>n</i> =240)	4.08 ^b	.71			1.40 ^b	.55		
60< (<i>n</i> =384)	4.08 ^b	.72			1.41 ^b	.65		
Gender								
Female (<i>n</i> =470)	4.04	.72	1.00	n.s.	1.44	.57	-.46	n.s.
Male (<i>n</i> =443)	3.99	.76			1.46	.67		
Previous long holiday								
Yes (<i>n</i> =272)	4.20	.66	4.92	.001	1.39	.55	-1.86	n.s.
No (<i>n</i> =641)	3.94	.76			1.47	.65		
Income								
Low (<i>n</i> =282)	4.05	.72	.34	n.s.	1.47	.65	.94	n.s.
Medium (<i>n</i> =232)	4.02	.72			1.41	.58		
High (<i>n</i> =239)	4.07	.69			1.40	.58		

1. Means with different superscripts are significant at $p < .05$ based on LSD post hoc tests. Items measured on scales from 1 to 5, higher item scores indicate higher WOM intention.

inclined to give nWOM, compared to respondents of 50 years and older. Note however that all respondents were not likely to engage in nWOM, with the highest average score of 1.60 on a one to five scale. A significantly

higher intention for pWOM was also found for respondents who previously had spent a holiday in Fryslân. No significant results were found when discerning between male and female respondents, or between various income groups.

5.4.3 Predicting WOM by PA, DI and responsibility attributions

Hierarchical regression analyses were used to test the hypothesized relations. As we discerned between nWOM and pWOM, the models were tested separately for these two dependent variables. Multiple predictor variables were included in the model, with independent variables added in separate blocks.

Predictors of pWOM

Variables were added in four blocks (Table 5.4). In the first step, the two PA dimensions (Social Belonging and Self-Continuity) appear to be significant predictors ($F(2, 783) = 128.38, p < .001$), explaining 25% of variance in pWOM. Second, Affective DI and Overall DI were added, with a significant increase in explained variance ($R^2\text{change} = .16$). The third block of variables consisted of the three responsibility variables. Attributing responsibility to citizens appeared to be a significant positive predictor of pWOM, thus indicating that perceiving citizens to be responsible for communicating positive images of Fryslân results in higher intentions to engage in pWOM. On the other hand, responsibility attributions to regional government were negatively related to pWOM, signifying that attributing more responsibility to regional governments is related to lower intention among respondents to engage in pWOM themselves. Responsibility attributions to entrepreneurs did not contribute to explaining variance of pWOM. This model explained 44% of variance in pWOM ($F(7, 778) = 88.55, p < .001$). Finally, the three personal characteristics that showed significant relations with pWOM and nWOM (Table 5.4, past holiday experience, age and gender) were added

Table 5.4 Hierarchical regression results Positive Word of Mouth

<i>Predictor</i>	<i>Model A</i>		<i>Model B</i>		<i>Model C</i>		<i>Model D</i>	
	Beta	<i>t</i>	Beta	<i>t</i>	Beta	<i>t</i>	Beta	<i>t</i>
Block 1								
Constant		10.00***		3.24***		3.55***		1.09
PLACE ATTACHMENT								
Social Belonging	.23	6.45***	.17	5.41***	.14	4.39***	.15	4.77***
Self-Continuity	.35	9.99***	.18	5.27***	.15	4.50***	.13	4.12***
Block 2								
DESTINATION IMAGE								
Overall Image			.29	7.05***	.28	8.67***	.28	8.66***
Affective Image			.23	8.84***	.19	5.69***	.18	5.48***
Block 3								
RESPONSIBILITY ATTRIBUTIONS								
Citizens					.18	5.79***	.19	6.28***
Government					-.06	-1.94	-.06	-2.23*
Entrepreneurs					-.04	-1.42	-.04	-1.53
Block 4								
PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS								
Previous holiday experience							.02	.63
Age							.16	5.67***
Gender							.02	.82
	<i>F</i> (2,783)=128.38		<i>F</i> (4,781)=136.00		<i>F</i> (7,778)=88.55		<i>F</i> (10,775)=67.76	
	<i>p</i> <.001		<i>p</i> <.001		<i>p</i> <.001		<i>p</i> <.001	
	<i>R</i> ² adj=.25		<i>R</i> ² adj=.41		<i>R</i> ² adj=.44		<i>R</i> ² adj=.46	

Dependent Variable: Positive Word of Mouth

p*<.05*p*<.01****p*<.001

to the model. Age was a significant positive predictor of pWOM, indicating that older people are more likely to talk positively about Fryslân as holiday destination, when controlling for the other variables in the model. This is in line with the previously reported findings (Table 5.4). The full model explained 46% of variance in pWOM ($F(10, 775) = 67.76, p < .001$).

Predictors of nWOM

In the first step, the two PA variables were added. Both emerged as significant predictors ($F(2, 783) = 99.09, p < .001$), explaining 20% of variance in nWOM. As to be expected, negative signs for the beta weights were found, indicating that stronger attachment in terms of social belonging and

Self-Continuity will less likely result in people talking negatively about their region. Adding Overall DI and Affective DI resulted in a significant increase of explained variance ($R^2_{\text{change}} = .07$). Again, negative beta weights were found. In this second model, however, the social belonging factor did not contribute anymore as significant predictor, indicating that DI accounts for a major part of the variance explained by social belonging. Adding the three responsibility predictors to the model did not result in a significant increase of explained variance. This model explained 27% of variance of nWOM ($F(7, 778) = 42.63, p < .001$, Table 5.5).

Table 5.5 Hierarchical regression results Negative Word of Mouth

Predictor	Model A		Model B		Model C		Model D	
	Beta	t	Beta	t	Beta	t	Beta	t
Block 1								
Constant		24.64***		26.18***		23.20***		22.62***
PLACE ATTACHMENT								
Social Belonging	-.09	-2.47*	-.05	-1.50	-.04	-1.08	-.05	-1.47
Self-Continuity	-.40	-	-.29	-7.79***	-.28	-7.37***	-.26	-6.95***
		11.12***						
Block 2								
DESTINATION IMAGE								
Overall Image			-.16	-5.03***	-.18	-3.88***	-.19	-5.15***
Affective Image			-.18	-4.24***	-.15	-4.85***	-.17	-4.42***
Block 3								
RESPONSIBILITY ATTRIBUTIONS								
Citizens					-.07	-1.94	-.07	-2.09*
Government					.03	1.02	.04	1.06
Entrepreneurs					-.06	-1.68	-.05	-1.59
Block 4								
PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS								
Previous holiday experience							-.09	-2.82**
Age							-.10	-3.07**
Gender							.04	1.07
	$F(2,783)=99.09$		$F(4,781)=72.49$		$F(7,778)=42.63$		$F(10,775)=32.8$	
	$p<.001$		$p<.001$		$p<.001$		3	
	$R^2_{\text{adj}}=.20$		$R^2_{\text{adj}}=.27$		$R^2_{\text{adj}}=.27$		$p<.001$	
							$R^2_{\text{adj}}=.29$	

Dependent Variable: Negative Word of Mouth

* $p<.05$

** $p<.01$

*** $p<.001$

Similar to the pWOM model, a fourth block with personal characteristic variables (past holiday experience, age and gender) was added. A small but significant increase in explained variance was found ($R^2 = .29$, $F(10, 775) = 32.83$, $p < .001$). Again, age was a significant predictor, however the flipped sign indicates (in line with the previously reported ANOVA's (Table 5.3)) that younger people are more likely to spread nWOM about Fryslân than older people. Further, previous holiday experience significantly adds to explaining nWOM variance. Interpreting the negative weight of this dummy variable (yes = 0, no = 1) leads to the impression that having spent a holiday in Fryslân in the last five years results in an inclination to engage in nWOM. This somewhat counterintuitive result will be addressed in the Discussion section. Finally, in the full model responsibility attributions to citizens was a significant negative predictor of nWOM, indicating that a perception of citizens to be less responsible for positive regional images of Fryslân results in a stronger inclination to engage in nWOM.

5.5 Discussion

The findings of the study give rise to a number of issues to be discussed further. Also, the results provide some interesting insights that can help policymakers concerned with destination marketing and branding campaigns, particularly with respect to stakeholder collaboration and implementing citizen participation in the planning process of regional tourism development.

First, respondents see the responsibility for sustaining a positive image of Fryslân as tourist destination to be shared mostly between themselves and tourism entrepreneurs, while regional governments are attributed less responsibility for this destination marketing task. However, our regression analyses prove that citizen responsibility is the most significant type of responsibility attribution. Respondents who feel that citizens are responsible for communicating DIs are more inclined to pWOM, while attributing

responsibility to regional government appears to inhibit pWOM intention. Respondents who think that citizens are not responsible for communicating DIs are more inclined to nWOM. These findings indicate that having a sense of self-responsibility is important for citizens to engage in behavior supportive of a regional 'greater good', at least in terms of communicating positive DIs.

Second and somewhat surprisingly, previous holiday experiences in Fryslân result in inclinations to engage in nWOM. As previous holiday experience does not add significantly to pWOM, it may be possible that this finding has to do with the type of holiday experience: negative experiences may have more impact than positive experiences. However, we did not measure this. In other research, satisfaction has been found to mediate between destination loyalty and predictors such as PA and DI (Prayag & Ryan, 2012). So, negative touristic experiences should be prevented as much as possible.

Third, another interesting finding pertains to the relation between age and WOM, being positive with pWOM and negative with nWOM. The increased nWOM tendency among younger respondents is an important issue from a tourism management perspective: how to engage younger people in terms of regional attachment, perceived self-responsibility and their role as place ambassadors? The phase in their life course however might limit the options to get younger people locally engaged. The interests of young adults might lie in exploring the world and experience new places (Lepp & Gibson, 2008) instead of bonding with home. Then, nWOM might be more a way to express self-identity than anything else. Indeed, Alexandrov et al. (2013) found that nWOM can be triggered by a need for self-affirmation and social comparison. DMO's should take into account such variations between age groups and find ways to connect with the particular needs and perspectives of young residents in specific, in order to

be able to get residents across the whole age spectrum involved in destination branding.

Fourth, the focus of this study on responsibility attributions is helpful for DMO's and other tourism management stakeholders in terms of finding ways to connect and engage with tourism entrepreneurs and local residents in place branding processes. Feeling responsible for positive destination WOM appears to be related to an intrinsic sense of belonging (Self-Continuity). This is good news for a region such as Fryslân, which is known to spark a strong sense of regional identity among many of its residents (Duijvendak, 2008; Jeuring, 2016). Such senses of belonging however can play out in different ways. It can lead to people wanting to protect their belongings from interference from the outside (e.g. incoming tourists). On the other hand, it can indeed result in promoting their region to others.

Therefore, it is important to acknowledge that supporting holistic brands by residents might demand a level of involvement that exceeds individual interests. The way individual residents make meaning of a region is likely to differ from the ideas of destination marketers or regional authorities (Vainikka, 2012) and affects the way individual perceptions translate into pWOM or nWOM. A challenge thus pertains to get an insight in these dynamics and connect holistic marketing narratives with the perceptions and narratives of residents. This might imply communicating holistic imaginaries that are not just paradisiac and recreate the tourism idyll, but rather ones that reveal the grounded and lived experiences of local residents and their visions on the contemporary and future advantages of spending time in their region, either as tourist or as inhabitant.

Thus, for successful bottom-up support for place branding, DMO's and regional governments should start to take into account principles of citizenship in their destination marketing policies. For example, Eshuis et al. (2014) emphasize the importance of creating dialogues between DMO's,

entrepreneurs and residents. In other words, residents need to be facilitated in finding a way to translate their sense of responsibility for their region into actual behavior. This enhances chances of residents getting a sense of ownership of communicated destination brands. At the same time, it allows DMO's to get an insight in the personal needs, interests and narratives of residents.

5.6 Conclusion

This paper explored who are responsible for promoting the Dutch province Fryslân as tourist destination, according to the residents of this region. Also, it measured how such responsibility attributions affect, next to Place Attachment and Destination Image, the extent to which these residents are engaged in WOM behavior about Fryslân as tourism destination. We hypothesized that PA (Hypothesis 1), DI (Hypothesis 2) and responsibility attributions for sustaining a positive image (Hypothesis 3) influence both positive and negative WOM.

We found that residents of Fryslân are likely to engage in pWOM, and are unlikely to speak negatively about Fryslân. PA and DI are strong predictors for pWOM and nWOM, although DI is more important in explaining pWOM, while PA is more important in explaining nWOM. Responsibility attributions at least partly contribute significantly in explaining the variance in pWOM and nWOM.

Getting residents engaged in destination branding is among the key topics of current branding literature and practice. However, the extent to which people feel responsible and to who they attribute responsibility for communicating DIs has remained unclear. This study has started to explore these relationships. The study contributes to knowledge about the antecedents of WOM and the roles of residents in place branding in a number of ways. Particularly, the findings point to a small but significant role of responsibility attributions for communicating DIs in predicting both pWOM

and nWOM. Moreover, by including responsibility perceptions for sustaining and communicating positive images of a region as tourism destination, it highlights how stakeholders –in this case residents– attribute responsibilities to themselves and others in the process of destination branding. Some limitations apply to this study and the findings and implications should be interpreted by taking these into account. The data for this study were obtained through a survey among a convenience sample of residents from the province of Fryslân. The online panel of residents contains relatively few young people. Also, participation in the panel is voluntary, which might pre-select more actively engaged or outspoken respondents. Moreover, the results may reflect local circumstances that are typical for Fryslân as tourism destination and which might not be applicable to other regions (e.g. political situation, climate or broader societal issues). For example, PA scores in this study were high, compared to similar findings in other Dutch regions (Rijnks & Strijker, 2013). Whether this has to do with a possible positive engagement bias among respondents in the panel, or that it reflects a strong regional 'Frisian' identity is difficult to say.

Despite these limitations, the results of the study align with other research on the importance of PA and DI for predicting WOM behavior (Alexandrov et al., 2013; Chen et al., 2014; Simpson & Siguaw, 2008). Yet, we note that scholars vary considerably in the way they operationalize these concepts, making it difficult to interpret and compare the results. This study found a two-dimensional solution of PA. Social Belonging, pertaining to a sense of 'fitting in', is somewhat similar to what other studies call Social Bonding (Chen et al., 2014), Affective Attachment (Yuksel, Yuksel, & Bilim, 2010) and Environmental Fit (Droseltis & Vignoles, 2010). In turn, Self-Continuity incorporates a notion of Place Identity (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2001) but also has a temporal aspect, reflecting Chen et al.'s (2014) Interactional Past and Interactional Potential. So, the PA concept remains in need for a more robust and unified conceptualization (Lewicka, 2011).

Similarly, results point to a conceptual difference between nWOM and pWOM. While correlated, talking negatively or positively about a destination appears to be triggered in different ways. This is consistent with other studies (Alexandrov et al., 2013) and we recommend other studies on the role of WOM in place branding to not merely focus on WOM as a positive attribute.

Future research could dig deeper into the role of responsibility attributions in relation to place branding and stakeholder collaboration in regional tourism development. For example, pertaining to the scale issues that apply to the relations between responsibility attributions and the ways residents make meaning of their everyday environment both as citizen and as (possible) tourist. For example, it would be interesting to discern between responsibility attributions for promoting places on different spatial levels (e.g. village, city, visited places as tourist). Also, such responsibility attributions could be studied in relation to broader societal dynamics, such as political preference, as a certain attitude toward governmental bodies might affect attributions of responsibility to external stakeholders in various contexts. This is particularly relevant in times of change toward decentralized 'Big Societies', where residents become responsible for all sorts of tasks previously covered by governmental authorities (Flinders & Moon, 2011).

Similarly, next to perceiving an important role for residents themselves, residents of Fryslân attribute much responsibility for promoting Fryslân as tourism destination to tourism entrepreneurs. Often, however, tourism entrepreneurs have small businesses and limited capability for branding. While current regional tourism policy in Fryslân explicitly aims to facilitate entrepreneurs with communication channels for tourism promotion, the potential of engaging residents in the promotion of local tourism businesses is thus far only partly explored. The question is whether authorities should play a role in this or not. The tendency to decentralize government responsibilities (Kisby, 2010) complicates the way place

branding activities will be shared among stakeholders. Therefore, other studies could take on a similar approach to responsibility perceptions in a place branding context, from the perspective of tourism entrepreneurs, employees of DMO's or policymakers. Relevant in this respect is to point to the importance of getting an insight in the effect of policy measures and place branding initiatives on responsibility perceptions. Therefore, future research could employ a longitudinal design, measuring attributions of responsibility at several moments in time, for example before, during and after branding and marketing campaigns.

Future research should also look into the role of previous touristic experiences of residents within their own province. The tourism market is competitive, and for many regions receiving tourists from far away will remain an utopia. Therefore, we argue that residents living nearby and within destinations should become a main target group for whom tourism is developed. When residents engage in touristic activities in their region of residence (Díaz Soria & Llurdés Coit, 2013; Jeuring, 2016), this can enhance regional identification and tourism may become an inclusive part of citizenship behavior. Not only in terms of creating positive experience as a basis of outward-oriented branding for incoming tourism (Zenker & Rütter, 2014), but also as an activity that contributes to a thriving, livable region where touristic and everyday life experiences are balanced and reinforcing each other (Canavan, 2013). A better message to communicate to regional tourism management might be hard to find.

References

- Agapito, D., Mendes, J. D. C., & Valle, P. O. D. (2010). Destination image: Perspectives of tourists versus residents. *European Journal of Tourism, Hospitality and Recreation*, 1(1), 90–109.
- Ahmed, Z. U. (1991). The influence of the components of a state's tourist image on product positioning strategy. *Tourism Management*, 12(4), 331–340.
- Alexandrov, A., Lilly, B., & Babakus, E. (2013). The effects of social- and self-motives on the intentions to share positive and negative word of mouth. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 41(5), 531–546.
- Andersson, M., & Ekman, P. (2009). Ambassador networks and place branding. *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 2(1), 41–51.
- Aronczyk, M. (2008). "Living the Brand": Nationality, globality and the identity strategies of nation branding consultants. *International Journal of Communication*, 2(1), 41–65.
- Ateljevic, I., & Doorne, S. (2004). Cultural circuits of tourism: Commodities, place, and re-consumption. In A. A. Lew, C. M. Hall, & A. M. Williams (Eds.), *A companion to tourism* (pp. 291–302). Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Betten, E. (2013). *De Fries. Op zoek naar de Friese identiteit*. Leeuwarden: Wijdemeer.
- Bianchi, R. V., & Stephenson, M. L. (2013). Deciphering tourism and citizenship in a globalized world. *Tourism Management*, 39, 10–20.
- Bianchi, R. V., & Stephenson, M. L. (2014). *Tourism and citizenship: Rights, freedoms and responsibilities in the global order*. London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
- Bigné Alcañiz, E., Sánchez García, I., & Sanz Blas, S. (2009). The functional-

- psychological continuum in the cognitive image of a destination: A confirmatory analysis. *Tourism Management*, 30(5), 715–723.
- Braun, E., Kavaratzis, M., & Zenker, S. (2013). My city–my brand: The different roles of residents in place branding. *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 6(1), 18–28.
- Canavan, B. (2013). The extent and role of domestic tourism in a small Island: The case of the isle of man. *Journal of Travel Research*, 52(3), 340–352.
- Carson, D. (2008). The `blogosphere' as a market research tool for tourism destinations: A case study of Australia's Northern Territory. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 14(2), 111–119. doi:10.1177/ 1356766707087518
- Chen, N. (2012). *Human-place relationship and word-of-mouth behaviour to promote the place as a destination: The construct, antecedents, and outcomes* (PhD). The University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia.
- Chen, N., Dwyer, L., & Firth, T. (2014). Effect of dimensions of place attachment on residents' word-of- mouth behavior. *Tourism Geographies*, 16(5), 826–843.
- Choo, H., Park, S.-Y., & Petrick, J. F. (2011). The influence of the resident's identification with a tourism destination brand on their behavior. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 20(2), 198–216.
- Chu, S.-C., & Kim, Y. (2011). Determinants of consumer engagement in electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) in social networking sites. *International Journal of Advertising*, 30(1), 47–75.
- Droseltis, O., & Vignoles, V. L. (2010). Towards an integrative model of place identification: Dimensionality and predictors of intrapersonal-level place preferences. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 30(1), 23–34.
- Duijvendak, M. (2008). Ligamenten van de staat? Over regionale identiteit

- en de taaiheid van de provincie. *BMGN-Low Countries Historical Review*, 123(3), 342–353.
- Díaz Soria, I., & Llundés Coit, J. (2013). Thoughts about proximity tourism as a strategy for local development. *Cuadernos de Turismo*, 32, 65–88.
- Eisinga, R., Te Grotenhuis, M., & Pelzer, B. (2013). The reliability of a two-item scale: Pearson, Cronbach, or Spearman-Brown? *International journal of public health*, 58(4), 637–642.
- Eshuis, J., Klijn, E.-H., & Braun, E. (2014). Place marketing and citizen participation: Branding as strategy to address the emotional dimension of policy making? *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 80(1), 151–171. doi:10.1177/0020852313513872
- Flinders, M., & Moon, D. S. (2011). The problem of letting go: The 'big society', accountable governance and 'the curse of the decentralizing minister'. *Local Economy*, 26(8), 652–662.
- Franklin, A., & Crang, M. (2001). The trouble with tourism and travel theory. *Tourist studies*, 1(1), 5–22.
- Hankinson, G. (2007). The management of destination brands: Five guiding principles based on recent developments in corporate branding theory. *Journal of Brand Management*, 14(3), 240–254.
- Hosany, S., Ekinci, Y., & Uysal, M. (2007). Destination image and destination personality. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 1(1), 62–81.
- Hung, K., & Petrick, J. F. (2011). The role of self-and functional congruity in cruising intentions. *Journal of Travel Research*, 50(1), 100–112.
- Hurenkamp, M., Tonkens, E., & Duyvendak, J. W. (2011). Citizenship in the Netherlands: Locally produced, nationally contested. *Citizenship Studies*, 15(2), 205–225.
- Jeuring, J. H. G. (2016). Discursive contradictions in regional tourism marketing strategies: The case of Fryslân, The Netherlands. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 5(2), 65–75.

