Co-creating with the digital tourist: A study of visitors of Frederikshavn and their preferences in relation to travel apps

smartourism

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Abstract

This thesis seeks to investigate the constructions of tourists visiting the city of Frederikshavn in order to find out how it is possible to develop a visitor app with the purpose of enhancing the experiences the visitor has when visiting the city. It furthermore seeks to explore what visitors of Frederikshavn believe should be included in an app in order for them to be motivated to use it. The reason for suggesting that the tourist experiences in Frederikshavn emerges from a report from *VisitDenmark.* The report shows that Denmark scores lower than other Northern European when looking at tourists' satisfaction with the experiences at the destination, which means that Denmark, in this case Frederikshavn, must focus on developing initiatives that can aid in enhancing the tourist experiences. The reason why an app is suggested as the solution of the problem, is that tourists have become more digital, meaning that a destination must focus on offering digital solutions, for instance when it comes to information-searching before, during, and after travelling. Furthermore, as it will be understood when reading through the thesis, digital solutions has the ability to enhance the visitor experience in itself, which provides another reason for suggesting that the app is the most valuable way to go in this case. The problem formulation presented in this thesis is developed from a constructivist point of view, and the methodology has a great impact on the entire process of writing the thesis. This is, as the paradigm implies, as peoples' constructions will be sought to be investigated, and therefore the process of gathering and interpreting the data will be chosen or designed in order for the researcher to be able to do so. In that regard, the qualitative method of interviews will be chosen as the researcher is then able to investigate these constructions. As the paradigm furthermore suggests, the research is undertaken with a point of departure in the researcher's own pre-understandings, which means that the results of the investigation will rely on subjective inquiry. The data used in order to answer the problem formulation will emerge from interviews with visitors of Frederikshavn and an e-mail correspondence with an expert from *VisitDenmark.* This data will be analysed through *meaning interpretation* and the notion of *hermeneutics,* and recommendations for the app will be presented before the conclusion, which will follow up on the most important parts of the investigation and the process behind it. Finally, a section presenting reflections on the thesis and its' findings will be elaborated in order to explain what the researcher could have done differently when undertaking the research behind the thesis.

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1. Introduction

In today's society, customers are constantly gaining power and control while the suppliers fight for the customer's attention. Accordingly, it is essential for organizations to know their customers, and this can be done by entering into a dialogue with them (Binkhorst & Dekker, 2009, p. 314) (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004, p. 11). Boswijk et al. (2007) argue that consumers have a need for creation of meaningful and specific value through personal interaction with the company, which means that the company must be in touch with the consumer and have insight in what is important for the individual consumer (Binkhorst & Dekker, 2009, p. 313). This interplay between consumer and company is also referred to as *co-creation* (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004, p. 9)*, and it will be explained more detailed in the theory chapter.

Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2004) argue that the entire 'co-creation experience' is a basis for value, but it is, at the same time, the future of innovation and a way in which it is possible for the customers to interact with a certain company or destination and thereby be able to influence the process of generating their own experience (Binkhorst & Dekker, 2009, p. 313). Additionally, recent studies point out that involving consumers as co-creators of products or services is positively related to for example new product development, increased product creativity and reduced development costs (Banovic, Guerrero, Krystallis, & Reinders, 2016, p. 2011), indicating that co-creation can influence an organization or destination products in many ways. In that sense, it is possible for tourists to co-create with any destination with the objective of creating value for both the tourist and the destination.

Like it is the case with co-creation, mobile technology is playing a greater and greater role in the tourist experience. Mobile technology and digital devices play a great role in the tourism domain as tourists are traveling and moving in unfamiliar surroundings, and therefore they seek information in order to both enrich the experience (Dickinson, Filimonau, & Hibbert, 2016, p. 193) (e.g. information about restaurants, hotels, etc.) but also to do something as simple as resolving different types of practical issues (Dickinson, Filimonau, & Hibbert, 2016, p. 193) (e.g. find a map). A term which covers all of these communication devices (computers, tablets, mobile phones etc.) is called *ICT*. ICT is an abbreviation for 'information communication technologies' (Berné, García-González, García-Uceda, & Múgica, 2015, p. 188), and throughout this thesis, theory about these technologies and co-creation will be connected quite closely in order to investigate how both co-creation and digital solutions can be great assets when it comes to creating positive tourist experiences.

The concept of smart tourism destination derives from the development of smart cities, where the inhabitants of a certain city are actively engaging in the co-creation process of services of physical products. Through this entire process, innovative living and engagement with stakeholders are designed. (Buhalis, Tussyadiah, & Ziang, 2015, p. 143)

For some tourists, mobile devices have even become the most important aspect of the tourist experience (Dickinson, Filimonau, & Hibbert, 2016, p. 193). Digital devices bring opportunities to add value to all phases of the tourist experience; it can influence a person's expectations for the holiday and destination, the activities a person undertakes at the destination, and so on, and thereby these devices play a great role in several of the phases a person is going through when searching for a destination, being at a destination and leaving the destination (Dickinson, Filimonau, & Hibbert, 2016, p. 194).

Furthermore, as it is the visitors who hold the preferences and wishes that must be accommodated by the destination, it is essential for tourism stakeholders to continuously staying in touch with the tourists' digital preferences in order to accommodate their needs and offer the digital solutions best suited for the tourists (e.g. websites containing information about the destination in question). The tourists are no longer mere spectators; they are now actively participating in creating and extracting value for themselves and for the destination (Binkhorst & Dekker, 2009, p. 314). This particular digitalization can also be referred to as *digital tourism,* and can be described as a mix between the "real world", which is the physical surroundings in which the visitor is situated, and digital content created with the aim of enhancing the visitor experience (Benyon, O'Keefe, Quigley, & Riva, 2013, pp. 521-527). From the concept of digital tourism emerges the one of *digitally enhanced tourism* which: "seeks to improve the tourist experience before, during and after the visit in manner which better understands each visitor as a unique individual with their own interests, goals and expectations," (Benyon, O'Keefe, Quigley, & Riva, 2013, p. 524). Based on this piece of knowledge, it is understood that it is of great importance for the tourist destinations to be aware of using and designing digital technologies, as they contribute to enhancing the tourist experience to a great extent. The impact of digital technologies and the importance of integrating them as a means of providing information for tourists will be clarified in the section 1.3. *Rationale behind the solution.* The digital solutions allow tourists to easily and quickly find accommodation, food, and routes, and therefore they have become essential resources for the modern tourist to bring when travelling. This is another way of explaining the concept of digitally enhanced tourism. The concept will be explained further in the theory chapter.