- Jeuring, J. H. G., & Becken, S. (2013). Tourists and severe weather – An exploration of the role of 'locus of responsibility' in protective behaviour decisions. *Tourism Management*, 37, 193–202.
- Johansson, M. (2012). Place branding and the imaginary: The politics of re-imagining a garden city. *Urban Studies*, 49(16), 3611–3626.
- Jorgensen, B. S., & Stedman, R. C. (2001). Sense of place as an attitude: Lakeshore owners attitudes toward their properties. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 21(3), 233–248.
- Kaiser, F. G., Ranney, M., Hartig, T., & Bowler, P. A. (1999). Ecological behavior, environmental attitude, and feelings of responsibility for the environment. *European Psychologist*, 4(2), 59–74.
- Kastenholz, E. (2010). 'Cultural proximity' as a determinant of destination image. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 16(4), 313–322.
- Kavaratzis, M. (2012). From "necessary evil" to necessity: Stakeholders' involvement in place branding. *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 5(1), 7–19.
- King, C. (2010). "One size doesn't fit all". Tourism and hospitality employees' response to internal brand management. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 22(4), 517– 534.
- Kisby, B. E. N. (2010). The big society: Power to the people? *The Political Quarterly*, 81(4), 484–491.
- Klijn, E.-H., Eshuis, J., & Braun, E. (2012). The influence of stakeholder involvement on the effectiveness of place branding. *Public Management Review*, 14(4), 499–519.
- Kyle, G., Graefe, A., & Manning, R. (2005). Testing the dimensionality of place attachment in recreational settings. *Environment and behavior*, 37(2), 153–177.
- Lalwani, N., & Duval, T. S. (2000). The moderating effects of cognitive appraisal processes on self-attribution of responsibility. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 30(11), 2233–2245.

- Lepp, A., & Gibson, H. (2008). Sensation seeking and tourism: Tourist role, perception of risk and destination choice. *Tourism Management*, 29(4), 740–750.
- Lewicka, M. (2011). Place attachment: How far have we come in the last 40 years? *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 31(3), 207–230.
- Malek, A., & Costa, C. (2014). Integrating communities into tourism planning through social innovation. *Tourism Planning & Development*, 12(3), 1–19.
- Misener, L., & Mason, D. S. (2006). Developing local citizenship through sporting events: Balancing community involvement and tourism development. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 9(4–5), 384–398.
- Morais, D. B., & Ogden, A. C. (2011). Initial development and validation of the global citizenship scale. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 15(5), 445–466.
- Mossberg, L., & Kleppe, I. A. (2005). Country and destination image – Different or similar image concepts? *The Service Industries Journal*, 25(4), 493–503. doi:10.1080/02642060500092147
- Mullis, J. P., & Duval, T. S. (1997). The PrE model of coping and tornado preparedness: Moderating effects of responsibility. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 27(19), 1750–1766.
- Müller, D. K. (2006). The attractiveness of second home areas in Sweden: A quantitative analysis. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 9(4–5), 335–350.
- Naylor, G., & Kleiser, S. B. (2000). Negative versus positive word-of-mouth: An exception to the rule. *Journal of Consumer Satisfaction and Complaining Behaviour*, 13, 26–36.
- Paasi, A. (2003). Region and place: Regional identity in question. *Progress in Human Geography*, 27(4), 475–485. doi:10.1191/0309132503ph439pr
- Paasi, A. (2012). Regions are social constructs, but who or what 'constructs' them? Agency in question. *Environment and Planning A*, 42(10), 2296–2301.

- Pan, B., MacLaurin, T., & Crotts, J. C. (2007). Travel blogs and the implications for destination marketing. *Journal of Travel Research*, 46(1), 35–45.
- Pan, S. (2011). Multileveled citizenship and citizenship education: Experiences of students in China's Beijing. *Citizenship Studies*, 15(2), 283–306.
- Prayag, G., & Ryan, C. (2012). Antecedents of tourists' loyalty to Mauritius: The role and influence of destination image, place attachment, personal involvement, and satisfaction. *Journal of Travel Research*, 51(3), 342–356.
- Qu, H., Kim, L. H., & Im, H. H. (2011). A model of destination branding: Integrating the concepts of the branding and destination image. *Tourism Management*, 32(3), 465–476.
- Rehmet, J., & Dinnie, K. (2013). Citizen brand ambassadors: Motivations and perceived effects. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 2(1), 31–38.
- Rijnks, R. H., & Strijker, D. (2013). Spatial effects on the image and identity of a rural area. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 36, 103–111.
- Ritzer, G. (2003). Rethinking globalization: Glocalization/globalization and something/nothing. *Sociological Theory*, 21(3), 193–209.
- Rodríguez Molina, M. Á., Frías-Jamilena, D.-M., & Castañeda-García, J. A. (2012). The moderating role of past experience in the formation of a tourist destination's image and in tourists' behavioural intentions. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 16(2), 107–127.
- Salazar, N. B. (2012). Tourism imaginaries: A conceptual approach. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 39(2), 863–882.
- Sartori, A., Mottironi, C., & Corigliano, M. A. (2012). Tourist destination brand equity and internal stakeholders: An empirical research. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 18(4), 327–340.
- Simpson, P. M., & Siguaw, J. A. (2008). Destination word of mouth: The role of

- traveler type, residents, and identity salience. *Journal of Travel Research*, 47(2), 167–182.
- Singh, S., & Krakover, S. (2015). Tourist experience at home – Israeli domestic tourism. *Tourism Management*, 46, 59–61.
- Terlouw, K. (2012). From thick to thin regional identities? *GeoJournal*, 77(5), 707–721.
- Vainikka, J. (2012). Narrative claims on regions: Prospecting for spatial identities among social movements in Finland. *Social & Cultural Geography*, 13(6), 587–605.
- Vaske, J. J. (2008). *Survey research and analysis: Applications in parks, recreation and human dimensions*. State College, PA: Venture.
- Williams, D. R., & Vaske, J. J. (2003). The measurement of place attachment: Validity and generalizability of a psychometric approach. *Forest science*, 49(6), 830–840.
- Xiong, L., King, C., & Piehler, R. (2013). “That’s not my job”: Exploring the employee perspective in the development of brand ambassadors. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 35, 348–359.
- Yuksel, A., Yuksel, F., & Bilim, Y. (2010). Destination attachment: Effects on customer satisfaction and cognitive, affective and conative loyalty. *Tourism Management*, 31(2), 274–284.
- Zenker, S., & Rütter, N. (2014). Is satisfaction the key? The role of citizen satisfaction, place attachment and place brand attitude on positive citizenship behavior. *Cities*, 38, 11–17.
- Zimmerbauer, K., & Paasi, A. (2013). When old and new regionalism collide: Deinstitutionalization of regions and resistance identity in municipality amalgamations. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 30, 31–40.

Chapter 6

Weather perceptions, holiday satisfaction and perceived attractiveness of domestic vacationing in The Netherlands¹

Jelmer H. G. Jeuring

¹Reprint of:

Jeuring, J. H. G., (2017). Weather perceptions, holiday satisfaction and
perceived attractiveness of domestic vacationing in The Netherlands.
Tourism Management 61, 70-81.



Chapter 6

Abstract

Despite variable and relatively cool summer weather, domestic vacations in countries around the North Sea are an important type of tourism. However, relations between weather and domestic tourism in this region remain understudied. A quantitative research (n=326) among domestic camping tourists in The Netherlands explores perceived personal significance of the weather, operationalized as Weather Salience (WxS), and its relation with attractiveness of domestic vacationing, adaptive touristic behavior and perceived differences between home and destination. Results show that WxS relates positively to attitudes toward domestic tourism and to holiday satisfaction. While higher levels of WxS enhance feelings of being away from home due to the weather, lower WxS increases indifference about holiday weather. Weather differences between home and destination are perceived but depend on region, accommodation type and WxS levels. Implications for (domestic) tourism climatology research are discussed and potential lessons for stakeholders employing tourism activities in temperate climates are provided.

6.1 Introduction

Weather and climate have received considerable attention in tourism research in the last decade. They are major drivers for tourist travel (Becken & Wilson, 2013), shape tourist experiences (Jeuring & Peters, 2013) and are part of the imaginaries of destinations all over the world. However, the influence of weather conditions differs considerably per destination and type of touristic activities (Lohmann & Kaim, 1999). In other words, weather impacts are strongly context sensitive. Also, not all places are blessed with favorable climatic circumstances for tourism (Denstadli, Jacobsen, & Lohmann, 2011) and few destinations are able to consistently deliver on promises of blue sunny skies or white powdered mountain peaks. At almost all tourist destinations, variations in the weather may, at times, result in sub-optimal, unfavorable and occasionally even dangerous weather conditions (Jeuring & Becken, 2013). Thus, tourism stakeholders need to prepare for and adapt to such weather conditions, either physically or mentally (de Freitas, 2003). In sum, this makes weather variability an important factor to consider for local tourism management stakeholders, for example in terms of providing bad weather facilities (Rauken, Kelman, Steen Jacobsen, & Hovelsrud, 2010), adequate and timely risk communication (Ayscue, Curtis, Hao, & Montz, 2015; Jeuring & Becken, 2013; Scott & Lemieux, 2010) or managing destination images (Hamilton & Lau, 2004).

A particular context pertains to domestic tourism taking place in temperate climates, such as northwest Europe. The weather in this region is highly variable and even in summer 'ideal' weather conditions for tourism and recreational activities are far from guaranteed (Lohmann & Kaim, 1999; Matzarakis, de Freitas, & Scott, 2007). It is therefore that many people living there travel South, in search of warmer, drier and more comfortable weather, if only temporarily. Moreover, it has been stated that weather and climate in northern Europe is unfavorable for tourism (Nicholls & Amelung, 2015). Still, domestic tourism in countries around the North Sea is the main

type of tourism in these areas, arguably opposing the hegemonic directions of push and pull factors found in many tourism contexts (Prayag & Ryan, 2010). While domestic tourism in northwest Europe is an understudied topic (Canavan, 2015; Jeuring & Haartsen, 2017), the role of the weather in the imaginaries, experiences, motivations and behavior of domestic tourists in this region has received even less attention.

An understanding of the role of the weather in this context is of importance for unravelling motivations for domestic non-visitation (Gardiner, Grace, & King, 2015), enhancing tourist experiences in 'suboptimal' meteorological climates, and providing geographically and temporally tailored weather facilities in such regions (Lohmann & Kaim, 1999). Further, various studies mention that tourists from nearby are more likely to cancel a holiday or move on to another destination due to inclement weather or bad weather forecasts (Becken & Wilson, 2013; Denstadli et al., 2011), thus making tourism businesses that mainly depend on proximate tourists especially vulnerable to weather variability. Moreover, weather appears to play an important role in perceptions of geographical otherness and (un)familiarity (Jeuring & Peters, 2013). Since perceptions of otherness are among the core motivations for tourist behavior, weather as a factor affecting the level of perceived (dis)similarity between home and away should be studied in order to better understand domestic tourism experiences.

This exploratory study aims to contribute to tourism climatology research, by focusing on domestic tourism in a temperate climate context. Geographically situated in Fryslân, a province in the North of The Netherlands, the objective is to get an understanding of (1). The personal significance of the weather for Dutch domestic camping tourists; (2). The relation between personal significance of the weather and beliefs, attitudes and intention towards domestic tourism; (3). The perceived impact of the weather on destination choice, satisfaction with, and adaptive behavior

during domestic camping holidays, and; (4). Weather-based perceptions of difference between home and away.

6.2 Theory

6.2.1 *Image and experience of domestic, near home tourism*

Ever since the arrival of affordable air travel, domestic holidays increasingly seem to have become the less attractive little brother of international tourism. Being able to travel further has not only led to a wider range of destination options and increased global competitiveness between destinations, it arguably has also polarized destination images through associations with geographical distance between home and away (Jeuring & Haartsen, 2017; Larsen & Guiver, 2013). However, despite the successful framing of tourism geographies along dichotomies where distant places are exotic, different and attractive, and where the proximate is familiar, mundane and to be escaped (Salazar, 2012), domestic holidays are far from obsolete. The contemporary global share of domestic holidays is far bigger than international holidays (UNWTO., 2014), which justifies an interest in the motivations and experiences of domestic vacationers.

Domestic tourism often takes places in a context that is relatively near or even within people's familiar, everyday life environment, hereby opposing the hegemonic imaginary of tourism being a business of travel, adventure and discovery. While this may seem unattractive for some, for others this appears a key motivation to spend a holiday near home: it is the experience of not having to do anything at all that many domestic vacationers seek and appreciate (Blichfeldt & Mikkelsen, 2013), providing a unique experience of freedom (Mikkelsen & Cohen, 2015). At the same time, motivations are very practical, ranging from financial constraints that sometimes even result in a staycation (Bourdeau, 2012; Hall, 2009), to personal limitations due to family circumstances, or a mere preference for

familiarity (Jeuring & Haartsen, 2017). This does not mean however that what can be called 'proximity tourism' (Diaz-Soria & Lluïdes Coit, 2013) or 'microdomestic tourism' (Canavan, 2013) does not allow for experiences of out-there-ness (Elands & Lengkeek, 2012; Lengkeek, 2001), fulfilling needs to escape and a sense of being away from home. To the contrary, in people's busy daily lives, doing nothing (including not travelling) can feel like being in another place (Blichfeldt & Mikkelsen, 2013), while unfamiliarity and otherness can be experienced close to home in many ways (Szytniewski & Spierings, 2014). Similarly, research on domestic vacationers in The Netherlands found that a certain mindset is instrumental to be able to see otherness and difference within familiar environments (Jeuring & Haartsen, 2017). Further, research on domestic tourism in Australia highlights generational differences in beliefs and attitudes towards domestic holidays (Gardiner et al., 2015), while such differences were absent with respect to international holidays.

In short, absolute geographical distance and perceived subjective distance are related in non-linear ways (Larsen & Guiver, 2013). This makes the context of domestic tourism both interesting and complex, particularly since it plays out on a spatial scale level where touristic experiences are woven into people's everyday lives. In this proximity tourism context, consumption and production overlap and the development and management of destination imaginaries are co-created and a responsibility of many local stakeholders (Jeuring & Haartsen, 2017). A tailored research approach is therefore needed, in order to understand the underlying motivational processes, the experiences and socio-economic benefits found in the context of holidaying domestically and near home. A potentially important factor that has thus far hardly been a topic of research in the context of domestic tourism is the weather. Given the importance of weather conditions in destination image, tourist motivations, experiences and holiday behavior, and the variable characteristics of

Northern European weather, an exploration of this nexus seems worthwhile and timely.

6.2.2 Weather and tourism

Relations between weather and tourism are multiple, complex and nuanced. People travel to destinations to experience particular weather conditions, and tourism businesses depend strongly on favorable weather circumstances, be they warm and sunny weather for beach tourism (Moreno, Amelung, & Santamarta, 2008; Ruddy & Scott, 2016) or enough snow to cover ski slopes (Gorman-Murray, 2008; Hopkins, 2013; Scott, Gössling, & de Freitas, 2008; Williams, Dossa, & Hunt, 1997). As such, weather conditions both enable and inhibit tourist activity across space and time.

Research on tourism climatology (Matzarakis, de Freitas, & Scott, 2007; de Freitas, 2003) has become a well-established niche in the field of tourism studies. It can be categorized into three fields of interest (Gössling, Abegg, & Steiger, 2016): regional climate indices (Matzarakis, Mayer, & Iziomon, 1999; de Freitas, 1990), weather and climate induced tourism flows (Becken & Wilson, 2013; Falk, 2015; Rosselló-Nadal, Riera-Font, & Cárdenas, 2011), and weather preferences and behavior (Hübner & Gössling, 2012; Lohmann & Hübner, 2013; de Freitas, 2015). Most tourism climatology research acknowledges that the weather is first and foremost experienced on an individual level, in turn impacting the way (groups) of individuals perceive regions and destinations, move within and between places and adapt to physical and psychological weather stimuli. How people respond and adapt to different weather circumstances thus is partly 'a function of an individual's perceptions of weather and climate and, in particular, those aspects they consider to be important' (de Freitas, 2015, p. 2).

Stewart's (2009) concept of Weather Salience (WxS), defined as 'the degree to which people are psychologically attuned to and affected by weather and weather changes' (Stewart, Lazo, Morss, & Demuth, 2012, p.

172) discerns seven dimensions through which the weather becomes personally significant to people. These include paying attention to weather cues, impacts of the weather on mood, and attachment to weather patterns, hereby reflecting the multiple ways weather conditions are embedded in people's lives. The emerging line of studies employing the WxS concept has thus far not been used as a basis to further the understanding of weather in a tourism context. Neither has WxS, to the authors knowledge, been studied outside of the United States. In the present research, three fundamental aspects of how perceived personal significance of the weather can influence the way tourists make meaning of, and engage with the places they visit are addressed: perceptions of attractiveness, behavioral and psychological adaptation, and perceptions of difference between home and holiday destination.

First, attractiveness of weather conditions can make or break a holiday: "mist in the mountains limits possible vistas that were anticipated for, but an opening in the clouds granting a peek into a valley might be experienced as even more impressive than when seen on a bright sunny day" (Jeuring & Peters, 2013, p. 210). Attractiveness of the weather has been measured objectively, for example by constructing physiological equivalent temperature (PET) indices (Rutty & Scott, 2014; Scott et al., 2008; de Freitas, 1990), but also more subjective methods have been used, such as stated preference surveys (Denstadli et al., 2011). Importantly, preferred and experienced weather conditions tend to be attributed to the spatial context in which they occur, for example in terms of tourism destinations or countries of residence. While evidence for long-term impact on, for example, destination choice is mixed (Gössling et al., 2016; Hübner & Gössling, 2012), weather conditions appear to be an important part of memorized tourist experiences (Gössling et al., 2016; Jeuring & Peters, 2013).

Also, in the ongoing process of building, experiencing and evaluating tourism destinations' attractiveness, the weather often is an

important contextual factor, for example affecting the construction of a sense of place (Jeuring & Peters, 2013). For long, many tourism destination marketing efforts have been building on imaginaries that are representing favorable or even ideal weather conditions (Gorman-Murray, 2008; Salazar, 2012), to be found in most tourism brochures and websites. Consequently, the weather has become a part of destination brands and of the image of a place more broadly (Gómez Martín, 2005). In the context of northern European countries –important countries of origin for destinations with warmer and more stable climates– the weather plays an important role both as push and pull factor (Jeuring & Haartsen, 2017). Nevertheless, relatively few studies have focused on the attractiveness of temperate climates (Denstadli et al., 2011), particularly in the context of domestic tourism.

Second, behavioral and psychological adaptation pertains to destination choice, travel timing and to adaptation during a vacation. Strongly motivated by a need for comfort, people are very well able to adapt to various weather circumstances (de Freitas, 2015). In the decision stage this results in evaluating possible holiday destinations in terms of finding a match between preferred and expected weather conditions (next to other factors such as landscape and price (Lohmann & Kaim, 1999)). At destination, behavioral adaptation pertains to using weather forecasts (Ayscue et al., 2015; Becken & Wilson, 2010, 2013), clothing choice (de Freitas, 2003) or aligning daily activity schedules and travel itineraries with prevailing weather conditions (Becken & Wilson, 2013).

Psychological adaptation can range from active emotional coping on both the intra- and inter-personal level (e.g., families), to passive acceptance of inclement weather (de Freitas, 2003). In relation to destination image and destination choice, at destination weather conditions that are less optimal than expected can also result in cognitive dissonance (Robert, 1973), with tourists needing to cope with the

consequences of the choices they made earlier (e.g., choosing to spend their vacation in a temperate climate). Thus, understanding behavioral and psychological adaptation of tourists spending their vacation in a temperate climate with variable and often relatively cool weather is important to provide those tourists with tools to deal with weather variations during their vacation.

Third, weather conditions can contribute to people's experience of difference between home and away, an important aspect of touristic experiences. When people travel to other places, meteorological conditions can be different from or similar to when at home, familiar when experienced earlier or unfamiliar when not. The weather appears to be one of the ways people make sense of where they are, for example through comparison with earlier experiences (Jeuring & Peters, 2013). As such, the holistic meta image of destinations on the country level is nuanced and specified on the individual level of actual weather experiences, embedded in the local context of holiday accommodations and daily activities. In turn, these specific experiences can be extrapolated to higher level evaluations of destinations and holidays as a whole.