The importance of destinations offering digital opportunities to its' tourists are acknowledged by *VisitDenmark* as they say in their strategy, *Strategi for Det Digitale Turisme Danmark og indsatsområder for 2016,* published in 2015 that:

"Denmark must be a leading country regarding digital tourist communication. That is our vision. We must ensure that the tourist will have the best possible experiences in Denmark (…)" (VisitDenmark, 2015) (own translation).

However, another report deriving from *VisitDenmark'*s own webpage published by *Det Nationale Turismeforum* indicates that Denmark is not keeping up with the remaining Northern European countries when looking at tourists' level of satisfaction with the entire holiday experience. The report is an annual analysis of the development that the Danish tourism is going through, which provides an outline of key figures of Danish tourism (VisitDenmark, 2017, p. 14).

The report illustrates that Denmark has a lower score than the other Northern European countries when looking at aspects such as services and the selection of historical attractions and museums, shopping and cultural sites (VisitDenmark, 2017, p. 13). Furthermore, the study on tourists' level of satisfaction in the report also displays that Denmark has scored only 171 points, and that is lower than the average of the Northern European countries scoring 189 points (VisitDenmark, 2017, p. 15), meaning that it is important for the tourism industry in Denmark to generate initiatives designed to help enhance the visitor level of satisfaction. This is important as tourists seek experiences of value (Binkhorst & Dekker, 2009, p. 311), and if they are not satisfied with their experiences when visiting Denmark, they would most likely choose not to visit Denmark again.
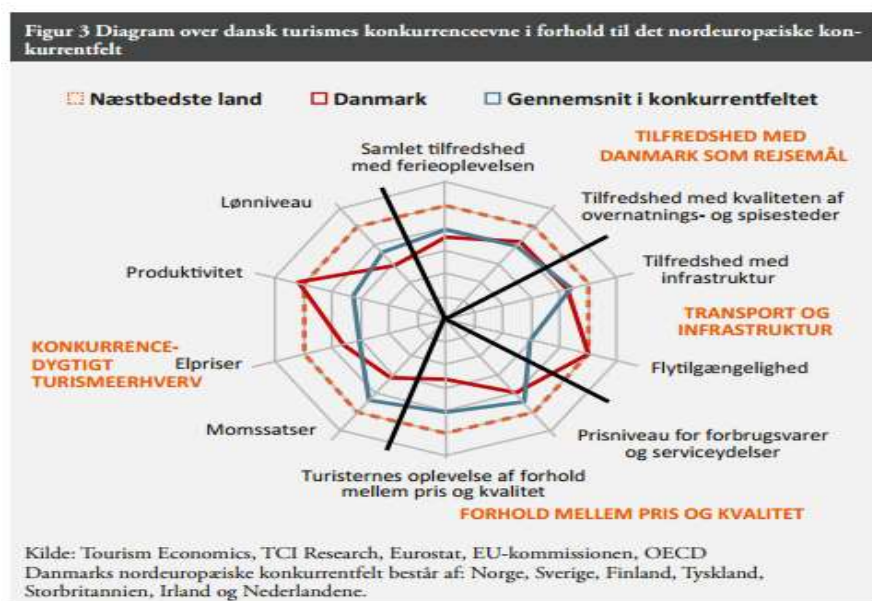
Picture 2: Displays a chart of the competitiveness of Danish tourism compared to other Northern European countries. The picture originates from the report formed by *Det Nationale Turismeforum* on *VisitDenmark*'s webpage.

Based on the findings of the report by *VisitDenmark* and the information above, the following problem formulation emerges:

Focusing on the preferences, needs, and desires of the digital tourists, how is it possible to develop content for a tourist app for visitors of the city of Frederikshavn with the objective of enhancing the visitor experience, and what kind of content should it contain?

Shortly described, the problem formulation sheds light on the main focus of the thesis which is to create initiatives or recommendations for an app designed for tourists containing information about the city of Frederikshavn. The objective of this thesis is to develop suggestions for an app that can aid the tourists in exploring the city and its attributes in an easy risk-free manner for the tourist and thereby, it is a tool that can make the it easier for them. The reason why it is a risk-free solution for the tourist, is that he or she will not have to spend money on the app. The reason why it is easy, is that the tourist will have one platform for the information that they need about the destination. The author of this thesis argues that the app must be free as most people will not be willing to pay to buy a visitor mobile app as they do not know its value in advance (Palumbo, 2015, p. 52).

The specific information that needs to be included in the app will be found by conducting interviews with visitors of the city of Frederikshavn, and it will be presented later in the thesis. This will be explained further when reading through the thesis. The problem formulation is developed with a point of departure in the report from *VisitDenmark*, and on a strategy from *Det Nationale Turismeforum*, with the aim of discovering possible solutions with the aid of the theoretical framework presented later. The problem formulation has a main focus on avoiding that the tourists will have negative or trivial experiences when visiting the city of Frederikshavn and on avoiding "losing" tourists to other Northern European countries and thereby losing turnover deriving from tourism business and activities. According to Yoon and Uysal, tourists who have had positive experiences at a destination are more inclined to return (Uysal & Yoon, 2005, p. 47), which indicates that they must be less inclined to visit if they have had negative experiences. Therefore, it can be argued, that only if the app was actually to be developed in real life, it would be safe to conclude whether an app can be the answer to the problem of losing tourists. However, the author of this thesis argues that it is possible to suggest that an app could be the solution to some of the problem related to influencing the tourist experiences positively, as it has many advantages, which will be presented in the section 1.3. *Rationale behind the solution.* Additionally, the problem formulation seeks to create solutions for a digital platform for tourists visiting Frederikshavn where it is possible to obtain relevant information about the city, as the author of this thesis has not yet succeeded in coming across a similar app for the area.

As it is described above, there is a great foundation for enhancing the visitor experience: visitors seek experiences of value, and if they have had these experiences in Frederikshavn, it can be argued that they will be more inclined to return. It is important for the destination to continuously focus on staying appealing to the tourists, as tourism contributes to the economy, creating life at the destination, creating jobs, etc.

As it appears from the problem formulation, this thesis aims at developing recommendations for the tourist app, and it does not aim at developing an actual app. The reason for this choice is that the author of the thesis does not have the tools and technological abilities to develop the app. These recommendations can also be referred to as content, and this can be for instance an overview of accommodation, restaurants etc. The actual app will not be developed by the author, but ideas about the types of content for the app will be suggested based on the interviews with the visitors. However, even though the actual app will not be developed, at least not for this project or by the author of this thesis, it can be argued that recommendations for a visitor app can still be of great value, as these recommendations will hopefully aid in facilitating the visitor's journey before, during and after the

travel, if implemented by tourism officials. Therefore, it can be argued that looking into the contents of a potential app is of as great importance as designing the actual app.

As Thomsen argues, a problem is something that should derive from your wonder about something (Thomsen, 2012). However, it must be mentioned in this connection, that this problem does not necessarily has be a problem in that sense (for example, if there is something that is not working properly and needs to be changed or fixed). It can, on the other hand, be a mismatch between how a topic is explained or studied in academic literature and how it is experienced by people outside it (Thomsen, 2012). The character of the wonder of this thesis can be understood as a problem that the thesis seeks to solve, as Denmark has a lower score than other Northern European countries. That is the core issue of the thesis. This thesis seeks to explore and explain how the DMO's of the city of Frederikshavn can create initiatives that can influence the tourists of Frederikshavns' level of satisfaction with their experiences positively. Hence, the objective of the thesis is to minimize the risk of losing tourist. Focusing on this particular area of the Danish country means that the recommendations presented in the analysis will reflect the values and attributes of this certain area and use these to attempt to enhance the tourists of Frederikshavns' experiences at the destination. These attributes stem from webpages about the city, such as the one of *VisitNordjylland* and *VisitFrederikshavn*. The city of Frederikshavn has been chosen as the area of the study, as it is a city with different kinds of attributes such as *Bangsbo Museet*, *Gågaden* etc. (Visitfrederikshavn, n.d.) that can be used to entertain and attract tourists. Furthermore, it is a city with a large harbor (Port of Frederikshavn, n.d.) receiving tourists from both Norway and Sweden which provides the opportunity for the author to explore the needs and preferences of tourists from other parts of Scandinavia than Denmark, and the city is also the home of a campsite, where both domestic and foreign tourists stay.

In the following, a description of the case which this thesis is based on will be presented. The section about the city, from which the thesis is based on, will include a short description of the city. This is included in order to describe what can be experienced in the city, and find out what kind of information could be necessary to include in the app. After that has been done, the methodology and methods chosen for conducting the research in this thesis will be accounted for.

1.1. The case

The case in this thesis is based on the city of Frederikshavn, which is a commercial town (Visitnordjylland, n.d.) situated in the Northern part of Jutland (see picture 1). Frederikshavn is also

referred to as "the little metropolis", and the experiences the city has to offer is, among others, the shopping street, museums, different types of restaurants and the possibility of seeing concerts or visiting the beach (Visitfrederikshavn, n.d.).
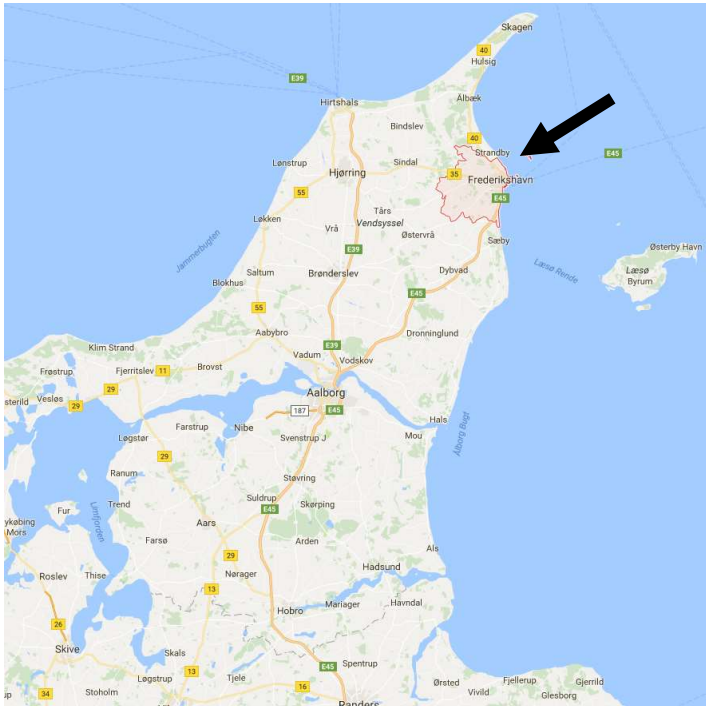
Picture 1: Displays where the city of Frederikshavn is located. The picture originates from Google Maps.

The shopping street in Frederikshavn is one of the longest shopping streets in Denmark, and offers everything from branded goods to unique products (VisitFederikshavn, n.d.). The city offers diverse gastronomic experiences, often including local food and ingredients. For instance, it is possible to have an American experience with barbecue, or a more Danish one with traditional Danish open sandwiches, "smørrebrød" (VisitFrederikshavn, n.d.). The city furthermore offers the possibility to visit the local museum *Bangsbo* which, among other things, houses an exhibition of the resistance movement in Jutland during World War II (VisitFrederikshavn, n.d.). It is also possible to experience local art exhibitions at Frederikshavn *Kunstmuseum og Exlibrissamling*, which displays both a permanent exhibition which is always at display and a series of different exhibitions which are changed during the year containing both Danish and international contemporary art (VisitFrederikshavn, n.d.). The city furthermore is the hometown of the "*palm beach*", which is a beach decorated with palm trees evoking associations to more tropical settings. The beach is known in Denmark and the rest of Scandinavia as well. During the summer, the beach offers possibilities to engage in activities such as beach soccer, petanque or beach volley (Visitfrederikshavn, n.d.). The beach is therefore not only for

visitors who seeks time to relax or sunbathe, but it is also for the more active visitor.

In relation to the nationality of the visitors of Frederikshavn city, the majority of the tourists visiting are Danish, German, Norwegian and Swedish (Visitnordjylland, 2017).

The following section explains the advantages and the disadvantages of choosing an app as a solution.

1.2. Rationale behind the solution

This section serves as an explanation of the solution to the problem suggested by this thesis, namely the app.

Firstly, it is important to stress that designing an app is not something that can be done for free, as it costs a certain amount of money depending on what kind of app you want to develop and design, and on how many functions it should contain (Fejer, 2015). In that connection, freelance designer, Klaus Fejer, suggests the prices of apps containing different features. For instance, there is the 'standard app-solution', which is a solution containing only a few functions. One of the disadvantages of this solution is, besides the limited number of functions, that it eliminates the possibility of releasing the app in the company's own name. The price for 'standard app-solution' is between 10.000-50.000 Danish Kroner. If the company interested in owning an app wishes that the app features more functions than the standard solution, the price is from 50.000 Danish Kroner and increasing depending on how many extra functions it should contain (Fejer, 2015). Therefore, it is necessary to consider the costs of the app, before it can be developed, and it is necessary to consider what kind of content and functions that should be included.