In some places, the experience of inclement weather has become embedded in the local culture, nation state identity and destination image (Endfield, 2011; Harley, Strauss, & Orlove, 2003; Limb & Spellman, 2001). For example, in the context of Europe, people in the United Kingdom have an image of being strongly engaged with the weather (Harley et al., 2003), while similar accounts can be found for people from Benelux countries. This can result in polarized comparisons between country of residence and tourism destinations, with imagined weather differences as representations of distance between home and away, as motivations for travel and as a source for otherness (Jeuring & Haartsen, 2017). As such, unawareness of potential microclimatic differences on the intraregional level can lead to ignorance toward the potential attractiveness of near home tourism

destinations. At the same time, awareness of and experiencing differences between the weather at home and the weather at a (geographically proximate) destination, can be a relevant source for unfamiliarity and a sense of 'being away from home'. This becomes particularly relevant when considering people's ability to construct comfortable microclimates (de Freitas, 2003), even in atmospheric conditions that seem uncomfortable on a lower spatial resolution.

Given the high exposure to weather conditions (Hewer, Scott, & Gough, 2015), the abovementioned three aspects are particularly relevant for camping tourism in the context of northern Europe, which is arguably challenged by variable and relatively suboptimal weather conditions. This might make spending a domestic vacation in northern Europe potentially less attractive and camping tourists need to have relatively strong adaptive skills in order to cope with weather variability. Also, increased exposure makes weather induced experiences of difference between home and away more likely for tourists spending their vacation on camping grounds than for people who spend their vacation in less exposed environments.

Nevertheless, domestic tourism within countries along the North Sea is an important economic factor, particularly in more rural regions (Bel, Lacroix, Lyser, Rambonilaza, & Turpin, 2015; Canavan, 2015). Predominantly in the summer season, a considerable number of people stay within their country of residence to spend their main holiday, often on camping grounds (Blichfeldt & Mikkelsen, 2013; Blichfeldt, 2004). Some scholars have done fruitful research on camping tourists (Blichfeldt, 2004; Triantafillidou & Siomkos, 2013), but particular attention for the weather in domestic tourism has thus far been limited to only a few studies (Gössling et al., 2016; Hewer et al., 2015; Lohmann & Kaim, 1999; Rantala, Valtonen, & Markuksela, 2011). Thus, much is to be learnt about the local context of domestic tourism, where people willingly choose to spend their holidays in variable and potentially familiar weather circumstances.

6.3 Methodology

6.3.1 Study area

The study was situated in the Dutch province of Fryslân, one of the twelve provinces of The Netherlands (Figure 6.1). Being a generally rural region for Dutch standards, over forty percent of its surface is water, including a major part of the Wadden Sea (World Heritage area). The Southwest of the province has an extensive network of fresh water lakes, embedded in agricultural landscapes with dairy livestock, while its Southeastern part contains large forested areas and is more secluded and patchy. In terms of tourism regions, the province's tourism marketing discerns three areas (Jeuring, 2016), which roughly match the three different regions just described: the Wadden Islands, the Frisian Lakes area and the Frisian Woods area (Figure 6.1). Situated along the southern part of the North Sea, weather conditions in Fryslân are strongly influenced by its coastal geography. Having a temperate sea climate, winters are relatively mild, even though frosty days with maximum temperatures below zero degrees Celsius occur occasionally.

Maximum temperatures during the summer season tend to be around 20 degrees Celsius, sometimes rising as high as 30 degrees Celsius. Average monthly rainfall ranges between 60 millimeter and 70 millimeter. Weather conditions can change quickly throughout the year, even within a couple of hours. Importantly, while summer months are the warmest of the year, they also see most days with rainfall (Sluijter, Leenaers, & Camarasa, 2011).

Peak holiday season is during the summer months July and August (ETFL, 2012) and, similar to other regions on higher latitudes (Denstadli et al., 2011), daily and seasonal weather variability are an important challenge for the local tourism sector (ETFL, 2012). Intraregional variation in weather patterns are often attributable to places' distance from the coast. While the Wadden Islands have arguably lower temperatures in summer than places

more inland, they have a higher average hours of sunshine, particularly in the (early) summer season (Sluijter et al., 2011).

After the Second World War, tourism in Fryslân developed significantly, currently generating almost one billion euros on a yearly basis and providing jobs for around seven percent of the Frisian population (ETFI., 2012). Most tourism is domestic, while German visitors are the major group of foreign tourists. Major tourist attractions pertain to rural qualities such as nature, tranquility and 'big skies'. Important touristic activities are soft outdoor activities such as watersports (both on the fresh water lakes as on the Wadden Sea), cycling and beach tourism (ETFI., 2012). Jeuring (2016) and Jeuring and Haartsen (2017) provide a more extensive touristic profile of Fryslân. The combined characteristics of Fryslân's climate, geography and the importance of tourism for the regional economy, demands for knowledge about the role of weather perceptions of its attractiveness as tourism destination.



Figure 6.1 Tourist regions in Fryslân (Jeuring, 2016).

6.3.2 Instrument

A printed survey (in Dutch language) was used to measure the following items and scales. Multi-item scales measuring Value Beliefs, Attitudes and Intention towards domestic tourism were adapted from Gardiner et al. (2015) to the Dutch context. Value Beliefs pertained to four dimensions: Emotional Value (five items e.g., 'Taking a holiday in The Netherlands makes me feel good'), Novelty Value (five items e.g., 'Taking a holiday in The Netherlands is something different'), Price Value (four items e.g., 'Holidays in The Netherlands offer value for money') and Quality Value (four items e.g., 'Holidays in The Netherlands offer an acceptable standard of quality'). Attitudes (e.g., 'I like holidays in The Netherlands') and Intentions (e.g., 'I intend to go on a holiday in The Netherlands in the near future') were each measured with three items. Internal reliability (Table 6.2) of all scales was acceptable to good (Vaske, 2008).

Perceived personal significance of the weather was operationalized through the Weather Salience (WxS) concept and measured with the Weather Salience Short Form (seven items, see Table 6.1), developed by Stewart et al. (2012), a shorter version of the original Weather Salience Scale (Stewart, 2009). Next, a number of items were included to measure weather impacts on people's holiday. These items were developed on an exploratory basis, based on findings from other studies on the various ways weather affects tourism see Section 2. and pertained to aspects of destination attractiveness (Gómez Martín, 2005; Lohmann & Kaim, 1999) (e.g., 'The weather plays a role in my holiday destination choice'), but also to adaptive behavior in relation to weather conditions (Becken & Wilson, 2013; Denstadli et al., 2011) (e.g., 'I am fine with adapting my daily holiday schedule to the weather conditions'). To measure the extent to which differences between home and destination are experienced through weather conditions (Jeuring & Peters, 2013), one exploratory item was included ('The holiday weather contributes to my experience of being

away from home'), next to eleven weather aspects (based on Lohmann & Hübner, 2013) for which respondents could indicate whether they apply to home or to their holiday destination (e.g., 'Weather conditions change more quickly'). The survey was concluded with a set of demographic items. A number of items and scales included in the survey are not addressed here as these measures are beyond the purpose of this paper. IBM SPSS Statistics software (version 23) was used for the data analysis.

6.3.3 Procedure and sample

Data collection took place in August 2015 on camping grounds in the province Fryslân. Given the exploratory nature of the study and the main purpose being to get insight in conceptual relationships, a convenience sampling technique was deemed appropriate. Convenience sampling is common in tourism research given the transient character of the population and the logistic complications for reaching this population (Young, 1999). Potential respondents were approached on seventeen different camping grounds, spread across the three main holiday regions of the province (Figure 6.1). The camping grounds varied from small nature based grounds to large parks with an abundance of facilities. First, permission was asked from the camping owners to distribute the survey. On two occasions we were not allowed to distribute the survey (both camping grounds being located on the Wadden Islands). In these cases, we moved on to other, similar types of camping grounds. After obtaining permission, guests were approached by explaining the context of the research and were asked if they wanted to participate by filling out the survey. A total of 379 people were approached, of which 344 agreed to participate and the rest declined for various reasons (e.g., no interest, bad timing). While most of the surveys were collected shortly after being filled out, some respondents were given a return envelope, not all of which were actually found back in the researcher's mailbox. Also, after collecting the surveys, it appeared that a

Table 6.1 Factor analysis results of Weather Salience items.

Items	F1	F2	F3	M (SD)
1) I take notice of changes that occur in the weather	.78			3.69 (.89)
2) I notice how the clouds look during various kinds of weather	.76			3.34 (.98)
3) I plan my daily routine around what the weather may bring	.70			3.50 (.95)
4) The weather or changes in the weather really do not matter to me ^a	.53			2.33 (1.16)
5) I am attached to the weather and climate of my hometown		.84		3.66 (1.01)
6) It is important to me to live in a place that offers a variety of different weather conditions throughout the year		.83		3.58 (1.08)
7) In the past I have wished for weather that would result in a weather-related holiday			.97	2.70 (1.43)
Cronbach's alpha	.62			
Pearson correlation		.48		
Total WxS score	14.19 (2.72)			24.16 (3.69)
Eigenvalue	2.10	1.40	1.02	
Percent variance explained	30.0	20.0	14.6	

Item 1-4 and 7 coded 1=never to 5=always, item 4 and 5 coded 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree. ^aItem reverse coded.

number of surveys were only filled out partially. These were excluded from the analysis. This left us with a total of 326 usable surveys and a response rate of 86 percent.

The sample ($n = 326$) consisted of 58 percent female and 42 percent male camping tourists. Travel parties comprised families with kids (57%), with kids being mostly between six and twelve years old. Travel parties with just adults made up for 37 percent of the sample, while six percent were single campers. The duration of the holiday was for the majority (81%) seven nights or longer. While about 40 percent stayed in a tent, 60 percent stayed in a caravan or motorhome.

Table 6.2 Comparisons between Low, Medium and High WxS groups of perceived value, attitude and intention towards domestic tourism in The Netherlands.

	Mean ^a (SD)	Test statistic	Significant differences at 0.05 level ^b
EV (α=.85)			
Low	5.29 (1.08)	F(2,313)=7.32, p=.001	Low WxS respondents have significantly lower EV perceptions than Medium WxS respondents.
Medium	5.74 (.65)		
High	5.65 (.71)		
NV (α=.69)			
Low	4.67 (.98)	F(2, 313)=2.86, p=.06	No significant differences between WxS groups.
Medium	4.99 (.82)		
High	4.86 (.93)		
PV (α=.82)			
Low	4.87 (.98)	F(2,309)=1.29, p=.278	No significant differences between WxS groups.
Medium	5.11 (.90)		
High	5.04 (.96)		
QV (α=.82)			
Low	5.48 (1.05)	F(2,315)=4.62, p=.01	No significant differences between WxS groups.
Medium	5.83 (.64)		
High	5.81 (.62)		
AT (α=.82)			
Low	5.42 (1.13)	F(2,315)=8.14, p=.001	Low WxS respondents have significantly less positive attitude towards domestic tourism than Medium WxS respondents.
Medium	5.91 (.64)		
High	5.84 (.77)		
IN (α=.72)			
Low	4.97 (1.37)	F(2,318)=5.79, p=.003	Low WxS respondents have significantly less intention to engage in domestic tourism than Medium WxS respondents.
Medium	5.52 (1.00)		
High	5.20 (1.17)		

EV: emotional value; NV: novelty value; QV: quality value; PV: price value; AT: attitude; IN: intention.

^aLikert scale of Strongly disagree (1) to Strongly agree (7).

^bBased on Tamhane's T2 post hoc comparisons.

6.4 Results

6.4.1 Weather Salience

First, insight in perceived personal significance of the weather was obtained by measuring respondents' levels of Weather Salience (WxS) (Table 6.1). Summed WxS scores of the seven items ranged between 11 and 34, with an average of 24.16 (SD = 3.69). One-way ANOVA showed that respondents had significantly higher levels (0.88 mean difference) of WxS ($F(1,1782) = 11.26, p < 0.001$) than respondents in the original study of Stewart et al. (2012), indicating a relatively high degree to which this sample was psychologically attuned to and affected by weather and weather changes. However, when exploring the dimensionality with a Principal Components Analysis (with Varimax rotation) (Ramkissoon, Smith, & Weiler, 2013), a three factor solution was found (Table 6.1). Based on these findings, it was decided to continue the analysis with a summed scale of the four items underlying the first factor. This factor included most aspects of the Weather Salience concept. Internal reliability of the four item scale was relatively low (Cronbach's Alpha = .62), but acceptable in the current context (Loewenthal, 2001; Vaske, 2008). For the purpose of this study, this scale will be referred to as WxS, even though we are aware this does not cover the whole range of WxS dimensions (see also section 6.5).

Subsequently, the sample was grouped into several categories, in order to get more insight in the distribution of WxS and potential differences related to subgroups of respondents, using one-way ANOVAs. Diverging from the findings of Stewart et al. (2012), female and male respondents did not differ significantly. Also, Weather Salience appeared to be unrelated to frequency of past domestic holidays, frequency of past international holidays, household type (with or without kids), age and income. Yet, discerning between type of camping accommodation, people staying in a tent (14.73, SD = 2.66) had significantly higher levels of WxS than people staying in a caravan/motorhome (13.81, SD = 2.71, $F(1,318) = 9.02, p =$

0.003). This points to a relation between weather experiences and holiday accommodation. To look into this relation more deeply, in a number of subsequent analyses distinction will also be made between accommodation types (section 6.4.3).

Table 6.3 Comparisons between Low, Medium and High WxS groups of perceived impacts of the weather on holiday satisfaction, destination choice and adaptive behavior.

Impacts	WxS groups			<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	η
	Low	Medium	High			
1. The weather during my current holiday has a positive influence on my holiday satisfaction.	3.78 ^a (.92)	3.95 ^{ab} (.73)	4.20 ^b (.78)	4.56	.011	.17
2. The weather during my current holiday has a negative influence on my holiday satisfaction.	2.22 (.94)	2.38 (.87)	2.25 (.94)	n.s.		
3. The holiday weather contributes to my experience of being away from home.	3.90 ^a (.92)	4.22 ^b (.85)	4.59 ^c (.64)	10.15	.001	.25
4. When the weather is bad it occurs to me that I might as well have stayed at home.	2.90 (1.21)	3.20 (1.22)	3.03 (1.45)	n.s.		
5. At my current holiday destination I have sufficient ways to enjoy myself when the weather is bad.	3.76 (1.13)	3.67 (1.09)	3.88 (1.03)	n.s.		
6. I am fine with adapting my daily holiday schedule to the weather conditions.	4.00 (.82)	3.98 (.91)	4.05 (.90)	n.s.		
7. The weather plays a role in my holiday destination choice.	3.24 ^a (1.27)	3.44 ^a (1.14)	3.90 ^b (1.15)	5.30	.005	.18

Means with different superscripts are significant at $p < .05$ based on LSD (item 3 and 7) or Tamhane's T2 (item 1) post-hoc analysis. Items measured on five-point scale (1=Strongly disagree; 5=Strongly agree).

6.4.2 Values, attitudes and intention towards domestic tourism

Next, the analysis focused on the relation between Weather Salience and values, attitudes and intention toward domestic tourism. In line with Stewart et al., (2012) procedure, respondents were grouped in low (average minus one standard deviation, $n = 49$), medium (between average minus one and plus one standard deviation, $n = 209$) and high (average plus one standard deviation, $n = 64$) Weather Salience. The scores of the three groups on perceived value, attitudes and intention towards domestic tourism in The Netherlands were compared with one-way ANOVAs and post-hoc group comparisons (Table 6.2).

Post-hoc tests revealed significant group differences for Emotional Value, Attitude and Intention between people with low WxS and medium WxS. This indicates that people with low WxS attribute relatively little emotional value to domestic tourism, that they have a relatively less positive attitudes towards domestic tourism and their intention to engage in domestic tourism is lower than people with medium WxS. Note that all groups scored above the scale mean. Interestingly, no significant differences were found between low WxS and high WxS groups. A –not significant– tendency could even be discerned where high WxS respondents scored somewhat lower on each scale than medium WxS respondents. Overall though, a medium level of Weather Salience seems to be most positively related to values, attitudes and intention towards domestic tourism in The Netherlands.

6.4.3 Perceived impact of weather on satisfaction and adaptive behavior

Relations between perceived significance of the weather and perceptions about domestic tourism become more meaningful when something can be said on how weather is dealt with during a domestic vacation. Therefore, by using one-way ANOVAs and post-hoc comparisons, the extent to which

levels of WxS were related to perceived impacts of weather on people's satisfaction and adaptive behavior was examined (Table 6.3).

Results indicated that the weather has a positive influence on people's holiday satisfaction, particularly for people with higher levels of WxS. On the other hand, weather conditions were perceived to have little negative effects on satisfaction with current holidays. Next, respondents perceived the weather to have an important impact on people's experience of being away from home and –to a lesser extent– on their holiday destination choice. Again, this was especially strong for higher WxS respondents. Interestingly, irrespective of their level of WxS, respondents were generally neutral about the extent to which any bad weather conditions experienced during their holiday would make them think they might as well stayed at home. Thus, respondents feel little weather-induced regret, once they have made the choice to go on a camping holiday. Also, respondents stated to be quite adaptive to varying weather circumstances, both in terms of their perception of the availability of bad weather alternatives and their willingness to adapt to prevailing weather.

Next, for the same seven statements a distinction was made between people staying in a tent and people staying in caravan/motorhome (Table 6.4) by testing group differences with one-way ANOVAs, as these are the two main types of camping accommodation used by the respondents. While more or less the same overall tendencies were found as for the WxS groups, significant differences appeared in the context of holiday satisfaction: positive influence of the weather was significantly higher for people's staying in a tent, while the this was turned around for negative influences. This is interesting, since people in a tent are arguably more exposed to the prevailing weather conditions.

Table 6.4 Comparisons for perceived impacts of the weather on holiday satisfaction, destination choice and adaptive behavior between people staying in tent and caravan/motorhome.

Impacts ^a	Accommodation		F	p	η
	Tent	Caravan			
1. The weather during my current holiday has a positive influence on my holiday satisfaction.	4.11 (.74)	3.90 (.76)	6.17	.013	.14
2. The weather during my current holiday has a negative influence on my holiday satisfaction.	2.16 (.86)	2.44 (.90)	7.50	.007	.15
3. The holiday weather contributes to my experience of being away from home.	4.35 (.75)	4.19 (.88)	n.s.		
4. When the weather is bad it occurs to me that I might as well have stayed at home.	3.05 (1.30)	3.17 (1.23)	n.s.		
5. At my current holiday destination I have sufficient ways to enjoy myself when the weather is bad.	3.63 (1.13)	3.80 (1.05)	n.s.		
6. I am fine with adapting my daily holiday schedule to the weather conditions.	4.05 (.87)	3.96 (.91)	n.s.		
7. The weather plays a role in my holiday destination choice.	3.60 (1.13)	3.46 (1.19)	n.s.		

^aItems measured on five-point scale (1=Strongly disagree; 5=Strongly agree).

6.4.4 Weather aspects as signifiers of difference between home and away

It was already found that some domestic camping tourists attribute an important role to the weather in their experience of being away from home (particularly when having higher levels of WxS, Table 6.3). In order to find evidence for specific weather conditions underlying these perceptions, weather differences between home and destination were measured for eleven weather aspects (Table 6.5). Overall, while most respondents were able to indicate whether they perceived a difference or not between home and holiday destination, for most weather aspects the majority of the respondents did not perceive any differences. This was not entirely

surprising, given the relative similarity of overall climatic circumstances within The Netherlands (recall the geographically proximate context of domestic tourism). However, biggest differences were perceived for wind conditions; stronger wind was perceived more often at holiday destinations, while less strong wind was perceived to be occurring more often at home. Other weather aspects that people perceived to be occurring relatively often at their holiday destination were comfortably warm weather (possibly attributable to people spending their holiday in the summer season), quickly changing weather conditions and fresh/cold weather conditions.

Table 6.5 Perceived differences in weather conditions between home and destination.

Perceived weather differences	Percentage attributed difference			
	At destination	At home	No difference	Don't know
1. More often a strong wind	42.3%	11.1%	40.4%	6.2%
2. Wind is less strong	12.7%	38.0%	44.1%	5.2%
3. More often comfortably warm	24.1%	11.8%	56.0%	8.0%
4. Weather conditions change more quickly	26.1%	6.2%	56.2%	11.5%
5. More often fresh/cold	22.2%	9.8%	58.2%	9.8%
6. More often continuous drizzle/rain	5.3%	15.5%	62.2%	17.0%
7. More often uncomfortably warm/hot	6.8%	21.5%	63.1%	8.6%
8. More often a heavy rain shower	8.6%	12.6%	64.6%	14.2%
9. Sun shines more often	19.4%	6.2%	65.4%	9.0%
10. More often a thunderstorm	5.6%	11.3%	65.6%	17.5%
11. More often cloudy	5.8%	15.7%	66.5%	12.0%

Next, these perceptions of difference were scrutinized with a one-way ANOVA test for differences between WxS groups and type of holiday accommodation. This was done as follows. First, answers per weather aspect were split into two categories, separating between (1). Perceived

difference and (2). No difference/don't know. Then, answers for all weather types were summed, resulting in a variable where lower values indicate lower levels of weather perceived difference, and higher values indicate higher levels of perceived difference. On average, respondents had on average an opinion about 3.37 (SD = 3.36) (out of eleven) weather aspects. People staying in a tent ($M = 4.28$, $SD = 3.62$) perceived significantly more differences ($F(1,307) = 16.74$, $p = 0.001$) than people staying in a caravan/motorhome ($M = 2.72$, $SD = 3.04$). When discerning between different levels of WxS, it appeared that the differences between accommodation types were significant for medium and high WxS groups, while no differences were found for people with low WxS (Table 6.6). Testing for an interaction between WxS and accommodation type did however not reveal a significant result.

Table 6.6 Perceived weather differences between home and holiday destination for people staying in a tent and caravan/motorhome, per level of Weather Salience.

Levels of Weather Salience	Tent ^a	Caravan ^a	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	η
	<i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	<i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)			
Low WxS	2.4 (2.2)	3.0 (2.7)	n.s.		
Medium WxS	4.7 (3.6)	2.7 (3.2)	16.05	.001	.27
High Wxs	4.6 (4.0)	2.8 (2.8)	4.06	.05	.26

^aAverage number of perceived differences out of 11 weather aspects.

Finally, spatial differences in perceived weather characteristics were examined by comparing perceptions of tourists staying in three different holiday regions within the province of Fryslân (Wadden Islands, Frisian Lakes and Frisian Woods), each with an arguably different microclimate. It has to be noted that the geographical distinction between sub regions is based

on regional tourism marketing structures (Jeuring, 2016) and not on climatological data. Thus, while a distinction between islands, fresh water lakes and forested areas has face validity in this context, the division is primarily illustrative for the hypothesis that weather can play a role in people's perceptions of difference between home and away.

Table 6.7 Differences in weather conditions between home and destination, per holiday region.

Perceived weather differences	Percentage attributed difference ^a											
	At destination			At home			No difference			Don't know		
	W	L	I	W	L	I	W	L	I	W	L	I
1. More often a strong wind	11.7	45.2	68.9	18.4	10.4	4.7	62.1	39.1	20.8	7.8	5.2	5.7
2. Wind is less strong	20.6	10.3	7.5	8.8	40.5	63.2	62.7	40.5	25.5	7.8	4.3	3.8
3. More often comfortably warm	16.5	17.4	39.0	6.8	13.0	15.2	68.9	61.7	37.1	7.8	7.8	8.6
4. Weather conditions change more quickly	10.7	17.4	51.0	8.7	3.5	6.7	68.9	67.0	31.7	11.7	12.2	10.6
5. More often fresh/cold	10.7	18.1	37.7	10.7	7.8	11.3	71.8	62.9	39.6	6.8	11.2	11.3
6. More often continuous drizzle/rain	3.9	9.6	1.9	3.9	6.1	36.8	79.4	66.1	41.5	12.7	18.3	19.8
7. More often uncomfortably warm/hot	12.6	4.3	3.8	4.9	13.8	46.2	74.8	69.8	44.3	7.8	12.1	5.7
8. More often a heavy rain shower	6.8	12.9	5.7	5.8	3.4	29.2	76.7	69.0	48.1	10.7	14.7	17.0
9. Sun shines more often	7.8	5.2	46.2	4.9	9.6	3.8	77.7	75.7	42.5	9.7	9.6	7.5
10. More often a thunderstorm	5.9	6.1	4.8	9.9	4.4	20.0	71.3	71.1	54.3	12.9	18.4	21.0
11. More often cloudy	5.8	7.8	3.8	6.8	3.4	37.7	77.7	74.1	47.2	9.7	14.7	11.3

^aW=Frisian Woods, L=Frisian Lakes, I=Wadden Islands. Relatively strong perceived differences per weather type are highlighted in bold.

One-way ANOVAs per holiday region, testing for differences between WxS levels and accommodation types, on the summed total of perceived weather differences did not provide significant results. However, when comparing the regions with each other, it was found that particularly on the Wadden islands ($M = 5.4$, $SD = 3.6$) tourists perceive substantially more weather differences, compared with camping tourists in the Frisian Lakes ($M = 2.6$, $SD = 2.6$) and Frisian Woods ($M = 2.0$, $SD = 2.8$; $F(2,307) = 37.87$, $p = 0.001$) areas.

A subsequent distinction between different weather aspects shows that perceived type of weather differences varies considerably across the holiday regions (Table 6.7). Not surprising in the light of the results presented just above, most differences were found for the Wadden Islands, and (much) less for the Lakes and Woods areas. Quickly changing weather conditions and fresh/cold weather, but also comfortable warmth and sunshine are perceived to be different much more often on the Wadden Islands than elsewhere. Wind plays an important role in both the Lakes area and on the Wadden Islands, but not in the Woods area. Less wind than at home was perceived to be the most important difference for the Woods area. Another interesting finding is that while some weather conditions are perceived to be typical for the destination, other (i.e., drizzle, hot weather, heavy rain, cloudy weather and thunderstorms) are experienced more often at home, showing that both experiences of absence and of presence are noticed and potentially underlie perceived difference.

6.5 Discussion and conclusion

This paper provides insight in the personal significance of the weather among domestic camping tourists in The Netherlands. Employing Weather Salience (Stewart, 2009; Stewart et al., 2012) as a concept that captures the extent to which people are psychologically attuned to and affected by

weather and weather changes, the study related various levels of WxS with beliefs, attitudes and intention towards domestic tourism. Further, it was explored how WxS affects tourist experiences and behavior, and whether domestic tourists perceive weather-based differences between home and away on the small geographical scale of domestic camping in The Netherlands.

The results of this paper should be interpreted in the context of a number of limitations. Levels of Weather Salience among the sample were significantly higher than found in Stewart et al., study (2012). However, comparisons between the studies remain somewhat difficult given the variations in the convergence of underlying WxS dimensions and the different sample types. Also, the shortened WxS scale was used and its dimensional characteristics as found in this study should be embedded in further research in order to get deeper insight in the stability of these dimensions within the context of tourism and recreation. Particularly, research should verify ways to improve the relatively low internal reliability of the WxS scale as found in this study. The actual weather during the surveying period was mostly sunny summer weather with temperatures well above the average for August in The Netherlands. This might have affected the variance in weather evaluations, particularly with respect to measuring weather impacts pertaining to short term time frames (e.g., the current vacation) and to the absence of perceived negative impacts. In addition, no distinction was made between seasonal camping guests and short-term guests or first time and repeat visitors. People who have a seasonal camping place might benefit from increased temporal flexibility in their choice to spend time at the camping ground. As such, they are able to adapt to both favorable and inclement weather conditions more easily, for example by alternating between home and their camping place. Another potential limitation concerns the in-situ nature of the study, resulting in a sample with respondents who all have already decided to go on a

domestic camping holiday. Thus, generalization of the findings to tourists who have decided otherwise remains difficult. Finally, using a convenience sampling technique limits the generalizability of the results to larger populations of camping tourists.

Despite these limitations, the results provide input for a discussion about the role of the psychological significance of weather in the context of domestic tourism in temperate climates. To our knowledge, this study was the first to explore the Weather Salience concept outside of the United States and also the first to employ it in a tourism context. Based on the findings, WxS appears to be a useful concept that is a valuable addition to the tourism climatology literature. While differences between people with varying levels of WxS were often small, minor effects of weather on tourist experiences and behavior have also been found in other studies (Denstadli et al., 2011; McKercher, Shoval, Park, & Kahani, 2015). But it is exactly this complex, nuanced and ephemeral role of weather that needs further explanation and, thus, deserves continuous attention.

For example, it can be questioned which levels of Weather Salience are advantageous in the tourism context. While, overall, respondents attributed relatively much importance to weather in terms of noticing weather changes and taking the weather into account in their daily planning, higher levels of WxS indicate stronger sensitivity, thus potentially being more influenced by the weather. In terms of holiday satisfaction, this can go both ways (for example, higher enjoyment or stronger disappointment), making temperate climates with changeable weather particularly tricky. On the other hand, higher levels of WxS can result in higher adaptive capacity, both psychologically and behaviorally, which can be beneficial in terms of safety and awareness when the weather becomes extreme (Jeuring & Becken, 2013). In the context of climate change and increase of weather extremes, this might indeed be a relevant point (Gössling et al., 2016). Similarly, lower levels of WxS can make people

numb, indifferent about or ignorant towards (changes in) holiday weather, which could enhance unrealistic expectations about and unawareness of both favorable and dangerous weather conditions.

In any case, the results seem to indicate that positive perceptions about domestic tourism in The Netherlands benefit mostly from Weather Salience levels that are not too low, but not too high either. However, when it comes to enhancing the overall attractiveness of domestic tourism in temperate climates, a main challenge for tourism businesses lies in the anticipatory imaginaries about weather in never visited destinations and, particularly, stereotyped ideas about the assumed familiar climate and weather of the home country and region. As the manager of one of the camping grounds on which tourists were approached stated, “when the guests are here, they deal with any type of weather. But it is at home where the weather affects their destination choice, between a vacation in The Netherlands or abroad”. Thus, understanding the complexity of destination choice decisions could benefit from taking into account the role of personal significance of the weather. Therefore, destination branding campaigns building on positive Word-of-Mouth and citizen participation (Jeuring & Haartsen, 2017) could profit from knowledge about the way weather shapes imaginaries of attractiveness among local residents, both positively and negatively.

Among people who actually chose to go on a camping vacation in The Netherlands, potentially bad weather seems to have little effect on satisfaction. This is in line with other studies' findings (Gössling et al., 2016; Lohmann & Kaim, 1999). Given that Steiger, Abegg, and Jänicke (2016) found that first time visitors are more sensitive to rain compared to repeat visitors, the lack of perceived negative impact of weather can be explained by a more extensive knowledge about the local environment and climate. Another explanation might be found in the lower expectations people have of the weather in The Netherlands, which would align with a

study on tourists in Norway (Denstadli et al., 2011). This could also explain why people staying in a tent experienced more positive influences from the weather than people staying in a caravan: when the weather is good, increased exposure to weather has a beneficial effect, while staying in a caravan/motorhome limits the potential of enjoying good weather and from behind the window of a caravan inclement weather might even look extra bad.

From a tourism management perspective, the results point to a need for destination marketing organizations and tourism entrepreneurs to think not only of providing physical facilities (e.g., bad weather attractions like museums or indoor swimming pools) that provide alternatives for outdoor vacation activities during inclement weather. In addition, providing a realistic image of likely weather conditions at destinations in temperate climates might be essential too. However, Gössling et al. (2016) concluded that branding places by using bad weather is not a good idea and stated in turn that “[weather] events are negotiated individually, in the context of a specific situation and opportunities to adapt” (p.8). Therefore, another option might be to enhance behavioral and psychological coping with various weather types, as it can strengthen tourists' sense of control about the way they deal with their vacation weather. This way, by bearing in mind the dimensions of Weather Salience, (marketing) strategies could explicitly take into account the very personal relation people can have with the weather. This can also help mitigating the impact of weather variability on the increasingly ad-hoc vacation decision making behavior that signifies the contemporary –and particularly the domestic– tourism market (Hamilton & Lau, 2004; Ruddy & Scott, 2016). We see a task here for tourism entrepreneurs (with support of regional authorities), who are often most knowledgeable about the local circumstances and microclimates.

This paper has shown that weather conditions can –particularly among people with higher levels of WxS– enhance the experience of being

away from home. This is an important result, since it demonstrates that weather can contribute to experiences of otherness and escape, or to a sense of (un)familiarity. Similar results were found in an earlier study (Jeuring & Peters, 2013), but weather differences appear to be perceived on the high spatial resolution of a small country like The Netherlands. In terms of specific weather features, our findings align with Lohmann and Kaim, (1999) to the extent that wind was the most noticed weather factor by tourists in northern Germany. However, in using a comparative approach, our study moves beyond the conventional measure of absolute weather experiences as employed in various other studies (Hewer et al., 2015; Lohmann & Kaim, 1999; Ritty & Scott, 2014).

Both type and number of weather related differences between home and destination appeared to vary on a small geographical level, pointing to a potential relevance of the weather for experiences of otherness in proximity of people's everyday environment. Furthermore, the construction of meaning about places through comparison (e.g., between home and destination) that can occur on the very local level, shows a potential for capitalizing on microclimates within tourism destinations. Hereby, our study could trigger a rethinking of the hegemonic narratives about climate and weather that shape and are shaped by the tourism industry. Climate and weather often have been contributing to a holistic narrative of the home-away binary, hereby in turn contributing to tourism being a business of travel to sunny and warm places, far away from the mundane, boring, cold and rainy home. But in order to do justice to the importance and attractiveness of domestic tourism in temperate climates, and to the individual micro level on which weather experiences take place, a counter narrative of microclimates, individual level coping and near-home attractiveness seems both promising and necessary.

A number of suggestions for future research can be made. Measurement of Weather Salience and its dimensionality could be further

explored in various tourism contexts. For example, this study's findings could be placed in context of domestic and international tourism of Dutch residents by using larger sample sizes or even a representative sample of the Dutch population. In doing so, differences between WxS levels might be larger than found in this study, since not only the specific segment of camping tourists would be considered. Also, extending beyond camping accommodations and data collection during different types of weather conditions (besides sunny summer weather with above average temperatures) could provide a broader context for interpretation of the findings. This way, too, environmental conditions become more strongly embedded in the research methodology (Lohmann & Hübner, 2013), an aspect of tourism climatology research that deserves more attention. The role of weather in destination choice could be studied further in terms of how weather expectations and experiences affect choosing for a domestic vacation or a destination abroad. Particularly a temporal perspective that takes into account how perceptions change over time could be a useful approach.

Finally, the weather as signifier of otherness and (un)familiarity deserves further attention. For example, future (qualitative) research could get an in-depth perspective on different types of otherness and unfamiliarity that is induced by various weather conditions. A better understanding of weather experiences in terms of otherness and familiarity would be an innovative and thus far hardly explored aspect of how weather affects tourism.

This study aimed to further the understanding of the role of weather experiences in a domestic camping tourism context. Employing a quantitative approach and situated in The Netherlands, the findings of the study contribute to the knowledge about the highly local and contextual impact of weather on people's lives. It can be concluded that Weather Salience, as it is capturing the psychological attunement to weather and

weather changes, has a significant but complicated influence on the outdoor tourist experience, even when holidaying domestically and in relative proximity to home.

In exploring the potential contribution of WxS in a domestic tourism context, this study's findings form a basis for further research on the role of Weather Salience in other tourism settings. More generally, the weather should be maintained as a relevant topic for tourism academics and local stakeholders that is best studied in specific, local contexts, for example that of domestic tourism. By contributing to a better understanding of domestic tourist experiences and of associations between people's everyday life and vacation destinations, tourism climatology research highlights the subjective, spatial aspects of the weather. Hereby tourism climatology can become even more strongly embedded in the geography of tourism.

References

- Ayscue, E. P., Curtis, S., Hao, H., & Montz, B. (2015). Forecast and weather-related information used among coastal tourism businesses. *Tourism Geographies*, 17(4), 603-626.
- Becken, S., & Wilson, J. (2010). *Providing weather information for tourism and leisure*. Christchurch: Lincoln University.
- Becken, S., & Wilson, J. (2013). The impacts of weather on tourist travel. *Tourism Geographies*, 15(4), 620-639.
- Bel, F., Lacroix, A., Lyser, S., Rambonilaza, T., & Turpin, N. (2015). Domestic demand for tourism in rural areas: Insights from summer stays in three French regions. *Tourism Management*, 46, 562-570.
- Blichfeldt, B. S. (2004). *Why do some Tourists choose to spend their Vacation Close to home*. Esbjerg: Syddansk Universitet.
- Blichfeldt, B. S., & Mikkelsen, M. V. (2013). Vacability and sociability as touristic attraction. *Tourist Studies*, 13(3), 235-250.
- Bourdeau, P. (2012). Visiting/living (in) the alps: Towards a tourist-residential

- convergence? Di chi sono le Alpi?: appartenenze politiche, economiche e culturali nel mondo alpino contemporaneo.
- Canavan, B. (2013). The Extent and Role of Domestic Tourism in a Small Island: The Case of the Isle of Man. *Journal of Travel Research*, 52(3), 340-352.
- Canavan, B. (2015). Identification, motivation and facilitation of domestic tourism in a small island. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, 1-16.
- Denstadli, J. M., Jacobsen, J. K. S., & Lohmann, M. (2011). Tourist perceptions of summer weather in Scandinavia. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 38(3), 920-940.
- Diaz-Soria, I., & Lluïdes Coit, J. C. (2013). Thoughts about proximity tourism as a strategy for local development. *Cuadernos de Turismo*, 32, 65-88.
- Elands, B. H., & Lengkeek, J. (2012). The tourist experience of out-there-ness: Theory and empirical research. *Forest Policy and Economics*, 19, 31-38.
- Endfield, G. (2011). Reculturing and particularizing climate Discourses: Weather, identity, and the work of Gordon Manley. *Osiris*, 26(1), 142-162.
- ETFI. (2012). *Toerismememomitor 2011* (Retrieved from Leeuwarden).
- Falk, M. (2015). Summer weather conditions and tourism flows in urban and rural destinations. *Climatic Change*, 130(2), 201-222.
- de Freitas, C. R. (1990). Recreation climate assessment. *International Journal of Climatology*, 10(1), 89-103.
- de Freitas, C. R. (2003). Tourism climatology: Evaluating environmental information for decision making and business planning in the recreation and tourism sector. *International Journal of Biometeorology*, 48(1), 45-54.
- de Freitas, C. R. (2015). Weather and place-based human behavior:

- Recreational preferences and sensitivity. *International journal of biometeorology*, 59(1), 55-63.
- Gardiner, S., Grace, D., & King, C. (2015). Is the Australian domestic holiday a thing of the past? Understanding baby boomer, Generation X and Generation Y perceptions and attitude to domestic and international holidays. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 21(4), 336-350.
- Gómez Martín, M. B. (2005). Weather, climate and tourism a geographical perspective. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 32(3), 571-591.
- Gorman-Murray, A. (2008). Before and after Climate Change: The Snow Country in Australian Imaginaries. *M/C Journal*, 11(5).
- Gössling, S., Abegg, B., & Steiger, R. (2016). "It was raining all the Time!": Ex post tourist weather perceptions. *Atmosphere*, 7(1), 1-12.
- Hall, C. M. (2009). Degrowing Tourism: Décroissance, sustainable consumption and steady-state tourism. *Anatolia*, 20(1), 46-61.
- Hamilton, J. M., & Lau, M. (2004). *The role of climate information in tourist destination choice decision-making*. Retrieved from <http://econpapers.repec.org/RePEc:sgc:wpaper:56>.
- Harley, T. A., Strauss, S., & Orlove, B. (2003). Nice weather for the time of year: The British obsession with the weather. In *Weather, climate, culture* (pp. 103-120). Oxford: Berg.
- Hewer, M. J., Scott, D., & Gough, W. A. (2015). Tourism climatology for camping: A case study of two Ontario parks (Canada). *Theoretical and Applied Climatology*, 121(3-4), 401-411.
- Hopkins, D. (2013). The perceived risks of local climate change in Queenstown, New Zealand. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 1-19.
- Hübner, A., & Gössling, S. (2012). Tourist perceptions of extreme weather events in Martinique, *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 1(1-2), 47-55.
- Jeuring, J. H. G. (2016). Discursive contradictions in regional tourism

- marketing strategies: The case of Fryslân, The Netherlands. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 5(2), 65-75.
- Jeuring, J. H. G., & Becken, S. (2013). Tourists and severe weather - an exploration of the role of 'Locus of Responsibility' in protective behaviour decisions. *Tourism Management*, 37(0), 193-202.
- Jeuring, J. H. G., & Haartsen, T. (2017). Destination branding by residents: The role of perceived responsibility in positive and negative word-of-mouth. *Tourism Planning & Development*, 14(2), 240-259.
- Jeuring, J. H. G., & Haartsen, T. (2017). The challenge of proximity: The (un)attractiveness of near-home tourism destinations. *Tourism Geographies*, 19(1), 118-141.
- Jeuring, J. H. G., & Peters, K. B. M. (2013). The influence of the weather on tourist experiences: Analysing travel blog narratives. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 19(3), 209-219.
- Larsen, G. R., & Guiver, J.W. (2013). Understanding tourists' perceptions of distance: A key to reducing the environmental impacts of tourism mobility. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 21(7), 968-981.
- Lengkeek, J. (2001). Leisure experience and Imagination: Rethinking Cohen's modes of tourist experience. *International Sociology*, 16(2), 173-184.
- Limb, M., & Spellman, G. (2001). *Evaluating domestic tourists' attitudes to British weather. A qualitative approach*. Paper presented at the First International Workshop on Climate, Tourism and Recreation.
- Loewenthal, K. M. (2001). *An introduction to psychological tests and scales*. Psychology Press.
- Lohmann, M., & Hübner, A. (2013). Tourist behavior and weather: Understanding the role of preferences, expectations and in-situ adaptation. *Mondes du Tourisme*, 8, 44-59.
- Lohmann, M., & Kaim, E. (1999). Weather and holiday destination

- preferences image, attitude and experience. *The Tourist Review*, 54(2), 54-64.
- Matzarakis, A., de Freitas, C., & Scott, D. (2007). *Developments in Tourism Climatology*. Paper presented at the 3rd International Workshop on Climate, Tourism and Recreation, Alexandroupolis, Greece.
- Matzarakis, A., Mayer, H., & Iziomon, M. (1999). Applications of a universal thermal index: Physiological equivalent temperature. *International Journal of Biometeorology*, 43(2), 76-84.
- McKercher, B., Shoal, N., Park, E., & Kahani, A. (2015). The [limited] impact of weather on tourist behavior in an urban destination. *Journal of Travel Research*, 54(4), 442-455.
- Mikkelsen, M. V., & Cohen, S. A. (2015). Freedom in mundane mobilities: Caravanning in Denmark. *Tourism Geographies*, 17(5), 663-681.
- Moreno, A., Amelung, B., & Santamarta, L. (2008). Linking beach recreation to weather conditions. A case study in Zandvoort, Netherlands. *Tourism in Marine Environments*, 5, 111-120.
- Nicholls, S., & Amelung, B. (2015). Implications of climate change for rural tourism in the Nordic region. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, 15(1-2), 48-72.
- Prayag, G., & Ryan, C. (2010). The relationship between the 'push' and 'pull' factors of a tourist destination: The role of nationality e an analytical qualitative research approach. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 14(2), 121-143.
- Ramkissoon, H., Smith, L. D. G., & Weiler, B. (2013). Testing the dimensionality of place attachment and its relationships with place satisfaction and pro-environmental behaviours: A structural equation modelling approach. *Tourism Management*, 36, 552-566.
- Rantala, O., Valtonen, A., & Markuksela, V. (2011). Materializing tourist weather: Ethnography on weather-wise wilderness guiding practices. *Journal of Material Culture*, 16(3), 285-300.