In the case of Frederikshavn and any other city in Denmark, it might not be necessary to develop an app in order to keep the tourists informed about the area. Another solution could be designing a tourist guide book, where the tourist could find information before and during the travel. In that scenario the costs of designing the app would be eliminated, and it would not be necessary to have ten or more employees hired for months to develop it, as it is necessary to do when developing an app (Fejer, 2015).

Even though the author of this thesis is aware of the above-mentioned drawbacks, she still argues that the app is the right solution for today's tourists as they have become more digital. First of all, a tourist guide book does not allow for changes in the content to occur. When the guide has been published, it is not possible to add information or correct typing errors, as the books has already been finished. This is not the case if having an app, as it is not a physical, printed object that cannot be altered when

finished. If the destination chooses to inform about the area in a physical book, there is a risk that some of the information will be outdated or even incorrect, as some things in the area will very likely change. This can result in the visitor doubting the usefulness of the book, and the experience can be influenced negatively, which is what this thesis aims at avoiding.

Another disadvantage of elaborating physical guides is that it involves material such as paper or ink, which is not free either nor is it sustainable. According to Klima og Miljø, ink costs more than 30.000 Danish Kroner per liter, which means that printing physical guides will not necessarily be much cheaper than designing an app.

Bloomidea, which is a company employing web and mobile developers amongst others (Bloomidea, n.d.), argues that around 95 percent of tourists worldwide use digital devices when searching for the best experiences before, during and after the visit (Bloomidea, 2015). They argue that one of every five people in the world that owns a smartphone spends most of her time on this smartphone using different apps, which could suggest that designing a visitor app for the city of Frederikshavn could be beneficial, as they spend so much time on using digital devices and apps.

Additionally, the company argues that having a visitor app can actually improve the visitors' experience, as smartphone owners actually use apps to improve it. By having the opportunity to access these types of apps, the visitor is able to for instance promote local products and services, which allows companies to improve or change products or services in return. By using an app, the visitor is allowed to discover places that has interests to them such as museums, shops or restaurants just by using the phone, which is often brought along anyway (Bloomidea, 2015).

Another advantage of creating an app is that all kinds of information can be included in an app about a unique area and what this certain area has to offer. In this way, the destination will not only be more visible, it will also have the opportunity of increasing the number of visitors based on this visibility, and it will furthermore come across as a dynamic and modern destination which is able to meet the needs of its consumers in the shape of a platform that provides easy access to information (Bloomidea, 2015).

The author of this thesis acknowledges the costs of creating an app, and is aware that it is not something that can be developed for free or overnight. However, as tourists spend a lot of time on their smartphones or other digital devices searching for information, it is still argued that the app is the most advantageous way to go as it:

1) eliminates the usage of materials such as paper or ink,

2) improves the visitor's experience, for example by providing the opportunity to promote products and services and to discover places of interest

3) allows the company or destination to receive more visibility and appear more dynamic and modern to consumers

Based on this information, the author claims that there are more advantages of designing a tourist app than there are disadvantages. She therefore has confidence to proceed to investigate how the visitor app can be developed and what content it should contain. The following section explains the structure of this thesis.

1.3. The thesis structure

In this section, the structure and the content of this thesis will be clarified.

Firstly, it is important to stress that the introduction functions both as a foretaste of what will be clarified in this thesis, but it also explains the gravity of the problem and why it is important for destinations to continuously work on creating memorable and positive experiences for their tourists. The section about the case has presented the case chosen for the thesis, and the following section about the rationale behind the app has explained why the app is the most beneficial way of enhancing the visitor experience.

The following chapter about methodology and methods will account for the stance taken in this thesis and how this particular stance will influence the thesis. Afterwards the concept of *hermeneutics* is included to understand and explain the process through which the researcher is able to obtain more profound understanding. After this process has been described, the data collection process will be illuminated, and the method for data collection, interviews, will be clarified along with arguments why this particular method is suitable for discovering the most valuable findings for this thesis.

After the methodological part of the project has been presented, the theory used in order to answer the problem formulation will be introduced. This part consists of theory about co-creation, digital tourism, experiences, tourist motivation and expectations and satisfaction, and their usefulness for this thesis will be explained.

After the theoretical framework has been presented, the structure of the interview will be presented with the questions used in order to obtain data that can be used to answer the problem formulation.

The last point before the conclusion will be the analysis through which the data will be analyzed and discussed.

Lastly the thesis will present a conclusion, which serves both as closure to the thesis but also as the part that summarizes and explains the aspects of the thesis that have the most relevance for the entire work whilst answering the problem formulating as simple as possible. The thesis content and the approach of investigation will be clarified in the following chapter containing the methodology.

2. Methodology and methods

This chapter aims at clarifying the philosophy of science behind the research of this thesis. After this has been explained, the methods and process behind data collection will be elaborated, and it will be explained how the data aids in making a thorough analysis with the objective of finding solutions to the problem.

2.1. Knowledge creation and tourism

The purpose of this thesis is, among other things, to examine, clarify and analyze the constructions of visitors of Frederikshavn in order to be able to present an analysis which can answer the problem formulation adequately and thereby create new knowledge within this specific field of tourism. Firstly, it is of great importance to stress that it is necessary to know what to research, and in that connection, it is essential to have theories to guide the study undertaken by the researcher, which can function as a guide for the research (Wenneberg, 2000, p. 35).

The same notion is reflected in Thomas Kuhn's ideas about paradigms, which can be described as the core guidelines of the study in the sense that the paradigm will create the frames in which the knowledge creation must take place within (Wenneberg, 2000, p. 35). This means that the paradigm is the basic belief system. However, when it comes to knowledge creation within the field of tourism it may not be simple, as the study of tourism is a very multifaceted and embraces many aspects of society such as economic, cultural and historic aspects, and, therefore, many subjects are integrated in tourism at once (Personal Social and Humanities Education, 2013, p. 11). This means that only applying a few different theoretical approaches when studying tourism related phenomena may not be the best way to undertake the research as this is not the best way of underpinning or show consideration for this multifaceted nature of tourism. On the other hand, a combination of different theories and ways to undertake the research may be more suitable when working with tourism. This means

that the author of this thesis will attempt at including various theoretical approaches in order to elaborate as adequate an analysis as possible.