- Rauken, T., Kelman, I. S., Jacobsen, J. K., & Hovelsrud, G. K. (2010). Who can stop the Rain? Perceptions of summer weather effects among small tourism businesses. *Anatolia*, 21(2), 289-304.
- Robert, L. A. A. (1973). Uncertainty in nature, cognitive dissonance, and the perceptual distortion of environmental information: Weather forecasts and New England beach trip decisions. *Economic Geography*, 49(4), 287-297.
- Rosselló-Nadal, J., Riera-Font, A., & Cárdenas, V. (2011). The impact of weather variability on British outbound flows. *Climatic Change*, 105(1), 281-292.
- Rutty, M. K., & Scott, D. (2014). Thermal range of coastal tourism resort microclimates. *Tourism Geographies*, 16(3), 346-363.
- Rutty, M. K., & Scott, D. (2016). Comparison of climate preferences for domestic and international beach holidays: A case study of Canadian travelers. *Atmosphere*, 7(2), 1-12.
- Salazar, N. B. (2012). Tourism imaginaries: A conceptual approach. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 39(2), 863-882.
- Scott, D., Gössling, S., & de Freitas, C. R. (2008). Preferred climates for tourism: Case studies from Canada, New Zealand and Sweden. *Climate Research*, 38(1), 61-73.
- Scott, D., & Lemieux, C. (2010). Weather and climate information for tourism. *Procedia Environmental Sciences*, 1, 146-183.
- Sluijter, R., Leenaers, H., & Camarasa, M. (2011). *De Bosatlas van het klimaat*. Groningen: Noordhoff.
- Steiger, R., Abegg, B., & Jänicke, L. (2016). Rain, rain, go away, come again another day. Weather preferences of summer tourists in mountain environments. *Atmosphere*, 7(5), 1-12.
- Stewart, A. E. (2009). Minding the weather: The measurement of weather salience. *Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society*, 90(12), 1833-1841.

- Stewart, A. E., Lazo, J. K., Morss, R. E., & Demuth, J. L. (2012). The relationship of weather salience with the perceptions and uses of weather information in a nationwide sample of the United States. *Weather, Climate, and Society*, 4(3), 172-189.
- Szytniewski, B. B., & Spierings, B. (2014). Encounters with Otherness: Implications of (un) familiarity for daily life in Borderlands. *Journal of Borderlands Studies*, 29(3), 339-351.
- Triantafillidou, A., & Siomkos, G. (2013). Summer camping: An extraordinary, nostalgic, and interpersonal experience. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 19(3), 197-208.
- UNWTO. (2014). *UNWTO annual report 2013*. Madrid: World Tourism Organization.
- Vaske, J. J. (2008). *Survey research and analysis: Applications in parks, recreation and human dimensions*. State College, Pennsylvania: Venture Publishing.
- Williams, P. W., Dossa, K. B., & Hunt, J. D. (1997). The influence of weather context on winter resort evaluations by visitors. *Journal of Travel Research*, 36(2), 29-36.
- Young, M. (1999). The social construction of tourist places. *Australian Geographer*, 30(3), 373-389.

Chapter 7

Conclusions



Chapter 7

7.1 Introduction

The aim of this thesis was to better understand how discursive, behavioral and experiential practices of socio-spatial identification depend on and augment/constrain touristic consumption/production of places near home. In the context of the Dutch province of Fryslân, from three stakeholder perspectives (tourism policy, entrepreneurs and residents), insights were gained on the extent to which touristic consumption/production practices transgress the boundaries between home and away on the regional level.

I referred to this transgression by using the notion of proximity tourism: the paradoxical production/consumption of touristic otherness within places that feel familiar. From this, the stakeholder perspectives could be scrutinized in order to make inferences as to what the implications are for Fryslân as tourism destination and for the ways residents make meaning of Fryslân as basis for socio-spatial identification, when boundaries between home and away dissolve.

In this final chapter I will shortly recap the main findings and conclusions per chapter (7.2). Then I will synthesize these in order to reflect on how the concept of proximity tourism contributes to conceptual knowledges of the blurring of tourism and the usual environment (7.3). From this I develop a number of theoretical and practical implications, by discussing proximity tourism as mode for regional development in terms of the political power of institutionalizing processes (7.4), the importance of citizen engagement (7.5) and sustainable tourism mobility (7.6). Finally, I discuss limitations of the research approach of this thesis and give suggestions for future research (7.7)

7.2 Results and conclusions per chapter

Chapter 2 started off with a study on the discursive positioning of Fryslân as tourism destination in regional tourism marketing strategies (Research Question 1). The study revealed various contradictions in how aspects of place brands, identity claims, target groups, roles and collaborations were used to position Fryslân. The regulating processes of touristic positioning are imbued with 'politically charged' representations of social and spatial meanings. This was exemplified by the hegemony of a homogenizing and externally oriented discourse. This led to the conclusion that Fryslân was primarily positioned as a place for touristic consumption for people from 'elsewhere', while the regional benefits were often reduced to incoming monetary revenue.

The strong reliance on holistic representations is at odds however with the intraregional social and spatial differences existing within the province. This brings along a challenge for destination marketers and policy makers as to how externally oriented images will be perceived and acted upon by internal stakeholders such as residents. Therefore, representations of difference and similarity employed in destination positioning should be balanced and support their socio-spatial narratives. This would furthermore account for and build upon the various roles of residents as both producers and potential consumers, which in turn can be a basis for engaging residents in place branding.

The notion of role attributions was picked up further by Chapter 3. It was explored how tourism entrepreneurs in Fryslân make meaning of their relationships with residents of the province by the way they attribute touristic consumption/production roles to residents of Fryslân (RQ2). Roles were attributed along four themes: 'Being a tourist', 'Discovery and unawareness', 'Life course experiences' and 'Ambassadorship'. It was concluded that relationships between entrepreneurs and residents are at risk of a behavioral lock-in: producers see residents as an unattractive target

group because they perceive residents as being unaware of near home touristic attractions, while a lack of interest in residents as potential customers reinforces that many residents remain unfamiliar with local attractiveness. The concept of re-consumption provided a conceptual and practical way out and gave rise to opportunities for pluralized and interdependent resident roles and entrepreneur-resident relationships. It was concluded that to facilitate the essential inclusion of residents in near home touristic consumption/production, efforts are required from entrepreneurs, regional government and, ideally also, residents. A basis for this could be the notion of role-switching, both within and between stakeholders: tourism SMEs may adopt touristic consumer roles themselves, and residents can become the producers, feeding them with local touristic knowledge and experiences, for instance. Role-switching both allows for and benefits from a conscious negotiation between what is seen as familiar, and what is seen as novel and thus can represent touristic value. For example when a visit of family or friends allows residents to be simultaneously a host and a tourist.

Chapter 4 then focused on the ways subjectivities of distance and proximity among residents of Fryslân affect the appreciation of their region of residence as a tourism destination (RQ3). The findings reflect the dominance of a belief that tourism and everyday life places are geographically separated: "home is here, my holiday is there." Interpretations of proximity and distance signified a hegemony of conventional touristic push, pull, keep and repel factors, such as weather conditions and cultural differences. Various nuances and non-linear ways of spatio-temporal positioning were found too. For example, the attractiveness of home and away was occasionally constructed in relative instead of absolute terms of space and time. Also, the appreciation of familiarity of and with Fryslân counters the impression that tourism destinations should only be framed as places to escape from home. Moreover, this opens up

the opportunity, but also highlights a need for Fryslân to acknowledge that it just as well is/can be a tourism destination for its residents.

It was concluded that this recognition is a challenge in terms of how to create near home tourist experiences. This challenge also raises the question whether a (re)discovery of the familiar home environment through tourism is a matter of responsibility and good citizenship. In this vein, Chapter 5 studied the engagement of residents in touristic promotion, to get further understanding of how touristic consumption/production can relate to notions of citizenship behavior. It was explored to what the extent residents of Fryslân feel responsible to engage in promoting the province as tourism destination (RQ4). Residents of Fryslân perceived responsibility for promoting Fryslân as tourism destination to be shared between the government, entrepreneurs and themselves, and as such their attribution patterns were found to be partly predictive of intentions to engage in both positive and negative Word-of-Mouth. It was concluded that, in principle, residents are willing to contribute to regional tourism development by WOM behavior. However this implies that as a precondition there is a need to facilitate meaningful touristic experiences for residents within their home region. For instance, touristic experiences near home and local knowledge are needed as a basis for the stories to be told to others.

Chapter 6 examined how the weather affects perceived attractiveness of domestic holidays in The Netherlands and which weather conditions form a basis for experienced differences between home and away (RQ5). Hereby, this chapter explored more in-depth the finding in Chapter 4 that the weather plays an important role in shaping spatial imaginaries along which home and away are negotiated. Respondents displayed a general high level of attentiveness to weather conditions, but how this relates to destination imaginaries and at-destination behavior, varies according to people's Weather Salience (perceived personal significance of the weather).

Furthermore, weather induced differences between home and destination appeared to vary on a small geographical level, with windy conditions being a major factor. It was concluded that weather is a meaningful socio-spatial characteristic, with important consequences for the attractiveness of domestic tourism in The Netherlands. The findings hereby point to the relevance of the weather for experiences of touristic otherness. It was suggested that weather deserves more attention in Dutch tourism management practices in terms of psychological coping, in addition to currently popular physical interventions to deal with inclement weather. Also, since weather shapes stereotyped ideas about the assumed familiar climate and weather of the home country and region, efforts to communicate more nuanced weather knowledge could positively contribute to perceived attractiveness of domestic tourism.

7.3 Reflections on proximity tourism

7.3.1 *From lock-in to in-between-ness?*

The prevalence of tourism meanings which benefit from the 'in-between-ness' (Bourdeau, 2012) that is enabled by overlapping dichotomies (i.e., home-away, tourist-resident), is still relatively limited and undervalued in the context of Fryslân. The different stakeholders concerned in this thesis seem to shape each other's spaces in which they can perform certain touristic practices along meanings which often reconfirm the taken-for-granted difference between what is unusual (and thus touristically attractive) and what is usual. This way, limited opportunities exist for engaging with alternative, hybrid practices (i.e., proximity tourism) as basis for socio-spatial identification and as foundation for attributing touristic value. The lock-in (Ma & Hassink, 2013) hinted at in Chapter 3 thus appears to extend beyond SME-resident relationships and affects various stakeholder relations, their touristic practices and how meanings of Fryslân inform and are informed by socio-spatial identities such as 'home' and 'away'.

Both the tendency of a lock-in and the opportunities for proximity tourism are embedded in the meaning-making powers generated in processes of circulation (Ateljevic, 2000; Du Gay, 1997). The interdependencies of practices which were addressed across various chapters exemplify this. For example, positioning Fryslân as tourism destination (Chapter 2) builds on holistic spatial identities to be supported by certain practices of Frisian residents. For this support, such as Word of Mouth communication (Chapter 5), touristic knowledge about and experience with residents' home region is crucial. Facilitated by active resident-entrepreneur relationships (Chapter 3), residents can build and reframe various spatial imaginaries of Fryslân (Chapter 6) by engaging in touristic activities (Chapter 4). In turn, to inform residents about the various touristic offerings in Fryslân, to facilitate consumption activities and resident-entrepreneur relationships, tourism marketing and policy need to facilitate resident oriented tourism (Chapter 2), which in turn can reinforce place attachment and a sense of citizenship. Such circular interdependencies indeed make any touristic practice a delicate endeavor.

At worst, circulating forces result in the marginalization of meanings and interests of certain stakeholders at the expense of others. To that end, the apparent external orientation in destination marketing on incoming visitors (Chapter 2) from ever further away (e.g., attempting to attract visitors from Asian countries such as China and Japan) risks overlooking and misunderstanding local stakeholders (e.g., residents). But also when relationships between tourism entrepreneurship and the community in which it is embedded are absent (Chapter 3), opportunities are likely missed in terms of knowledge circulation and ambassadorship. This limits the symbolic drivers of tourism (i.e., discovery, curiosity, comfort, otherness) to transcend into and be inspired from socio-spatial characteristics of places, people and activities that are closer to home and associated with everyday life. At the same time, not acknowledging the touristic value of

familiarity or the touristic character of near home holidays does not do justice to the societal importance of tourist practices on small geographical levels and within familiar contexts. This means that certain practices that are undeniably imbued with touristic value remain under the radar (e.g., Visiting Friends and Relatives, VFR tourism) and that certain motivations and benefits of 'typical' near home tourists (e.g., temporarily inhabiting second homes or seasonal camping spots) remain little understood and unacknowledged.

At best however, the dynamics of circulation further integrate tourism into everyday life, by bringing out a renewed interest for and valuation of what was deemed familiar and known. Creative and innovative ways of constructing touristic value consciously negotiate and build on the paradox of physical proximity imbued with experiential novelty. Similarly, citizen participation is not only considered in terms of production (e.g., hospitable hosts, brand ambassadors) but also acknowledges its precondition of consumption (tourism as a way to learn about the home region) (Chapter 3 & 5). Moreover, residents feel a responsibility to engage with their home region through tourism. Tourism policy embraces the potential of touristic role-shifting between various stakeholders (Chapter 3) and entrepreneurs are considering how to make most of the mutual interests of themselves and of people living in the proximity of their businesses.

This thesis only provides insight in a small part of these inherently complex and interdependent processes. However, it does show that circulation is a powerful mechanism of constructing, confirming, reconfirming and contesting meanings. Specifically, there seems to be plenty of room for tourism stakeholders in Fryslân to increase their awareness about its potential and be attentive to the opportunities that are embedded 'in-between' the production and consumption of here and elsewhere.

7.3.2 The latent exoticness of assumed familiarity

In any case, for all stakeholders it seems unavoidable that they have to deal with the continued blurring of meanings in the era of 'after-tourism' (Bourdeau, 2012): conventional touristic places are becoming increasingly ordinary and interchangeable, while mundane and everyday places are infused with exoticness. Alongside this process, tourism has grown into a cultural phenomenon that dominantly shapes people's worldviews and identities. At the same time tourism destabilizes the meanings of home and away by its transient spatio-temporal nature. This creates a paradox in which the ephemerality of touristic consumption/production feeds from a reconfirmation of absolute dichotomies that (artificially) delimit the usual and the non-usual. The meaning-making flexibility of the 'after-tourism' era thus owes to the popularity of dualisms serving as stable, established socio-spatial anchors. The exoticness of the ordinary then lies in its peripheral, latent nature, situated not at the edge, but in-between polarized extremities. And it is exactly within such overlapping margins, in the shadow of hegemonic touristic practices, where innovative, multiple meanings and practices of 'new' touristic otherness can emerge.

So, the paradox of destabilizing forces of touristic dualisms is not just an undesirable consequence of globalizing dynamics or an externality of profit-oriented approaches to tourism. From the optimistic perspective this thesis has aimed to embrace, a hybridization of everyday life and tourism is primarily creating a promising space for rediscovery of what is assumed familiar, an exoticization of the everyday (c.f., Larsen, 2008). While this might mean that tourism 'dissolves' into everyday life (Bourdeau, 2012), at the same time thus new opportunities arise for tourism to be a meaningful way for people to grapple with the transition of 'spaces of place' to 'spaces of flows' (Govers, Van Hecke, & Cabus, 2008). Various forms have emerged already, from guided walks for residents to train stations that become shopping centers, from staycationing (holidays at home) to glamping

(luxury camping). The inventions of new meanings and practices is an exploratory –and timely– adventure in itself.

At the same time, given the latent nature of proximity tourism, it would be unreasonable to expect from this thesis to find more than occasional examples of proximity tourism in Fryslân. But the examples found throughout this thesis that do reflect an appreciation of the touristic value of what is relatively nearby are to be taken as promising signs for the innovative capacity of tourism in Fryslân and for the flexibility of tourism as cultural phenomenon.

7.3.3 Tourist experiences in a usual environment

Aligning with these notions, the findings also provide conceptual input for understanding the relation between spatial (un)familiarity and the construction of tourist experiences. For example, Elands and Lengkeek (2012), by building on Cohen's phenomenological approach to tourist experiences (Cohen, 1979), argue that a certain level of consciousness is necessary in order to experience 'out-there-ness'. This implies that people need a certain state of mind in order to appreciate any kind of touristic experiences. This intentional precondition is also referred to as 'distancing' (Diaz-Soria, 2017). For instance, residents as touristic consumers thus can contribute themselves to an integrated approach of touristic production and consumption, by adopting such a conscious interest in exploring ways to experiences exoticness near home. This requires an effort –psychological and behavioral– in the form of 'becoming' a tourist: visit a local museum, spend a night at a nearby bed & breakfast, rent a boat with a local entrepreneur, join a guided tour in the city of residence, visit an event in the neighboring village, to name only a few of the many options.

However, distancing is primarily a mental activity (Diaz-Soria, 2017) which might include but not depends on physical travel outside the usual environment. Thus, instead of predefining what is usual and unusual, the

boundary between home and away is shaped by the experiences itself and by the intentionality of the individual. This aligns with what de Certeau (1984) calls a 'bridge': the frontiers between home and away are not mere divisions that belong neither to 'here' nor to 'elsewhere'. These frontiers are actively negotiated and are spaces of interaction within which (touristic) stories can unfold. The findings from Chapter 4 illustrate this in the different ways people attribute meanings to and derive spatial identities from Fryslân as tourism destination *and* as place of residence: calling Fryslân 'home' makes it (for some) completely impossible to see the province as place for spending a holiday (i.e., they accept and reconfirm established frontiers between the usual and the unusual). For others, living in Fryslân means that they have the experience of being on holiday every day of the year. They actively negotiate (bridge) the familiarity and unfamiliarity provided by different meanings Fryslân has for them.

Next to psychological aspects, the social context obviously also affects what is seen as usual and unusual. For example, as becomes clear from Chapter 3, the hosting of family or friends provides for a context in which familiarity and attractiveness within a 'usual' environment are renegotiated and even inversed: finding novelty in familiar places becomes the touristic value itself. Residents not just *host* their guests, rather they *join* them as proximity tourists, for example on a guided citywalk or to a museum that none of them had visited before.

That is not to say that physical travel and specific environmental conditions become less relevant. On the contrary, evidence was found at various occasions that the physical environment and particularly the movement within it contributes to experiences of being away from home. But the physical distances need not to be extensive, and touristic otherness thus can be experienced even when travelling only small distances. Exemplary for this in the Frisian context is that the crossing of the Wadden Sea to Wadden Islands can provide a sense of being away (Chapter 4).

Furthermore, the physical environment itself is 'on the move' too and hereby can invoke experiences of difference: weather conditions in all their unpredictability and ephemerality can contribute to touristic experiences near home (Chapter 6). On a holistic level the Dutch climate often is a push factor (Chapter 4), as it is perceived as relatively uncomfortable and not aligning with the reinforced tourism imaginaries of blue sunny skies. On the personal level of micro experiences though, weather becomes a spatial characteristic of destinations and affects touristic practices in a much more nuanced way (c.f., Jeuring & Peters, 2013). As such, weather conditions can make the most familiar places an unusual environment and they can make the most routine activities an exciting adventure (or a trauma). More generally then, much is still to be learnt about the cultural significance of weather in tourism contexts, for example in terms of how weather variability is perceived from a longitudinal perspective, throughout a vacation, or how specific weather experiences are forming broader attitudes toward destinations. Also, other ephemeral phenomena on the micro-level, such as tidal changes or seasonal variability (e.g., Cannas, 2012) could provide for a broader conceptual context to advance the knowledge of how spatio-temporal characteristics of the environment affect near home tourist practices.

7.4 Politics of regional institutionalization

7.4.1. Rethinking successful tourism development

The increased 'tourism reflexivity' –the interest of regions and cities to explore and develop their touristic potential– has resulted in a growing concern with spatial identification as part of regional development policy (Govers et al., 2008). As such, touristic identification processes are increasingly politically charged (Dredge & Jenkins, 2003). Spatial identities and representations are attempted to be regulated, with important implications for the ordering of production and consumption practices

across stakeholders: what is found attractive by consumers is not only decided by themselves, but just as much by the imaginaries reinforced by tourism marketing, for example through place branding. When such tourism practices are a form of spatial institutionalization, the practices studied in this thesis thus far tend to limit proximity tourism to be part of this institutionalizing process.

Indeed, the importance attributed to competitive identities (Anholt, 2007) as basis for tourism development (Chapter 2) is problematic, as such an approach often does not align with the interests of internal stakeholders such as residents, let alone that it accounts for the multiplicity and interdependence of the roles they can take up. For example, Fryslân's image as tourism destination is constructed in a way that does not fully benefit from its internal heterogeneity. Also, the potential of internal stakeholders as place ambassadors pertains to much more than 'living the brand', or fulfilling roles as informal place promoters, to be used whenever convenient.

Nevertheless, being recognized as tourism destination seems to have become an indicator of prosperity for cities, municipalities, regions and countries. Arguably every region and city wants a piece of the tourism pie and jump on the bandwagon of global touristic mobility. The way this touristic success is often measured and hereby strived for however –in terms of (international) visitor numbers, overnight stays, et cetera– narrows the potential of tourism being a social force with benefits that reach beyond revenue. For example, by celebrating 'elsewhere' at the expense of 'here', a division between immobility and mobility is created (Salazar, 2012). Next to a general ignorance toward local stakeholder interests, this might result in residents being hesitant to engage in activities that are associated with the label of 'tourists' (Singh & Krakover, 2015). Obviously then, such sentiments counter the possibilities of tourism near home to be appreciated more fully.

While not unique for Fryslân, this tension between regional institutionalization for the purpose of tourism and the varieties of socio-spatial identification of residents is a problem inherent to the touristic commodification of socio-spatial identities more generally (Braun, Kavaratzis, & Zenker, 2013). In this vein, this thesis points to the need to rethink how 'successful' tourism development is to be defined. Clearly, the 'tourism as an industry paradigm' which appears to prevail might have to give way to a 'tourism as social force paradigm' (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2006) in order to rightfully address these issues.

7.4.2 Empowering intraregional touristic mobility

Spatial meanings serve as anchors to position places and people in relation to other(s), signifying what and where they are (not) (Dixon & Durrheim, 2000). This double process of identification is imbued with (dis)empowering forces that establish boundaries of inclusion and exclusion, between what is meaningful and what is redundant. While this boundary making pertains to many aspects of tourism (and to cultural dynamics in general), the ways Fryslân is positioned as tourism destination makes it familiar for its residents and unfamiliar for visitors from elsewhere (Chapter 2). In other words, the holistic imaginaries used as institutionalizing instruments that work well to connect people and places through tourism on the global level, fall short as mechanisms to grapple with the complex ways touristic mobilities and experiences can be enjoyed near home. For instance, residents attributed touristic meanings to Fryslân (Chapter 4) by saying that 'living in Fryslân means being on vacation everyday'. This highlights the need for policies aimed at regional livability to be sensible to how tourist experiences and activities can contribute to people's socio-spatial identification and well-being within the spatialities where people live their everyday lives. As such, there is a clear need for in-depth knowledge about intraregional touristic mobility on small geographical levels.

Furthermore, despite the holistic and externally oriented destination positioning discourse found in Chapter 2, the acknowledgement that internal stakeholders such as residents can contribute to tourism development in *multiple and mobile* ways (as opposed to being passive, immobile hosts of visitors from elsewhere, or merely being 'attractions' to be gazed at) can form an alternative way for integrating 'local' interests into tourism policies. This acknowledgement would also help strengthening the multiplicity of relations between stakeholders (e.g., entrepreneurs and residents, Chapter 3), for example along the role-switching dynamics inherent to the interdependencies of production and consumption.

In sum, it can be stated that when regions have the intention to incorporate tourism as a tool for socio-spatial transformation, the foundation for this might have to be built around the ways residents engage with their near home environment through tourism. Empowering intraregional touristic mobility therefore deserves to be high on the agenda of both tourism researchers and policymakers.

7.5 Citizen engagement and place attachment

7.5.1 Proximity tourism for all: rights and responsibilities

The power to influence socio-spatial transformation through territorial legitimacy is increasingly contested (Zimmerbauer & Paasi, 2013). This development is signified and reinforced by a decentralization of governance processes toward lower spatial levels (e.g., sub-national regions) and enhanced by bottom-up processes (Lugosi, 2014), for example by giving voice to residents. This thesis then points to the importance to account for the multiple roles of local tourism stakeholders (particularly residents) (e.g., Chapter 3) as both consumers and producers. In that sense, the notion of proximity tourism gives residents both new rights and responsibilities in how they shape their socio-spatial identities through

tourism and how they contribute to tourism as tool for socio-spatial transformation.

Rights are relevant when, for example, residents are increasingly acknowledged as producing forces in tourism, because this automatically means (for example based on the notion of re-consumption) that their consuming activities need to be facilitated as well. An important question to ask then is for who tourism –as socio-spatial practice near home– is available and accessible and in which ways? This question goes beyond the development of physical infrastructure and attractions. It pertains more than anything to the symbolic, societal value attributed to ‘tourism’ (Hibbert, Dickinson, Gössling, & Curtin, 2013). Availability and accessibility of leisure time and touristic mobility are symbols of modernity and affluence: access to tourism is indeed a right for all (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2006). However, when near home leisure activities are then framed as *recreation* –thus as *not tourism*–, this arguably contributes to a relative devaluation of leisure practices on small geographical levels. For people who for some reason are limited in their potential to ‘get global’, or who simply do not wish to do so and prefer to stay at or near home (Chapter 4), this means that they are at risk of being overlooked when it comes to their preferences or interests. But also, they remain little understood in their motivations and experiences. At the same time, an artificial distinction between tourism and recreation might result in people who are relatively mobile, affluent and who have more generally access to ‘global’ tourism activities, spending their vacation near-home is likely an unattractive option. In other words, exclusively relying on ‘international’ and ‘physical distance’ narratives could result in an marginalization of certain activities and places from the touristic realm that form essential ways for people to value themselves and the places they inhabit.

This thesis also points to certain responsibilities for residents. For example, residents have a certain obligation to acknowledge their multiple

roles in tourism development within their region of residence. Citizenship and citizen participation depends on a felt responsibility to take care of both the physical places and activities near home *and* a sensibility toward their societal symbolic meanings. The topic of place branding and the role of resident Word of Mouth (Chapter 5) exemplifies how residents can help promote their region. These practices have a lot of potential but are at risk of being experienced by residents as being enforced upon them. Ideally then, being a place ambassador should be rooted in an intrinsic motivation. This is an important challenge for tourism policy, for which the 'lock-in' described in Chapter 3, and the paradox of perceiving Fryslân as attractive tourism destination, but only for others (Chapter 4) are exemplary. In sum, as long as there is a disconnect between meanings of tourism and people's attachment to places where they live, the integration of touristic consumption/production that seems so promising in theory will remain underdeveloped in practice.

7.5.2 Playful learning: building social capital through tourism

The broader context in which these issues are embedded pertains to the ways people develop attachment to places, feel that they belong somewhere and employ spatial identities. To this end, the relevance of proximity tourism lies in its potential to build on and develop social capital within small spatial units that are meaningful for such spatial identities. Indeed, successful intraregional tourism destinations, as stated by Canavan, are 'accessible to locals, providing social interest and leisure opportunities, supporting community infrastructure and industry, and ultimately [are] contributing to social cohesion and civic pride' (Canavan, 2013, p. 349). This statement clearly reflects the interdependent and circulating dynamic between different stakeholders and the socio-spatial meanings attributed to tourism that have been placed in the spotlight by this thesis.

For tourism to strive for such an integrated role in local societies seems an ideal central objective for any practice of touristic production, and consumption. Throughout the last decades though we have unlearned to think this way about tourism, influenced by various powerful societal developments that have put economic profits above social benefits. But a major opportunity lies in the capacity of tourism itself to be an educational tool, a learning practice through which knowledge and awareness is generated. Therefore, it is suggested to stimulate proximity tourism as an opportunity for playful learning (Bos, McCabe, & Johnson, 2013). This potential is exemplified by one entrepreneur (Chapter 3): *“Learning should be fun, but even more importantly, you should not notice that you are learning. This makes all educational aspects similarly attractive for touristic purposes.”* This way, tourism is more than a hedonic activity in search of pleasurable experiences. Tourism in general becomes part of people's lifelong learning (Falk, Ballantyne, Packer, & Benckendorff, 2012) about the world around them – including the places they call home.

Moreover, an increased emphasis on learning about a region's history, present and future, can provide destination branding with new routes for communication, and entrepreneurs with new business models and clientele. It is this integrated approach to tourism, embedded in people's everyday lives, that is the key message put forward by the notion of proximity tourism. In that vein, there is a clear link to be made in policy between educational programs and tourism within locales such as cities and regions. Facilitating school trips and developing touristic educational programs within young people's living environment are ways to communicate knowledge, create awareness and learn social, cultural and practical skills. These could be made a priority in regional policies that aim to build on tourism for regional development.

However, as has hopefully occurred naturally by now, tourism as learning practice indeed is not just another mode of consumption. It is also

a key precondition of any production practice. Therefore, engaging with learning through tourism is as important for tourism entrepreneurs as it is for residents. Being curious, 'a Marco Polo' (Chapter 3), and be willing to educate and be educated by residents and other entrepreneurs should also be part of the repertoire of any business activity.

7.6 Proximity tourism in the context of sustainable travel

The experience of being on the move, travelling from one place to another, is an important motivation for touristic behavior. People's 'need for distance' (Larsen & Guiver, 2013) is inherently related to how home and away are negotiated, which was also confirmed in this thesis, particularly in Chapter 4. Other places with different nature, scenery, climate or cultures will keep pulling people and make them willing to cross significant distances. Travel will always be a central aspect of tourism.

However, since the era of fossil fuel will inevitably come to an end, a momentum is emerging to replace unsustainable modes of transport on which tourism is currently depending so strongly. This momentum extends beyond the need for innovative technologies based on alternative energy resources. The symbolic importance attributed to physical travel forms a point of concern that deserves as much attention. First of all because travel has become an indispensable pre-condition for identifying oneself as tourist and second because it shapes the ways we identify places as (in)appropriate for touristic consumption. This has direct consequences for how far and how often people travel for their touristic needs. Indeed, the incentives to travel the world by airplanes are everywhere. Budget airlines often offer cheaper tickets than rail companies. This hegemonic paradigm of cheap travel and selling kilometers dominates tourism meanings and feeds the cultural valuation of physical distance. To counter such imaginaries, developing proximity tourism could indeed be a promising but challenging avenue (Dubois, Peeters, Ceron, & Gössling, 2011).

Therefore, tourism industries need to find ways to make the near home environment touristically valuable. The province of Fryslân could become a frontrunner in shifting the paradigm, for example based on its geographical layout: the Wadden Islands are arguably places perfectly fitting imaginaries of near-home otherness. Surely, such environmental contrasts are to be found in many places across the world. Similarly, the increasing popularity of cycling as touristic activity and as transport mode brings along promising opportunities for new ways of exploring places. Particularly e-bikes, made in Fryslân and used to explore the province, could serve as a symbol for sustainable approaches to tourism by linking with current developments around the transition to renewable energy sources. Obviously, this could also be placed in the context of watersports, for example by framing sailing and electric boats as sustainable transport modes on the Frisian lakes. Such developments would make Fryslân a genuine living laboratory, in which the integrated social, environmental and economic benefits of proximity tourism could play a central role.

However, as long as tourism industries are built on business models which favor and reconfirm imaginaries in which touristic otherness is coupled with travel to places that necessitate unsustainable modes of transport, tourism is undermining its status as symbol for modern cultures and limits its enormous potential to contribute to societal progress on both global and local levels.

7.7 Limitations and future research

Some limitations should be taken into account when interpreting the findings of this thesis. While Fryslân serves as an interesting context for research concerned with touristic processes and regional institutionalization, generalization to other regions however is limited due to the specific socio-spatial organization of Fryslân within the Dutch nation state. The particular spatial imaginaries and an arguably strong Frisian regional identity make the

context unique. Therefore, future research might want to take a comparative approach between different regions, either within The Netherlands or abroad, in order to the findings here into a broader context.

I have used the Circuit of Culture (Du Gay, 1997) as a metaphor to structure the outline of this thesis. While I have actually not traced down all the articulations of how meaning is made of tourism in Fryslân, this metaphorical use has provided some interesting insights in the construction of tourism as a cultural phenomenon. The findings give rise to plenty reasons to analyze certain touristic Frisian artefacts by employing the Circuit in a more comprehensive way. For example, a worthy suggestion for future research in order to understand how tourism contributes to socio-spatial identification would be to focus on how symbolic use of identity materials in tourism (such as the Frisian flag) are negotiated in various cultural processes.

Furthermore and importantly, there is a clear need for a continued qualitative and quantitative monitoring of touristic mobility on the 'microdomestic' level (Canavan, 2013). This is necessary to understand the complex ways touristic and everyday experiences are intermingled and feeding off each other. Since everyday life is imbued with leisure practices and opportunities for experiencing touristic otherness, the various practices (discursive, behavioral, experiential) which facilitate or constrain such experiences should be observed, in order better understand tourism as social force (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2006), instead of just a profit-driven industry. Therefore, there is a clear task for research organizations to strengthen quantitative insights in intra- and interregional tourism mobility on small geographical levels. In the Dutch context this could for example be embedded in the already existing 'Continu Vakantie Onderzoek' (Continuous Holiday Survey) by NBTC-NIPO and the Dutch Bureau for Statistics (CBS). In the Frisian context this could be a task for the Fries Sociaal Planbureau/Partoer, with which I collaborated to gather the data for Chapter 4 and 5.

Likely, new indicators would have to be developed to account for the nuanced nature of such tourism mobility. At the same time, qualitative insights are needed to further develop the notion of proximity tourism. For example, this thesis only provides a partial insight in which groups are engaging in proximity tourism and what their social circumstances are. Much more knowledge is to be gained on their preferences, experiences and ways of socio-spatial identification. Similarly it would be worth getting an overview of entrepreneurs who explicitly or implicitly provide products which attract local customers within regions such as Fryslân.

Following the notion that tourism is dissolving into the practices of everyday life (Bourdeau, 2012), there is a conceptual challenge in understanding 'touristic everydayness' and the everyday and ordinary practices that in certain circumstances become touristically valuable. This extends and inverts the notion of de-exoticization (Larsen, 2008), which already pointed to the importance of routines during holidays. There is a need for knowledge (both quantitative and qualitative) about, for example, the volume of regular guests and seasonal camping places in domestic tourism (Blichfeldt, 2004), but also VFR tourism and second home tourism in Fryslân.

Another line of research pertains to the way touristic discourses (e.g., of attractiveness, otherness) develop within regions and how they relate to local political, social and environmental circumstances. Particularly retrospective longitudinal analyses would be valuable to better understand how and why certain meanings of tourism develop and how they align or differ between regions. Such research would benefit from research on regional institutionalization (Paasi, 2012; Zimmerbauer & Paasi, 2013). This longitudinal approach would also provide a strong basis for putting currently popular practices of touristic marketing and place branding (Eshuis, Klijn, & Braun, 2014; Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013) into a temporally sensitive context.

Finally, an important research gap, one that extends beyond the context of proximity tourism, concerns the rather shallow qualitative and arbitrary quantitative conceptualization of the 'usual environment' (Govers et al., 2008). Socio-spatial identification, just as any form of identification, is a double edged sword that cuts off what 'is' from what 'is not'. It is therefore always imposing its power into multiple directions. In-depth understanding, let alone conceptualizations of the dynamic interaction between meanings of tourism and of the usual environment are often lacking and taken for granted. This thesis only partly addresses this problem. Yet, it was my aim to provide an alternative way of thinking about tourism that shifts the attention to small spatial levels and gives some contra weight to the one-sided paradigm of internationalization that has been dominating tourism practice and scholarship for so long. In that sense, I hope this thesis helps to put more prominently on the agenda the touristic potential embedded in the assumed familiarity of near home places and that it is an encouragement to look closer.

References

- Anholt, S. (2007). Competitive identity: the new brand management for nations, cities and regions. *Journal of Brand Management*, 14(6), 474-475.
- Ateljevic, I. (2000). Circuits of tourism: stepping beyond the 'production/consumption' dichotomy. *Tourism Geographies*, 2(4), 369-388.
- Betten, E. (2013). *De Fries. Op zoek naar de Friese identiteit*. Leeuwarden: Wijdemeer.
- Blichfeldt, B. S. (2004). *Why do some Tourists choose to spend their Vacation Close to home*. Esbjerg: Syddansk Universitet.

- Bos, L., McCabe, S., & Johnson, S. (2013). Learning never goes on holiday: an exploration of social tourism as a context for experiential learning. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 1-17.
- Bourdeau, P. (2012). Visiting/living (in) the Alps: towards a tourist-residential convergence? *Di chi sono le Alpi?: appartenenze politiche, economiche e culturali nel mondo alpino contemporaneo*, 195-204.
- Braun, E., Kavaratzis, M., & Zenker, S. (2013). My city–my brand: the different roles of residents in place branding. *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 6(1), 18-28.
- Cannas, R. (2012). *An Overview of Tourism Seasonality: Key Concepts and Policies* (Vol. 3).
- Canavan, B. (2013). The Extent and Role of Domestic Tourism in a Small Island: The Case of the Isle of Man. *Journal of Travel Research*, 52(3), 340-352.
- Cohen, E. (1979). A Phenomenology of Tourist Experiences. *Sociology*, 13(2), 179-201. doi:10.1177/003803857901300203
- de Certeau, M. (1984). *The practice of everyday life*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- de Souza Bispo, M. (2016). Tourism as practice. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 61, 170-179. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2016.10.009
- Diaz-Soria, I. (2017). Being a tourist as a chosen experience in a proximity destination. *Tourism Geographies*, 19(1), 96-117. doi:10.1080/14616688.2016.1214976
- Dixon, J., & Durrheim, K. (2000). Displacing place-identity: a discursive approach to locating self and other. *British journal of social psychology*, 39(1), 27-44.
- Dredge, D., & Jenkins, J. (2003). Destination place identity and regional tourism policy. *Tourism Geographies*, 5(4), 383-407.
- Du Gay, P. (1997). *Doing cultural studies: The story of the Sony Walkman* (Vol. 1): Sage.

- Dubois, G., Peeters, P., Ceron, J. P., & Gössling, S. (2011). The future tourism mobility of the world population: Emission growth versus climate policy. *Transportation Research Part A: Policy and Practice*, 45(10), 1031-1042. doi:10.1016/j.tra.2009.11.004
- Elands, B. H., & Lengkeek, J. (2012). The tourist experience of out-there-ness: theory and empirical research. *Forest Policy and Economics*, 19, 31-38.
- Eshuis, J., Klijn, E.-H., & Braun, E. (2014). Place marketing and citizen participation: branding as strategy to address the emotional dimension of policy making? *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 80(1), 151-171.
- Falk, J. H., Ballantyne, R., Packer, J., & Benckendorff, P. (2012). Travel and Learning: A Neglected Tourism Research Area. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 39(2), 908-927.
- Govers, R., Van Hecke, E., & Cabus, P. (2008). Delineating tourism: Defining the usual environment. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 35(4), 1053-1073.
- Hibbert, J. F., Dickinson, J. E., Gössling, S., & Curtin, S. (2013). Identity and tourism mobility: An exploration of the attitude behaviour gap. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 21(7), 999-1016.
- Higgins-Desbiolles, F. (2006). More than an "industry": The forgotten power of tourism as a social force. *Tourism Management*, 27(6), 1192-1208.
- Jeuring, J. H. G., & Peters, K. B. M. (2013). The influence of the weather on tourist experiences: Analysing travel blog narratives. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 19(3), 209-219.
- Kavaratzis, M., & Hatch, M. J. (2013). The dynamics of place brands: An identity-based approach to place branding theory. *Marketing Theory*, 13(1), 69-86.
- Larsen, G. R., & Guiver, J. W. (2013). Understanding tourists' perceptions of distance: a key to reducing the environmental impacts of tourism mobility. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 21(7), 968-981.

- Larsen, J. (2008). De-exoticizing tourist travel: Everyday life and sociality on the move. *Leisure Studies*, 27(1), 21-34.
- Lugosi, P. (2014). Mobilising identity and culture in experience co-creation and venue operation. *Tourism Management*, 40(0), 165-179.
doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2013.06.005>
- Ma, M., & Hassink, R. (2013). An evolutionary perspective on tourism area development. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 41, 89-109.
doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2012.12.004>
- Paasi, A. (2012). Regional Planning and the Mobilization of 'Regional Identity': From Bounded Spaces to Relational Complexity. *Regional Studies*, 1-14.
- Salazar, N. B. (2012). Tourism Imaginaries: A Conceptual Approach. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 39(2), 863-882.
- Singh, S., & Krakover, S. (2015). Tourist experience at home – Israeli domestic tourism. *Tourism Management*, 46, 59-61.
- Smith, S. (1999). How far is far enough? Operationalizing the concept of "usual environment"
- Zimmerbauer, K., & Paasi, A. (2013). When old and new regionalism collide: Deinstitutionalization of regions and resistance identity in municipality amalgamations. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 30(0), 31-40.

Summary

Introduction

This thesis is concerned with the ways how tourism's subjective boundaries between home and away shape and are shaped by people's socio-spatial identities. Specifically, the main objective of this thesis is to better understand how discursive, behavioral and experiential practices of socio-spatial identification depend on and augment/constrain touristic consumption/production of places near home. As such, this thesis explores the meanings, behaviors and experiences of '*proximity tourism*', which pertains to the consumption/production practices which blur and transcend the boundaries between home and away (Bourdeau, 2012) through the paradox of touristic otherness within places that feel familiar.