If taking a closer look at a paradigm, the researcher will notice that it is based on ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions behind research. Consequently, it is a set of basic beliefs within the researcher which reflects a worldview that expresses the researcher's nature of reality and this person's relationship to this reality (Guba & Lincoln, Competing paradigms in qualitative research, 1994, p. 107). However, it is not possible to verify or falsify the truthfulness of these beliefs (Guba & Lincoln, Competing paradigms in qualitative research, 1994, p. 109). Therefore, not only one, but several different paradigms clarifying different worldviews have been suggested. Examples of different paradigms are elaborated by Egon G. Guba in his book *The Paradigm Dialog,* 1990, and others have been elaborated by Alan Bryman in his book *Social Research Methods,* 2001. The paradigm behind this thesis has emerged from the definition of paradigms by Guba and it will be explained in the following section presented after the following paragraph.

It is important for researchers in any research process to consider their paradigm, since these different paradigms have unique ideas about common sense in order to obtain a specific purpose, the research process and, consequently, the outcome of the research. These are dependent on in the ontology and the epistemology integrated in the certain paradigm, and they influence the research design. Researchers must be aware of the differences it makes to work with a particular paradigm instead of not another, and how they fit the purpose that they are trying to fulfil (Bryman 2016, 30). It is, as such, the paradigm from which the researcher sees through that defines what good research is, and how she must relate to the research undertaken. The paradigm of this thesis is *constructivism*, which will be elaborated later in this thesis. Consequently, the ontology is relativistic, and the epistemology is subjective. What the ontological and epistemological stances mean for this thesis will be explained presently.

2.2. The basic belief behind the thesis

The basic belief behind the constructivism paradigm, which is implied in this thesis, is that reality exists only in the mind of the holder, and therefore there can never be any agreement upon how things really are or really work. Each individual holds unique constructions meaning that inquiry can never be value free, as the researcher holds her own as well. Since no "real" world pre-exists, reality is best regarded as results of different versions of human interpretations or constructions. This means that constructivist are advocates of the idea that knowledge is something that is to be constructed (Lincoln,

1990, p. 84) rather than something that can be discovered by mind (Wang, 1999, p. 354). This means that there is no right or wrong way to view things, as every individual will experience things and interpret them in their own way. This also means that when addressing for instance data or a case it is essential to keep in mind that every case is different, and therefore, it is never possible to generalize findings based on one case to another as every case is unique.

However, it must be emphasized that even though people have unique constructions, some constructions may be shared by more individuals, as the assemblage of signs and symbols and of meanings of which this assemblage is included may be shared by two or even more individuals (Guba & Lincoln, The Constructivist Credo, 2013, p. 52). This means that people are unique, as they have several constructions, but some of these might be shared by another person, while other of these constructions are shared by another person. However, even though these "general" or shared constructions exist they cannot be labeled as true, but it does increase the certainty that they can be used for sense-making (Guba & Lincoln, The Constructivist Credo, 2013, p. 54) (Guba & Lincoln, Competing paradigms in qualitative research, 1994, pp. 110-111).

Furthermore, constructivism considers social phenomena and their meanings as something that are continually being carried out by and between social actors. They are produced and formed by social interactions, and they can at all times be altered or revised. From the position of constructivism, culture can be seen as: "an emergent reality in constant construction and reconstruction," (Klakegg, 2015, p. 64). There are no set of cultural understandings from which it is possible to extract completely applicable solutions to any problem. The constructivist paradigm questions whether any truth actually exists (Klakegg, 2015, p. 64), meaning that this thesis does not seek a truth in that sense, but it seeks to look into visitors of Frederikshavns' constructions.

This thesis seeks to obtain valuable empirical data which will be used to find out if a tourist app is needed, and what kind of content should be included in the app in order to enhance the tourists of Frederikshavns interviewed for this thesis' experiences. In accordance with the constructivist paradigm, different tourists' opinions and constructions will be studied during the process of data collection, and these will be used in answering the problem formulation. The constructions and opinions will be discovered during interviews, which will be conducted with tourists who are visiting or has visited the city of Frederikshavn. Through the process of conducting the interviews, the researcher will engage in a co-creation process with the visitors from which she, together with the visitor, will be able to generate ideas and suggestions for the app by examining the preferences and opinions of

these visitors. The notion of shared constructions will be kept in mind when looking at the interviewees' opinions. This is kept in mind as some of the interviewees might have similar opinions about some of the things that they are asked to explain about, and it is important to keep in mind that people are still individuals, even though they share some opinions with other. Furthermore, it is included, as it is important to underpin that even though the author of this thesis acknowledges that people are unique individuals, it is still possible to have shared constructions. The basic beliefs behind the thesis will be explained more thoroughly in the following section.

2.3. The ontology and epistemology behind this thesis

It is crucial for any research process that the researcher is aware of his or her choices of position regarding a) the relation between theory and practice, b) the relation between research and knowledge, *epistemology* (theory of knowledge) and lastly, c) *ontology* (how things really are or really works) (Klakegg, 2015, pp. 57-58). Based on these considerations, several ground rules must be followed, as it was mentioned earlier. The ideas behind the paradigm constructivism will be elaborated further in the following.

Ontology concerns assumptions and ideas about reality and what can be known about it (Guba & Lincoln, Competing paradigms in qualitative research, 1994, p. 108). An important point about the matter of ontology is that the researcher's position towards this issue will influence how the problem formulation is formulated, and which methods should be used in order to answer it (Klakegg, 2015, p. 64). For instance, if a problem formulation is developed from the perspective of an objectivist, focus will often be on formal dimensions of an organization such as beliefs or values, where a constructivist, on the other hand, will focus on the active participation of people in reality constructions, as social phenomena is something that is produced between social actors with meanings and opinions (Klakegg, 2015, p. 64), as it was explained earlier. This means that the researcher of this thesis will include visitors of Frederikshavn in order to be able to understand their constructions, as she acknowledges that she must engage in interacting with the visitor in order to investigate and understand his or her constructions the best. The researcher claims that she will understand and gain the most profound insight in these constructions through this interaction as it will allow the visitors to elaborate their constructions. This will be explained in more detail later.

Taking a relativistic ontological position implies that the researcher dismisses the idea of a true reality, since various subjective constructions reflecting peoples' ideas of reality exists (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003, p. 13) (Guba & Lincoln, Competing paradigms in qualitative research, 1994, p. 109). Therefore,

the researcher must be aware that not two constructs are similar, and, consequently, the research process must be designed with consideration to these differences in order to obtain valid results. Additionally, since constructivists are advocates of this relativistic ontology, they regard research as a process that can only be successful if it involves subjective interaction with the subject of the inquiry. According to constructivism, subjectivity is necessary as it is: "(…) the only means of unlocking the constructions held by individuals," (Guba, The Alternative Paradigm Dialog, 1990, p. 26). The researcher must acknowledge that these different constructions exist in order to be able to access and understand them. The idea that every individual has its own constructions implies that the researcher likewise has his or her own "reality", and therefore, epistemologically, constructivists choose to dismiss the ideas about objectivism supported by positivists (Guba, The Alternative Paradigm Dialog, 1990, p. 20). In other words: research can never be objective as the researcher herself has her own reality which will influence the process and, eventually, the outcome of the process.

In this thesis, a relativistic ontology is adopted embracing the belief that multiple ideas about reality exist. This implies that there are various ideas about how things are, and these are all accepted as real knowledge, as it is acknowledged that people are unique and experience and interpret things in their own way. This means, that when doing an interview with for instance tourists, it is important to show consideration for all the different constructions and accept that it might not be possible to get the same findings twice. However, even though this might be the case, it can be argued, that it can still be possible to obtain valid results when keeping in mind, that people have different assumptions about reality. Additionally, the findings obtained later in the process of writing this thesis will be influenced by people (very likely with different assumptions of reality), and therefore it is very probable that the author of this thesis will encounter different versions of knowledge or different realities as well. Furthermore, the researcher is aware that her own constructions will influence the process and the outcome of the process, as she cannot be objective. This will be explained further in the section 5.4 *Quality of the research.*

When approaching research from a relativistic perspective, it is implied that the researcher will play an active role in the process and influence the process, since the epistemology is subjectivism. In that way, it is possible for the researcher to create and extract knowledge and insight concurrently.

Epistemology, on the other hand, concerns the nature of reality and how the researcher relates herself to the research undertaken (Guba, The Alternative Paradigm Dialog, 1990, p. 18). It is intertwined with the ontology, as the ontology controls which epistemological stance the researcher takes (Foard,

Henn, & Weinstein, 2006, p. 17). Furthermore, as the researcher acknowledges her own subjective participation in the process, the researcher will engage in interaction with visitors of Frederikshavn in order to obtain knowledge.

In this thesis, the subjective epistemology implies that the author acknowledges that she cannot approach the research with objectivity, since her own constructions will influence the process of collecting and analysing data. The researcher herself selects what is investigated and how it is investigated, and therefore she plays an active role and influences the structure of the process and the outcome as well. For instance, it is the researcher who decides, which methods is used to gather the empirical data, and in this thesis, it is the researcher who formulates the questions for the interviewees. This will be elaborated later. The following section concerns hermeneutics, and it will explain how the process of interpretation is carried out in this thesis.

2.4. Hermeneutics

Hermeneutics is a term which means to interpret (Regan, 2012, p. 288). Hermeneutical research implies systematic reflection upon questions about the nature of interpretation: "Additionally, hermeneutical inquiry involves systematic reflection on questions about the very nature of interpretation: What it interpretation? What makes one interpretation better or more correct than another? What it the proper scope of interpretative inquiry? (…)" (Topper, 2011, p. 2). How the researcher relates to these questions will shape the researcher's conception of hermeneutics. When this is said, it is important to stress, that when attempting to interpret or understand an individual, it is necessary to begin by understanding her self-understandings and self-interpretations. Not until this has been understood, the researcher can point out what is in need of being explained. Therefore, when the interviews are being planned, questions elaborating on the respondents' demands and latent wishes will be developed. Additionally, self-interpretation very much influences human and social reality, and these tend to change over time and vary across different cultures (Topper, 2011, pp. 3-5), meaning that the author of this thesis' self-interpretation not might not be similar to the one she will have years from now or if she had a different cultural background. This means that if these factors (time and culture) had been different, the output of the thesis could have been different as well as the author's self-interpretation would have been different and thereby it would have shaped the structure in another way. With this in mind, the author claims that these factors play a central role when interpreting.

Hermeneuticists argue that if an adequate interpretation of the meaning of sense of any text is sought for, an analysis of a circular kind in a double sense must be undertaken. Firstly, when attempting to determine the meaning of a text, the reader must undergo a process of moving back and forth between reading only parts of the text and the text as a whole with the parts being read in lights of having read the whole and the other way around. Additionally, both the individual parts of the text and the text as a whole must be placed within a certain context or situation (Topper, 2011, p. 4), as it will be described shortly later. Therefore, the entire process is holistic as well as it is circular. It is not possible in any way to take a standpoint outside the circle and understand the meaning of a single part of a text or the text as a whole. However, it is important to stress that even though the standards for assessing interpretations might seem subjective in many ways, that is not necessarily the case. The reason for that is that when dealing with individual constructions or beliefs, it is not possible to understand those without placing them in a certain background of publicly available "intersubjective" meanings upon which the interpretations are made with reference to the researcher's subjective pre-understandings. Only by acknowledging that these the beliefs must be placed within these backgrounds, it is possible to evaluate the adequacy of any interpretation (Topper, 2011, p. 4).

Additionally, the process of interpreting implies a movement within what is referred to as *the hermeneutical circle* (Topper, 2011, p. 4). This process is also called *the hermeneutical spiral* (Motahari, 2007, p. 106)*,* and this way of addressing the phenomenon, is most suitable for this thesis, as the author believes that the process explained shortly happens within a circle reaching the same point over and over again. The process rather moves in a spiral moving upwards, when the researcher obtains a higher or more profound level of understanding of the situation studied. Furthermore, as the text *The Hermeneutical Circle or the Hermeneutical Spiral?* argues, it may be more suitable to refer to it as a spiral as: "the process of understanding is neither circular nor linear," (Motahari, 2007, p. 106). The process is not circular, as when moving from part to whole, the interpreter will eventually return to the same understanding of a certain part as she did before the beginning of the process. On the other hand, it is not linear either, as: "we do return to the part in one respect or another, although not to the exact point of departure," (Motahari, 2007, p. 106). It is only necessary to return to the starting point, if someone cannot figure out what a certain sentence means. If that is the case, the interpreter will be "caught" in a circle (Motahari, 2007, p. 106), not being able to move upwards towards a more profound understanding.