The theoretical observation of proximity tourism builds on a *relative perspective* in a physical spatial sense, as it positions touristic otherness as relatively nearby (even within) the usual environment. Similarly, touristic experiences are relatively unexpected and counterintuitive due to assumed associations of familiarity with the 'usual' geographical space, and because its ontology is relatively diverging from the societal norms for 'appropriate' touristic activities. Also, it builds on the notion that the practices through which proximity tourism are *consumed and produced* are contingent with each other in an ongoing circulation (Ateljevic, 2000). Proximity tourism can be seen as a cultural artifact of the global-local paradox, as a form of localization and a performance of territorial identification, simultaneously enabled by and motivated to counter the homogenizing processes of globalization (Govers et al., 2008).

The 'Circuit of Culture' (Du Gay, 1997; Hall & Evans, 2013) is used as a metaphorical framework to grapple with the ways shared meanings between members of a society are produced and circulated. Hereby, the interdependent relation between touristic consumption/production is not

studied in isolation, but as a process for which its meanings are contingent on the relations with practices of regulation, representation and identification.

The geographical focus of this thesis is principally concerned with Fryslân, a province in the North of The Netherlands. The context of Fryslân is a favorable 'living lab' for studying socio-spatial identification in and through tourism, in which various notions of 'home' and 'away' are produced and contested. The core of this thesis consists of five studies (Chapter 2-6). In these Chapters, three stakeholder perspectives are addressed (Policy and marketing, Chapter 2; Tourism entrepreneurs, Chapter 3; Residents, Chapter 4-6).

Chapter 2 studies the discursive positioning of Fryslân as tourism destination in regional tourism marketing strategies. The study reveals various contradictions in how aspects of place brands, identity claims, target groups, roles and collaborations were used to position Fryslân. The regulating processes of touristic positioning are imbued with 'politically charged' representations of social and spatial meanings. This is exemplified by the hegemony of a homogenizing and externally oriented discourse. This leads to the conclusion that Fryslân is primarily positioned as a place for touristic consumption for people from 'elsewhere', while the regional benefits are often reduced to incoming monetary revenue.

The strong reliance on holistic representations however is found to be at odds with the intraregional social and spatial differences existing within the province. This brings along a challenge for destination marketers and policy makers as to how externally oriented images will be perceived and acted upon by internal stakeholders such as residents. Therefore, it is argued that representations of difference and similarity employed in destination positioning should be balanced and support their socio-spatial narratives. This would furthermore account for and build upon the various

roles of residents as both producers and potential consumers, which in turn can be a basis for engaging residents in place branding.

The notion of role attributions is picked up further by Chapter 3. It is explored how tourism entrepreneurs in Fryslân make meaning of their relationships with residents of the province by the way they attribute touristic consumption/production roles to residents of Fryslân. It is concluded that relationships between entrepreneurs and residents are at risk of a behavioral lock-in: producers see residents as an unattractive target group because they perceive residents as being unaware of near home touristic attractions, while a lack of interest in residents as potential customers reinforces that many residents remain unfamiliar with local attractiveness. The concept of re-consumption provides a conceptual and practical way out and gives rise to opportunities for pluralized and interdependent resident roles and entrepreneur-resident relationships. It is further concluded that a role-switching dynamic, both within and between stakeholders, could facilitate inclusion of residents in near home touristic consumption/production: tourism SMEs may adopt touristic consumer roles themselves, and residents can become the producers, feeding them with local touristic knowledge and experiences.

Chapter 4 focuses on the ways subjectivities of distance and proximity among residents of Fryslân affect the appreciation of their region of residence as a tourism destination. The findings reflect the dominance of a belief that tourism and everyday life places are geographically separated: "home is here, my holiday is there." Interpretations of proximity and distance signify a hegemony of conventional touristic push, pull, keep and repel factors, such as weather conditions and cultural differences. Various nuances and non-linear ways of spatio-temporal positioning are found too. Also, the appreciation of familiarity of and with Fryslân counters the impression that tourism destinations should only be framed as places to escape from home. Therefore, it is concluded that there is a need to

acknowledge that Fryslân just as well is/can be a tourism destination for its residents. This also raises the question whether a (re)discovery of the familiar home environment through tourism is a matter of responsibility and citizenship.

In this vein, Chapter 5 studies the engagement of residents in touristic promotion, to get further understanding of how touristic consumption/production can relate to notions of citizenship behavior. It is explored to what the extent residents of Fryslân feel responsible to engage in promoting the province as tourism destination. Residents of Fryslân perceive responsibility for promoting Fryslân as tourism destination to be shared between the government, entrepreneurs and themselves. As such, their attribution patterns are found to be partly predictive of intentions to engage in both positive and negative Word-of-Mouth. It is concluded that, in principle, residents are willing to contribute to regional tourism development by WOM behavior. However this implies that as a precondition there is a need to facilitate meaningful touristic experiences for residents within their home region.

Finally, Chapter 6 examines how the weather affects perceived attractiveness of domestic holidays in The Netherlands and which weather conditions form a basis for experienced differences between home and away. Hereby, this chapter explores more in-depth the finding in Chapter 4 that the weather plays an important role in shaping spatial imaginaries along which home and away are negotiated. Respondents display a generally high level of attentiveness to weather conditions, but how this relates to destination imaginaries and at-destination behavior, varies according to people's Weather Salience (perceived personal significance of the weather). Furthermore, weather induced differences between home and destination appear to vary on a small geographical level.

It is concluded that weather is a meaningful socio-spatial characteristic, with important consequences for the attractiveness of

domestic tourism in The Netherlands. The findings hereby point to the relevance of the weather for experiences of touristic otherness. It is suggested that weather deserves more attention in Dutch tourism management practices in terms of psychological coping, in addition to currently popular physical interventions to deal with inclement weather. Also, since weather shapes stereotyped ideas about the assumed familiar climate and weather of the home country and region, efforts to communicate more nuanced weather knowledge could positively contribute to perceived attractiveness of domestic tourism.

Reflections on proximity tourism

The prevalence of tourism meanings which benefit from the 'in-between-ness' (Bourdeau, 2012) that is enabled by overlapping dichotomies (i.e., home-away, tourist-resident), is still relatively limited and undervalued in the context of Fryslân. This way, limited opportunities exist for engaging with alternative, hybrid practices (i.e., proximity tourism) as basis for socio-spatial identification and as foundation for attributing touristic value. Both the tendency of a lock-in and the opportunities for proximity tourism are embedded in the meaning-making powers generated in processes of circulation (Ateljevic, 2000; Du Gay, 1997).

At worst, circulating forces result in the marginalization of meanings and interests of certain stakeholders at the expense of others. To that end, the apparent external orientation in destination marketing on incoming visitors (Chapter 2) from ever further away (e.g., attempting to attract visitors from Asian countries such as China and Japan) risks overlooking and misunderstanding local stakeholders (e.g., residents).

At best however, the dynamics of circulation further integrate tourism into everyday life, by bringing out a renewed interest for and valuation of what was deemed familiar and known. Creative and

innovative ways of constructing touristic value consciously negotiate and build on the paradox of physical proximity imbued with experiential novelty.

So, the paradox of destabilizing forces of touristic dualisms is not just an undesirable consequence of globalizing dynamics or an externality of profit-oriented approaches to tourism. From the optimistic perspective this thesis has aimed to embrace, a hybridization of everyday life and tourism is primarily creating a promising space for rediscovery of what is assumed familiar, an exoticization of the everyday (c.f., Larsen, 2008).

The findings also provide conceptual input for understanding the relation between spatial (un)familiarity and the construction of tourist experiences. For instance, residents as touristic consumers can contribute themselves to an integrated approach of touristic production and consumption, by adopting such a conscious interest in exploring ways to experience exoticness near home. This highlights the importance of the mental activity of 'distancing' (Diaz-Soria, 2017): instead of predefining what is usual and unusual, the boundary between home and away is shaped by the experiences itself and by the intentionality of the individual.

Furthermore, the social context affects what is seen as usual and unusual. For example, the hosting of family or friends provides for a context in which familiarity and attractiveness within a 'usual' environment are renegotiated and even inversed: finding novelty in familiar places becomes the touristic value itself. The physical environment itself is 'on the move' too and hereby can invoke experiences of difference: weather conditions in all their unpredictability and ephemerality can contribute to touristic experiences near home.

Politics of regional institutionalization

The increased interest of regions and cities to explore and develop their touristic potential has resulted in a growing concern with spatial identification as part of regional development policy. The practices studied

in this thesis however tend to limit proximity tourism to be part of this institutionalizing process. The importance attributed to competitive identities (Anholt, 2007) as basis for tourism development is problematic, as such an approach often does not align with the interests of internal stakeholders such as residents, let alone that it accounts for the multiplicity and interdependence of the roles they can take up. Being recognized as tourism destination seems to have become an indicator of prosperity for cities, municipalities, regions and countries. The way the touristic success is often measured and hereby strived for –in terms of (international) visitor numbers, overnight stays, et cetera– narrows the potential of tourism being a social force with benefits that reach beyond revenue.

To that end, Fryslân certainly is not unique. The tension between regional institutionalization for the purpose of tourism and the varieties of socio-spatial identification of residents is a problem inherent to the touristic commodification of socio-spatial identities more generally (Braun, Kavaratzis, & Zenker, 2013). In this vein, this thesis points to the need to rethink how 'successful' tourism development is to be defined.

Importantly, the double process of identification is imbued with (dis)empowering forces that establish boundaries of inclusion and exclusion, between what is meaningful and what is redundant. While this boundary making pertains to many aspects of tourism (and to cultural dynamics in general), the ways Fryslân is positioned as tourism destination makes it familiar for its residents and unfamiliar for visitors from elsewhere. Yet, the acknowledgement that internal stakeholders such as residents can contribute to tourism development in *multiple and mobile* ways (as opposed to being passive, immobile hosts of visitors from elsewhere, or merely being 'attractions' to be gazed at) can form an alternative way for integrating 'local' interests into tourism policies. Thus, when regions have the intention to incorporate tourism as a tool for socio-spatial transformation,

the foundation for this might have to be built around the ways residents engage with their near home environment through tourism.

Citizen engagement and place attachment

In the light of increasingly decentralized governance processes for socio-spatial transformation, this thesis points to the importance to account for the multiple roles of local tourism stakeholders (particularly residents), as both consumers and producers. The notion of proximity tourism gives residents both new rights and responsibilities in how they shape their socio-spatial identities through tourism and how they contribute to tourism as tool for socio-spatial transformation.

Rights are relevant when, for example, residents are increasingly acknowledged as producing forces in tourism, because this automatically means (for example based on the notion of re-consumption) that their consuming activities need to be facilitated as well. An important question to ask then is for who tourism –as socio-spatial practice near home– is available and accessible and in which ways? Exclusively relying on ‘international’ and ‘physical distance’ narratives could result in an marginalization of certain activities and places from the touristic realm that form essential ways for people to value themselves and the places they inhabit.

Simultaneously, residents may have a certain obligation to acknowledge their multiple roles in tourism development within their region of residence. Citizenship and citizen participation depends on a felt responsibility to take care of both the physical places and activities near home *and* a sensibility toward their societal symbolic meanings. However, as long as there is a disconnect between meanings of tourism and people's attachment to places where they live, the integration of touristic consumption/production that seems so promising in theory will remain underdeveloped in practice.

The broader context in which these issues are embedded pertains to the ways people develop attachment to places, feel that they belong somewhere and employ spatial identities. To this end, the relevance of proximity tourism lies in its potential to build on and develop social capital within small spatial units that are meaningful for such spatial identities. Indeed, successful intraregional tourism destinations, as stated by Canavan, are 'accessible to locals, providing social interest and leisure opportunities, supporting community infrastructure and industry, and ultimately [are] contributing to social cohesion and civic pride' (Canavan, 2013, p. 349). A major opportunity lies in the capacity of tourism itself to be an educational tool, a learning practice through which knowledge and awareness is generated. Therefore, it is suggested to stimulate proximity tourism as an opportunity for playful learning (Bos, McCabe, & Johnson, 2013).

An increased emphasis on learning about a region's history, present and future, can provide destination branding with new routes for communication, entrepreneurs with new business models and clientele, can advance local awareness and facilitate social, cultural and practical skills. Tourism as learning practice is not just another mode of consumption, it is also a key precondition of any production practice. Therefore, engaging with learning through tourism is as important for tourism entrepreneurs as it is for residents.

Proximity tourism in the context of sustainable travel

People's 'need for distance' (Larsen & Guiver, 2013) is inherently related to how home and away are negotiated. However, since the era of fossil fuel will inevitably come to an end, a momentum is emerging to replace unsustainable modes of transport on which tourism is currently depending so strongly. The symbolic importance attributed to physical travel forms a point of concern that deserves much attention. To counter such

imaginaries, developing proximity tourism could indeed be a promising but challenging avenue (Dubois, Peeters, Ceron, & Gössling, 2011).

Tourism industries need to find ways to make the near home environment touristically valuable. The province of Fryslân could become a frontrunner in shifting the paradigm, for example based on its geographical layout: the Wadden Islands are arguably places perfectly fitting imaginaries of near-home otherness. E-bikes, sailing boats and electric boats, made in Fryslân and used to explore the province, could serve as a symbol for sustainable approaches to tourism by linking with current developments around the transition to renewable energy sources.

However, as long as tourism industries are built on business models which favor and reconfirm imaginaries in which touristic otherness is coupled with travel to places that necessitate unsustainable modes of transport, tourism is undermining its status as symbol for modern cultures and limits its enormous potential to contribute to societal progress on both global and local levels.

In sum, this thesis points to the potential significance of proximity tourism as underpinning for socio-spatial identification. The notion of proximity tourism can inform an augmented understanding of tourism, in which everyday life and touristic otherness are rather mutually inclusive instead of opposing. This way, proximity is embraced as potential commodity for tourism development. However, there seems to be plenty of room for tourism stakeholders in Fryslân to increase their awareness about its potential and be attentive to the opportunities that are embedded 'in-between' the production and consumption of here and elsewhere. In turn, this approach provides a perspective on tourism that is based on multiplicity and circulation and in which the societal opportunities of proximity tourism can become more strongly embedded in regional development.

Samenvatting

Introductie

Deze dissertatie richt zich op de manieren waarop de subjectieve toeristische grenzen tussen 'thuis zijn' en 'weg zijn' zowel gevormd worden door sociaal-ruimtelijke identiteiten en deze identiteiten vormgeven. Meer specifiek is het belangrijkste doel van deze dissertatie om beter te begrijpen hoe discursieve, gedragsmatige en ervaringsgerichte toepassingen van sociaal-ruimtelijke identificatie afhangen van en de toeristische consumptie/productie van plekken 'dichtbij' huis versterken/beperken. Hiermee verkend deze dissertatie de betekenissen, gedragingen en ervaringen van '*proximity tourism*': de consumptie/productie activiteiten die de grenzen tussen thuis zijn en weg zijn vervagen en overstijgen (Bourdeau, 2012), door de paradox van associaties van toeristisch 'anders-zijn' met plekken die vertrouwd zijn.

Proximity tourism als theoretische observatie gaat uit van een relatief perspectief wat betreft fysieke ruimte, omdat het een toeristisch anders-zijn relatief dichtbij (of zelfs binnen) de bekende en vertrouwde omgeving positioneert. Ook ziet het toeristische ervaringen als relatief onverwacht en contra-intuïtief, vanwege de aangenomen associaties van bekendheid met de 'normale' geografische omgeving, en omdat het uitgaat van een ontologie die afwijkt van de maatschappelijke normen ten aanzien van 'gebruikelijke' toeristische activiteiten. Daarnaast gaat het uit van het idee dat de consumptie en productie van proximity tourism met elkaar samenhangen in een continue circulatie (Ateljevic, 2000). Proximity tourism kan hiermee worden gezien als aan cultureel artefact van de 'global-local' paradox, als een vorm van lokalisering en als een representatie van territoriale identificatie, tegelijkertijd mogelijk gemaakt door en als weerstand tegen de homogeniserende processen van globalisering (Govers et al., 2008).

De 'Circuit of Culture' (Du Gay, 1997; Hall & Evans, 2013) is gebruikt als kader om de manieren waarop betekenissen in de samenleving circuleren te onderzoeken. Hiermee wordt de onderling afhankelijke relatie tussen toeristische consumptie en productie bestudeerd als een proces waarvan de betekenissen afhangen van de relaties met processen van regulering, representatie en identificatie.

De geografische focus van deze dissertatie is voornamelijk gericht op de provincie Fryslân. De context van Fryslân vormt een geschikt 'living lab' om sociaal-ruimtelijke identificatie via toeristische activiteiten en de verschillende manieren waarop hiermee betekenis wordt gegeven aan 'thuis zijn' en 'weg zijn' te bestuderen. De dissertatie bestaat uit vijf studies (Hoofdstuk 2-6). In deze Hoofdstukken worden drie stakeholder perspectieven onderzocht (Beleid en marketing, Hoofdstuk 2; Toeristische ondernemers, Hoofdstuk 3; Inwoners, Hoofdstuk 4-6).

Hoofdstuk 2 bestudeert de discursieve positionering in regionale toeristische marketing strategieën van Fryslân als toeristische bestemming. De studie brengt verschillende tegenstellingen aan het licht in de manieren waarop via *place brands*, geclaimde identiteiten, doelgroepen, stakeholder rollen en manieren van samenwerken Fryslân wordt gepositioneerd. De regulerende processen van toeristische positionering worden gekenmerkt door politiek geladen sociale en ruimtelijke representaties. Dit wordt geïllustreerd door de bevinding van een hegemonie van een homogeniserende en extern georiënteerde discours. Dit leidt tot de conclusie dat Fryslân vooral wordt gepositioneerd als een plek voor toeristische consumptie voor mensen die ergens anders vandaan komen.

Het benadrukken van holistische representaties staat echter op gespannen voet met de intraregionale sociale en ruimtelijke variëteit binnen de provincie. Dit brengt een uitdaging met zich mee voor destinatie marketers en beleidsmakers, wat betreft de manier waarop extern

georiënteerde boodschappen worden geïnterpreteerd door interne stakeholders, zoals inwoners. Representaties van diversiteit en gelijkheid in destinatie positionering moeten daarom in balans zijn en sociaal-ruimtelijke narratieven ondersteunen. Op deze manier wordt bovendien rekening gehouden met de verschillende rollen van inwoners als zowel producenten als mogelijker consumenten, wat een basis kan zijn om inwoners te betrekken bij *place branding* activiteiten.

In Hoofdstuk 3 worden rol attributies verder onderzocht. Er wordt gekeken naar hoe toeristische ondernemers in Fryslân betekenis geven aan hun relaties met inwoners van de provincie, via de verschillende manieren waarop zij toeristische consumerende/producerende rollen toeschrijven aan inwoners van Fryslân. De conclusie wordt getrokken dat relaties tussen ondernemers en inwoners in een gedragsmatige *lock-in* kunnen geraken: producenten zien inwoners als onaantrekkelijke doelgroep, omdat zij menen dat inwoners zich niet bewust zijn van toeristische attracties dichtbij huis, terwijl deze verminderde interesse in inwoners als mogelijke gasten er voor zorgt dat lokale attracties onbekend blijven voor veel inwoners. Het concept *re-consumption* biedt een conceptuele en praktische kans uit deze *lock-in* te raken, en geeft ruimte aan meervoudige en onderling afhankelijke rollen van inwoners en relaties met ondernemers. Er wordt bovendien geconcludeerd dat de dynamiek van *role-switching* van en tussen stakeholders het betrekken van inwoners bij toeristische consumptie/productie dichtbij huis verder kan versterken. Dit betekent bijvoorbeeld dat toeristische ondernemers zelf consumerende rollen aan kunnen nemen, terwijl inwoners producerende rollen aannemen, waarmee inwoners de ondernemers voorzien van lokale toeristische kennis en ervaring.

Hoofdstuk 4 richt zich op hoe subjectieve ideeën van inwoners van Fryslân over afstand en nabijheid de waardering beïnvloeden voor hun woonomgeving als vakantiebestemming. De bevindingen reflecteren het

dominante idee dat plekken voor toerisme en voor het dagelijks leven geografisch gescheiden zijn: "thuis is hier, mijn vakantie is daar." Dergelijke interpretaties van afstand en nabijheid onderschrijven de hegemonie van de conventionele *push*, *pull*, *keep* en *repel* factoren, zoals weersomstandigheden en culturele verschillen. Verschillende nuances en non-lineaire positionering in ruimte en tijd worden echter ook gevonden. Daarnaast biedt de gevonden waardering van bekendheid met Fryslân tegenwicht aan de indruk dat toeristische bestemmingen slechts gevormd dienen worden rondom ideeën over het ontsnappen aan de dagelijkse sleur. De conclusie wordt daarom getrokken dat een erkenning nodig is dat Fryslân net zo goed een toeristische bestemming voor haar inwoners is/kan zijn. Tegelijkertijd dringt hiermee de vraag zich op of een (her)ontdekking van de bekend veronderstelde woonomgeving door middel van toerisme een kwestie is van verantwoordelijkheid en lokaal burgerschap.