According to the German philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer, it is necessary that the interpreter have an understanding of her own presupposition before being able to understand the problem or situation

in question (Regan, 2012, p. 295). Gadamer argues that the presupposition is a good starting point to influence the hermeneutical spiral, as it is the basis of a temporal judgement which the interpreter is aware of before all the parts of the text or the situation, and before the subject has been finally studied (Regan, 2012, p. 296). He suggests that understanding is influenced to a high extent of the interpreter's self-understanding. Therefore, it is necessary for the interpreter to be aware of and acknowledge that she has these pre-understandings or prejudice, and that she has her own bias, which will influence the outcome of how something will be interpreted or understood. This means that an issue can occur when attempting to interpret a certain text or situation, as the interpreter is not always able to understand her own expectations about parts of the text or situation and what these mean to the whole of the meaning. However, if the interpreter is aware of these things, the meaning will eventually become clearer, and the understanding will become more profound (Regan, 2012, p. 296).
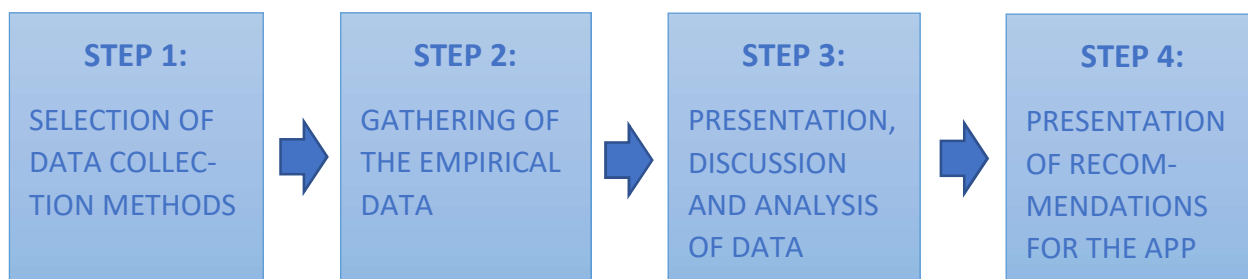
The notion of interpretation as a process influenced by the researcher's own pre-understanding is of great importance for this thesis. It clarifies why it is important for the researcher to be aware of these pre-understandings, whilst it explains that acknowledging the existence of pre-understanding(s) entails that the interpreter can never be completely objective when attempting to interpret something, which corresponds well with the stance taken by constructivists. The notion of the hermeneutical spiral is included as is explains the process the researcher has and will go through during the journey of moving from her own pre- understanding towards a more profound understanding. This will be further elaborated in the section 5.4. *Quality of the research*.

2.5. Gathering and processing empirical data

This section will introduce and explain the process of collecting and processing the empirical data with the objective of reaching a more profound understanding of the subject and being able to answer the problem formulation in an adequate manner.

When undertaking this kind of research, it is important to understand and emphasize that approaching research from one specific paradigm does not necessarily preclude the possibility of using certain methods. However, some methods are better suited for certain paradigms (Seale, Gobo, & et.al., 2007, p. 283). This thesis embraces qualitative methods, as they provide the possibility of collecting the data necessary in order to answer the problem formulation and work through the process from a constructivist point of view. Furthermore, this thesis only seeks to discover solutions that should be applied for a specific case (Frederikshavn), meaning that ability of generalizing the findings to other cities is not sought for.

The results found by using the qualitative method will provide examples of different constructions amongst interviewees and find out what these particular tourists desire from a touristic app and how it can be possible to motivate them to use it. The process is explained in the model below:

STEP 1:		STEP 2:		STEP 3:		STEP 4:
SELECTION OF DATA COLLEC-TION METHODS	→	GATHERING OF THE EMPIRICAL DATA	→	PRESENTATION, DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA	→	PRESENTATION OF RECOM-MENDATIONS FOR THE APP

Model 1: Illustrates the process through which the data is gathered and processed. The model is developed by the author of this thesis.

Firstly, it is important to emphasize that the analysis made in this thesis will depend highly on the data collection method and the process, as the data collected will determine what the analysis will present. As it has been mentioned earlier, the method of data collection chosen for this thesis is conducting interviews, and these will clarify 1) what visitors of Frederikshavn interviewed for this thesis expect of a touristic app containing information about the city of Frederikshavn, 2) how they can be motivated to use such an app, and 3) which factors they consider contributing to creating a satisfactory overall visitor experience in Frederikshavn. In a sense, the first and the third part of the interview seem somehow similar, having to do with finding out what kind of information and features should be included in the app according to these visitors.

However, the intention with the first part of the interview is to find out what is a *must* to include in the app, and the third part will, hopefully, clarify what can be included in the app as "something else" besides just the necessary content. This can be explained by including the *Kano model*, which is a tool that can be used to estimate what can create satisfaction or dissatisfaction for the consumer. In that connection, the book *International markedsføring* by Finn Rolighed Andersen et al. explains that a product can include features that has different values for the consumer. For instance, there is the *must be,* which is a feature that is taken for granted by the consumer. The must be does not create satisfaction as such, since it is expected to be included in the product. However, if the product lacks any of the must be features expected of product, it will very likely create dissatisfaction (Andersen, Jensen, Jepsen, Olsen, & Schmalz, 2012, pp. 40-41).

While undertaking the first part of the interview regarding what visitors of the interviews expect of the app, these considerations about a must be will be kept in mind in order to accommodate the expectations of the tourists and avoid dissatisfaction with the app, as must be is the aspects of the content that need to be present.

The model furthermore mentions the *more is better,* which is a category of the product's features that makes the consumer's level of satisfaction increase, while providing the customer with more and more product details. The Kano model additionally include a category named *delighters,* which can be described as something that leaves the consumer with a feeling of having had a positive experience with the product. However, if this aspect is not present in a product, it does not make the consumer feel dissatisfied in any manner, as it is something extra (Andersen, Jensen, Jepsen, Olsen, & Schmalz, 2012, p. 41). The notion of this Kano model category will very likely influence the output of the interview regarding the tourists' level of motivation towards using the app. The idea is that the tourists could be motivated to use the app not only because it is practical, but also because it has features that actually have other benefits as well. For example, if some tourists do not feel motivated to use the app solely with the objective of gaining knowledge about the destination to be visited, there might be other approaches to take in order to motivate these tourists to use it. One of these approaches could be to try to create extrinsic motivation, which could be caused by a financial gain (Fontrodona, 2013). In this way, the framework by Kano will be included as a way of ensuring that the respondents of the interviews will be asked what can make them use the app and what must be there in order for them to be satisfied with it. This will be further elaborated in the section about tourists and motivation.