Hierop voortbouwend onderzoekt Hoofdstuk 5 de betrokkenheid van inwoners bij toeristische promotie, om meer inzicht te krijgen in hoe toeristische productie/consumptie verbonden kan zijn met burgerschap. Er wordt onderzocht in welke mate inwoners van Fryslân zich verantwoordelijk voelen om Fryslân te promoten als toeristische bestemming. Inwoners van Fryslân beschouwen deze verantwoordelijkheid als gedeeld tussen de overheid, ondernemers en inwoners zelf. De manier waarop deze verantwoordelijkheid wordt toegeschreven is tevens een van de voorspellers van een intentie tot zowel positief als negatief geladen mond-tot-mond reclame over Fryslân. De conclusie wordt getrokken dat, in principe, inwoners bereid zijn om middels mond-tot-mond reclame bij te dragen aan de toeristische ontwikkeling van Fryslân. Dit impliceert dat betekenisvolle toeristische ervaringen binnen hun provincie voor inwoners gefaciliteerd moeten worden.

Tot slot wordt in Hoofdstuk 6 onderzocht hoe het weer de waargenomen aantrekkelijkheid van binnenlandse vakanties in Nederland

beïnvloedt, en welke weersomstandigheden een basis kunnen vormen voor het ervaren van verschillen tussen 'uit' en 'thuis'. Dit hoofdstuk diept daarmee de bevindingen uit Hoofdstuk 4 verder uit, waarin werd gevonden dat het weer een belangrijke component is in de manieren waarop ruimtelijke denkbeelden over thuis zijn en op vakantie zijn worden afgewogen en gevormd. Respondenten hebben over het algemeen een sterke aandacht voor weersomstandigheden, maar hoe deze aandacht zich verhoudt tot beeldvorming over vakantiebestemmingen en gedrag tijdens een vakantie, verschilt aan de hand van de mate van *Weather Salience* (de waargenomen persoonlijke significantie van het weer). Tevens worden er op lokaal geografisch niveau verschillen waargenomen tussen verschillende meteorologische omstandigheden die kenmerkend zijn voor de woonomgeving of voor de vakantiebestemming.

De conclusie wordt getrokken dat het weer een betekenisvol sociaal-ruimtelijk kenmerk is die een belangrijke rol speelt in de waargenomen aantrekkelijkheid van binnenlands toerisme in Nederland. De bevindingen wijzen hiermee ook op de relevantie van het weer als het gaat om toeristische ervaringen. Er wordt gesuggereerd dat het weer meer aandacht verdient in de context van ontwikkeling en management van Nederlands toerisme. Bijvoorbeeld wanneer het gaat om psychologische weerbaarheid, als aanvulling op meer gebruikelijke aandacht voor fysieke interventies om de negatieve invloed van ongunstige weersomstandigheden te verminderen. Bovendien, omdat het weer een rol speelt in stereotypische beeldvorming over bekend veronderstelde klimatologische omstandigheden van de omgeving waar men woont, kan het communiceren van meer genuanceerde informatie over het weer een positieve bijdrage leveren aan de waargenomen aantrekkelijkheid van binnenlands toerisme in Nederland.

Reflecteren op proximity tourism

Betekenisgeving aan toerisme, waarbij geprofiteerd wordt van de ‘*in-between-ness*’ (Bourdeau, 2012) die mogelijk wordt gemaakt door overlappende dichotomieën (thuis-uit, toerist-inwoner), blijkt nog relatief beperkt en ondergewaardeerd, in de context van Fryslân. Dit betekent dat er slechts beperkte mogelijkheden zijn om alternatieve, hybride manieren (bv. *proximity tourism*) te gebruiken als basis voor sociaal-ruimtelijke identificatie, en als basis voor het toeschrijven van toeristische waarde aan plekken. Zowel de neiging tot een *lock-in* en de mogelijkheden voor *proximity tourism* blijken sterk ingebed in de betekenisvormende krachten voortgebracht door processen van circulatie (Ateljevic, 2000; Du Gay, 1997).

In het slechtste geval resulteert de dynamiek van circulatie in een marginalisering van de betekenissen en belangen van bepaalde stakeholders ten koste van die van andere. Wat dat betreft riskeert een externe oriëntatie in destinatie marketing op inkomende bezoekers (Hoofdstuk 2) van telkens verder weg (bv. het proberen aan te trekken van bezoekers uit Aziatische landen zoals China en Japan) dat lokale stakeholders (zoals inwoners) over het hoofd gezien en genegeerd worden.

In het beste geval echter zorgen circulatie processen er voor dat toerisme verder wordt geïntegreerd in het dagelijks leven, doordat een hernieuwde interesse wordt gewekt en waardering wordt gevormd voor wat eerder vertrouwd en bekend was verondersteld. Creatieve en innovatieve manieren om toeristische waarde te vormen gaan op een bewuste manier om met en baseren zich op de paradox van fysieke geografische nabijheid waarin nieuwe (toeristische) ervaringen liggen ingebed.

De paradox van de destabiliserende krachten van toeristische dualiteiten is daarom niet slechts een ongewenst gevolg van globalisering, of een externaliteit van winst-georiënteerde toeristische ontwikkeling. Vanuit

het optimistisch perspectief op dergelijke paradoxen dat deze dissertatie heeft geprobeerd aan te nemen, zorgt een vermenging van het dagelijkse en het toeristische voor een veelbelovende ruimte om te herontdekken wat bekend was verondersteld en daarmee voor een exotisering van het dagelijkse leven (c.f., Larsen, 2008).

De bevindingen vormen ook conceptuele input om de relatie tussen geografische (on)bekendheid en de vorming van toeristische ervaringen beter te begrijpen. Inwoners kunnen bijvoorbeeld als toeristische consumenten zelf bijdragen aan een geïntegreerde benadering van toeristische productie/consumptie, door bewust interesse te tonen in manieren om dichtbij huis toch het gevoel van 'weg zijn' te krijgen. Hiermee wordt het belang benadrukt van het mentaal afstand nemen ('*distancing*', Diaz-Soria, 2017): in plaats van vooraf te bepalen wat anders of gewoon is, wordt de grens tussen uit en thuis gevormd door de ervaringen zelf en door de intentionele houding van de persoon.

Daarnaast zorgt de sociale context voor wat gezien wordt als anders en als gewoon. Het ontvangen van bijvoorbeeld vrienden of familie als gasten biedt een context waarin bekendheid met en aantrekkelijkheid van een 'normale' omgeving opnieuw worden heroverwogen en zelf omgekeerd: het vinden van nieuwigheid op bekende plekken wordt zelf een toeristische waarde. Daarnaast is de fysieke omgeving zelf ook in beweging and kan hiermee zorgen voor het ervaren van verschillen: weersomstandigheden, in al hun onvoorspelbaarheid en vergankelijkheid kunnen bijdragen aan toeristische ervaringen dichtbij huis.

De politiek van regionale institutionalisering

De groeiende interesse in regio's en steden om het toeristische potentieel te verkennen en ontwikkelen heeft er toe geleid dat er steeds meer belang wordt gehecht aan geografische en ruimtelijke identiteiten als onderdeel van beleid voor regionale ontwikkeling. De toepassingen die zijn

onderzocht in deze dissertatie lijken echter er voor te zorgen dat het idee van proximity tourism slechts in beperkte mate onderdeel is van dit proces van institutionalisering. Het belang dat wordt gehecht aan competitieve identiteiten (Anholt, 2007) als basis voor toeristische ontwikkeling is problematisch, omdat een dergelijke benadering vaak niet samenvalt met de belangen van interne stakeholders zoals inwoners, terwijl er op die manier vaak ook geen rekening wordt gehouden met de meervoudigheid en onderlinge afhankelijkheid van de rollen die stakeholders kunnen aannemen. Het worden erkend als toeristische bestemming lijkt een belangrijke indicator te zijn geworden voor de welvarendheid van steden, gemeenten, regio's of landen. De manier waarop toeristisch succes vaak wordt bepaald en hoe naar succes wordt gestreefd –in termen van (internationale) bezoekersaantallen, aantal overnachtingen, et cetera– beperkt de potentie van toerisme als maatschappelijke kracht waarin opbrengsten liggen die verder gaan dan financiële inkomsten.

Fryslân is zeker niet uniek hierin. De spanning tussen regionale institutionalisering met als doel toeristische ontwikkeling en de variatie aan manieren van sociaal-ruimtelijke identificatie van inwoners is een inherent en algemeen probleem van toeristische commodificatie van sociaal-ruimtelijke identiteiten (Braun, Kavaratzis & Zenker, 2013). In lijn hiermee wijst deze dissertatie naar de noodzaak tot een herbezinning over de manier waarop 'succesvolle' toeristische ontwikkeling wordt gedefinieerd.

Het is belangrijk te realiseren dat identificatie een tweezijdig proces is, vergeven van macht gevende en beperkende krachten, welke worden ingezet om de grenzen van inclusie en exclusie uit te lijnen, om te bepalen wat betekenisvol is en wat overbodig is. Dergelijke identificatie processen hebben betrekking op vele aspecten van toerisme (en op culturele processen in het algemeen). In de context van Fryslân zorgt dit er voor dat de regio wordt gepositioneerd als toeristische bestemming op een manier dat deze bekend is voor inwoners en onbekend voor bezoekers van buiten

de provincie. Echter, wanneer erkend wordt dat interne stakeholders zoals inwoners kunnen bijdragen aan toeristische ontwikkeling op meervoudige manieren en hun interne mobiliteit wordt onderkend (in plaats van dat inwoners worden gezien als honkvaste gastheren/vrouwen van bezoekers uit andere plekken, of als 'attracties' om naar te kijken), opent dit alternatieve mogelijkheden om 'lokale' belangen te integreren in toerisme beleid. Dus, wanneer regio's de intentie hebben om toerisme te gebruiken als manier voor sociaal-ruimtelijke transformatie, is het goed de basis te vormen rondom de manieren waarop inwoners, via toeristische activiteiten, omgaan met de omgeving waarin zij wonen.

Burgerparticipatie en plaatsverbondenheid

In het licht van een groeiende decentralisatie van bestuurlijke processen rondom sociaal-ruimtelijke transformatie wijst deze dissertatie op het belang rekening te houden met de meervoudige rollen van lokale toeristische stakeholders (met name inwoners), zowel als consumenten als producenten. Het idee van *proximity tourism* geeft inwoners zowel nieuwe rechten als verantwoordelijkheden ten aanzien van die manieren waarop zij door middel van toerisme hun sociaal-ruimtelijke identiteiten (kunnen) vormen, en hoe zij (kunnen) bijdragen aan toerisme als manier om sociaal-ruimtelijke transformatie te bewerkstelligen.

Rechten zijn relevant wanneer, bijvoorbeeld, inwoners meer worden erkend als producenten in toeristische circulatie, omdat dit automatisch betekent dat hun consumerende activiteiten ook moeten worden gefaciliteerd. Een belangrijke vraag is dan voor wie toerisme –als sociaal-ruimtelijk activiteit dichtbij huis– beschikbaar en toegankelijk is, en op welke manieren. Dit betekent dat wanneer er uitsluitend 'internationale' toeristische narratieven worden gebruikt en het belang van fysieke afstand tussen bestemming en woonplek wordt bekrachtigd, dit kan resulteren in de marginalisatie van bepaalde activiteiten en plekken die essentieel zijn voor

de manieren waarop mensen zichzelf en de plekken waar ze wonen waarderen.

Tegelijkertijd kunnen inwoners een zekere verplichting hebben om zelf hun meervoudige rollen te erkennen in relatie tot toeristische ontwikkeling binnen hun woonomgeving. Burgerschap en burgerparticipatie hangen af van een gevoelde verantwoordelijkheid om zorg te dragen voor zowel de fysieke plekken en activiteiten dichtbij huis en zorgvuldig om te gaan met hun symbolische betekenis. Echter, wanneer toeristische betekenisgeving en de manier van verbondenheid van mensen met hun woonomgeving van elkaar zijn losgekoppeld, zal de integratie van toeristische consumptie/productie die in theorie veelbelovend is, in de praktijk suboptimaal ontwikkeld blijven.

De bredere context waarin deze zaken zijn ingebed heeft betrekking op de manieren waarop mensen verbondenheid ontwikkelen met plekken, hoe ze voelen ergens te behoren en hoe ze ruimtelijke identiteiten ontwikkelen. De relevantie van *proximity tourism* ligt in dit verband in de potentie om sociaal kapitaal te ontwikkelen binnen en met de geografische micro-context waarin zulke ruimtelijke identiteiten betekenisvol zijn. Volgens Canavan zijn succesvolle intraregionale toeristische bestemmingen inderdaad "toegankelijk voor lokale inwoners, sociaal interessant en bieden ze mogelijkheden voor vrijetijdsbesteding, ondersteunen ze de infrastructuur en economie van de lokale gemeenschap en dragen ze uiteindelijk bij aan de sociale cohesie en dat burgers trots zijn op waar ze wonen " (Canavan, 2013, p.349). Een belangrijke kans ligt daarmee ook in de capaciteit van toerisme als educatiemiddel, als een manier kennis en lokaal bewustzijn te genereren. De suggestie wordt daarom gegeven om *proximity tourism* te stimuleren als context voor spelenderwijs leren (Bos, McCabe, & Johnson, 2013).

Een grotere nadruk op het leren over het verleden, heden en toekomst van een regio brengt ook nieuwe mogelijkheden voor toeristische

promotie en *destination branding* met zich mee. Voor ondernemers vormt het een basis voor nieuwe business modellen en klanten en meer algemeen kan het lokaal bewustzijn en sociale, culturele en praktische vaardigheden bevorderen. Toerisme als een manier van leren is niet slechts een alternatieve manier van consumptie, het is ook een kernvoorwaarde voor elke vorm van productie. Leren door middel van toerisme is daarom net zo belangrijk voor toeristische ondernemers als voor inwoners in het algemeen.

Proximity tourism in de context van duurzaam reizen

De 'behoefte aan afstand' van mensen (Larsen & Guiver, 2013) is sterk verbonden met hoe betekenis wordt gegeven aan thuis zijn en weg zijn. Echter, het tijdperk van fossiele brandstoffen komt tot een einde en hiermee groeit het momentum om de niet duurzame transportmiddelen waarvan toerisme op dit moment zo sterk afhankelijk is te vervangen. Het symbolische belang dat toegeschreven wordt aan reizen als fysieke verplaatsing vormt een belangrijk punt van aandacht. Om dergelijke opvattingen ter discussie te stellen kunnen de ideeën rondom *proximity tourism* een veelbelovend maar uitdagend instrument vormen (Dubois, Peeters, Ceron, & Gössling, 2011).

Toeristische industrieën zullen manieren moeten vinden om de omgeving dichtbij huis betekenisvol en waardevol te maken voor toeristische ervaringen. De provincie Fryslân zou een pionier kunnen worden om het conventionele toeristische paradigma te verschuiven, bijvoorbeeld op basis van de geografische lay-out: de Waddeneilanden zijn onmiskenbaar bestemmingen die passen in de beeldvorming rondom de beleving van weg, maar toch dichtbij huis zijn. Daarnaast kunnen e-bikes, zeilboten en elektrische boten, gemaakt in Fryslân en gebruikt om de provincie te ontdekken, fungeren als symbool voor duurzame toeristische mobiliteit, bijvoorbeeld door een verband te maken met de hedendaagse

ontwikkelingen rondom de transitie naar het gebruik van duurzame energie.

Echter, zolang toeristische business modellen zijn gericht op het bevorderen en herbevestigen van denkbeelden waarin toeristisch 'ander zijn' is gekoppeld aan het reizen naar bestemmingen waarvoor niet duurzame transportmiddelen nodig zijn, ondermijnt toerisme zijn symbolische status als onderdeel van moderne culturen en beperkt het het enorme potentieel om bij te dragen aan maatschappelijke vooruitgang op globaal en lokaal niveau.

Samengevat wijst deze dissertatie op de potentiële significantie van *proximity tourism* als basis voor sociaal-ruimtelijke identificatie. *Proximity tourism* als conceptueel idee kan de basis vormen voor een uitgebreide en versterkte beeldvorming over toerisme, waarin het dagelijks leven en toeristisch 'anders zijn' onderdeel van elkaar zijn in plaats elkaars tegenpolen. Op deze manier wordt geografische nabijheid omarmd als mogelijke *commodity* voor toeristische ontwikkeling. Echter, het blijkt dat er veel ruimte is voor toeristische stakeholders in Fryslân om bewustzijn ten aanzien van dit potentieel te vergroten en aandacht te hebben voor de mogelijkheden die liggen 'tussen' de productie en consumptie van 'hier' en 'ergens anders'. Deze benadering biedt daarmee een perspectief op toerisme dat is gebaseerd op meervoudigheid en circulatie, en waarin de maatschappelijke kansen van *proximity tourism* sterker worden ingebed in regionale ontwikkeling.

References

- Anholt, S. (2007). Competitive identity: the new brand management for nations, cities and regions. *Journal of Brand Management*, 14(6), 474-475.
- Ateljevic, I. (2000). Circuits of tourism: stepping beyond the 'production/consumption' dichotomy. *Tourism Geographies*, 2(4), 369-388.
- Bos, L., McCabe, S., & Johnson, S. (2013). Learning never goes on holiday: an exploration of social tourism as a context for experiential learning. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 1-17.
- Bourdeau, P. (2012). Visiting/living (in) the Alps: towards a tourist-residential convergence? *Di chi sono le Alpi?: appartenenze politiche, economiche e culturali nel mondo alpino contemporaneo*, 195-204.
- Braun, E., Kavaratzis, M., & Zenker, S. (2013). My city–my brand: the different roles of residents in place branding. *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 6(1), 18-28.
- Canavan, B. (2013). The Extent and Role of Domestic Tourism in a Small Island: The Case of the Isle of Man. *Journal of Travel Research*, 52(3), 340-352.
- Diaz-Soria, I. (2017). Being a tourist as a chosen experience in a proximity destination. *Tourism Geographies*, 19(1), 96-117.
- Du Gay, P. (1997). *Doing cultural studies: The story of the Sony Walkman* (Vol. 1): Sage.
- Dubois, G., Peeters, P., Ceron, J. P., & Gössling, S. (2011). The future tourism mobility of the world population: Emission growth versus climate policy. *Transportation Research Part A: Policy and Practice*, 45(10)
- Govers, R., Van Hecke, E., & Cabus, P. (2008). Delineating tourism: Defining the usual environment. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 35(4), 1053-1073.
- Hall, S., & Evans, J. (2013). *Representation : cultural representation and signifying practices*. Los Angeles [etc.]: SAGE [etc.].

- Larsen, J. (2008). De-exoticizing tourist travel: Everyday life and sociality on the move. *Leisure Studies*, 27(1), 21-34.
- Larsen, G. R., & Guiver, J. W. (2013). Understanding tourists' perceptions of distance: a key to reducing the environmental impacts of tourism mobility. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 21(7), 968-981.

Dankwoord

In 2013 vervulde ik het berglandschap rondom Grenoble voor de mij welbekende vlaktes in het noorden van Nederland. Om te gaan promoveren in Groningen, maar over Fryslân. En ook nog af en toe reizend tussen de Rijksuniversiteit en Stenden Hogeschool. Tussen het Peerd van Ome Loeks en Us Mem. Over iets met identiteit en toerisme. Over dingen die vaststaan en dingen die voorbijgaan. Niet noodzakelijk in die volgorde.

Het staat in elk geval vast dat de vier jaar van dit promotieonderzoek zeer snel voorbij zijn gegaan. Dat het me is gelukt binnen vier jaar mijn proefschrift af te ronden is niet een vanzelfsprekendheid. Hiervoor ben ik een aantal mensen dank verschuldigd.

Allereerst wil ik Dirk en Tialda bedanken voor hun begeleiding. De gesprekken die we in de loop van de jaren hebben gehad waren altijd zowel gemakkelijk als inhoudelijk interessant. Waar ik in mijn schrijven de neiging heb om uitgebreid te zijn, hebben jullie me geholpen het uiteindelijk toch enigszins binnen de perken (proberen) te houden. Hoewel het soms zoeken was naar een manier om onze verschillende ideeën en verwachtingen samen te brengen, heb ik me altijd volledig gesteund gevoeld door jullie.

Daarnaast wil ik iedereen van FRW bedanken. Alle staf, mede promovendi, kamergenoten en flexplek bureaudelers; bedankt voor alle adviezen, gesprekken en gezelligheid. Ook bedank ik alle collega's van ETFI en Stenden in Leeuwarden en iedereen van UCF/Campus Fryslân. En natuurlijk Arriva en de NS om tussen alle locaties een over het algemeen toch best prima verbinding en mobiele werkplek te bieden.

De afgelopen twee jaren heb ik regelmatig in 'het noorden' gelogeed bij vrienden en familie. Vaak kreeg ik ook nog een diner en ontbijt er bij! Zonder deze *pieds à terre* was het een stuk lastiger geweest

om op iets grotere afstand van de faculteit te wonen. Ik wil dan ook iedereen bedanken die in de loop van de tijd een bedje voor mij klaar had liggen. Maar vooral Ralph en Sandra, Michiel en Yvonne, Erik en Martine, en natuurlijk mijn ouders Jaïke en Theo: ontzettend bedankt voor jullie gastvrijheid.

Tot slot wil ik mijn lieve Mirjam bedanken. Bedankt voor al je support, kritische vragen, bereidheid om samen naar Groningen te verhuizen en kans om vervolgens Amsterdam te leren kennen!



Source:

<http://www.ucciani-dessins.com>