After the data has been collected, an analysis will be conducted on basis of the results, and content for the app will be suggested. It is of great importance to emphasize and make sure during the process of creating the questions for the interviews, to ensure that the interviews will not only focus on shedding light on the features that the app should include. It must be kept in mind during the process, that it is equally important to make sure that a focus is kept on finding out how the tourists can have as satisfactory experiences when visiting the city of Frederikshavn as possible, and in that way, there are an objective of enhancing the visitor experience within the objective of generating ideas for the content of the app.

In accordance with the information provided in the methodology chapter, the research to be conducted during the development of this thesis will illuminate that individuals have different constructions, as it was mentioned earlier, and it should clarify what the interviewees expect and would appreciate in

such an app in order to enhance the visitor experience. The following section will account for the method used in order to undertake the research and answer the problem formulation in an adequate manner.

2.6. Qualitative inquiry

For the researcher to be able to obtain data that is useful for this thesis in order to be able to undertake the analysis, the qualitative method has been chosen. In the following paragraphs, the qualitative method and its meaning for this thesis will be described and clarified. The author of this thesis' understanding of the method is partially based on the book *Doing Interviews,* written by Steinar Kvale in 2007 and the book *Humanistisk Videnskabsteori* written by Finn Collin and Simo Køppe from 2012.

The qualitative method has existed since the beginning of the 1900's (Collin & Køppe, 2012, p. 278). Qualitative research can be described as any kind of research that excludes the use of statistics or any other types of quantification as the main source behind empirical results in studies (Collin & Køppe, 2012, pp. 279-280). In other words, it has to do with words instead of numbers, and it involves the use of induction and studying and reaching a meaning rather than simply studying behavior (Bryman, 2016, pp. 375,626). Qualitative studies often rely on inductive reasoning processes when seeking to interpret meanings deriving from data. When categorizing research as qualitative, an important step is to distinguish inductive research processes from the deductive processes. Roughly speaking, inductive research makes use of data to generate ideas (hypotheses), whilst deductive research starts with the idea and makes use of it in order to verify or falsify the idea (hypothesis-testing) (Thorne, 2000, p. 68). However, it can be argued that qualitative methods are not necessarily directly opposites of quantitative methods, as qualitative research too contains elements of a qualitative nature, since it makes use of both interpretation and qualitative procedures (Collin & Køppe, 2012, pp. 279-280).

The qualitative approaches used in this thesis have been chosen as the thesis takes its point of departure in the case of the city of Frederikshavn, and it is not the objective of this thesis to make generalizations. This means that the findings obtained for this thesis and for the app for the city of Frederikshavn will not be used as findings that can be applied on other cases. The aim of the process is to understand and clarify the constructions of interviewees selected later. As Guba and Lincoln explains it: "Qualitative data, it is asserted, can provide rich insight into human behaviour," (Guba & Lincoln, Competing paradigms in qualitative research, 1994, p. 106), which suggests that the method is useful for the investigation in this thesis.

The analysis that will be conducted later in this thesis will reflect how the qualitative approaches have been used instead of methods of a quantitative nature. The analysis will not consist of numbers and percentages, but it will consist of suggestions and opinions based on visitors of Frederikshavns' constructions. These suggestions and ideas, the author claims, will be useful for other visitors in Frederikshavn who have similar wishes and preferences as well. The qualitative approach in this thesis makes use of the inductive process, which means that the conclusions reached in this thesis are based on findings, whilst the deductive approaches uses findings to support a certain conclusion (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003, p. 14). The problem formulation focuses on finding out how it is possible to include visitors of a destination in the process of designing this app that can hopefully be used to enhance the experiences the visitors have when visiting that destination. In a sense, the question consists of two main areas of focus; finding out *how* these visitors can be included and *what* should be included in the app in order for it to be able to enhance these experiences. It is expected, that during the process of gathering and interpreting the data, a more profound understanding will be reached.

As it appears from what has been explained above, this thesis makes use of the qualitative methods. This is, as the thesis is influenced by the constructivist paradigm, and therefore, as it has been argued previously, it is acknowledged that every person is a unique individual that must be studied one at a time. As the quantitative methods seek to gather numerical data, these are close to impossible to use in order to shed light on human constructions, and therefore, this method has been deselected. This will be further explained in the section *Reflections on the thesis and its' findings*.

The qualitative method is used to gather data that can be used in order to answer the problem formulation, as this thesis seeks to shed light on the constructs of the research subjects. It is chosen as it allows the researcher to get an insight in the respondents' subjective constructions and opinions which is in line with the notion of the constructivist paradigm that people are unique. The book *Understanding Tourism* by Kevin Hannam and Dan Knox argues that qualitative research strategies are highly based on interpretation, meaning that the researcher will always influence the process as she has her own understanding of the world, and as she will interpret what she experiences in her own way (Hannam & Knox, 2010, p. 180). However, by using the qualitative strategies the researcher acknowledges and accepts that it is impossible to stay objective when undertaking research, which is consistent with the paradigm influencing this thesis.

Furthermore, it is chosen, as there is no fixed method for doing an interview, and therefore, the researcher is allowed to shape the inquiry (Kvale, 2007, p. 90).

2.7. Interviews

This thesis will obtain and analyze primary data. Primary data is also referred to as an "empirical material collection", and it has to do with material that is collected by a researcher directly from the subject(s) studied, participants of a study/ text units which are associated with the aspects of tourism that are being researched (Hansen, 2014). It must be stressed that it is not necessarily possible to label data primary or secondary data based on the type of data per se, as some theorists attempt to do it. However, it seems more relevant to label the data based on *how* these are obtained instead (Hansen, 2014). Based on this knowledge, the data in this thesis is labeled as primary data; not based on its genre, but on the fact that it will be collected by the author of this thesis, and as it stems directly from the subjects studied.

It is argued by Steinar Kvale that during an interview, knowledge is constructed in the interaction between the researcher and the interviewee (Kvale, 2007, p. 3). This is in accordance with the constructivist paradigm. Kvale argues that the purpose of a qualitative interview can be of either explorative or hypothesis-testing character. When doing an explorative interview, the researcher seeks to gain information about a certain topic, and these types of interviews is often only a little structured. The other kind of interview, on the other hand, has an objective of testing a certain hypothesis, and these kinds of interviews are often more structured than those of an explorative kind (Kvale, 2007, p. 38). The interviews conducted for this thesis will be of an explorative kind, as the objective of the interviews will be to study the constructions of the interviewees without on beforehand formulating hypotheses or possible answers for interviewees to choose from.

As the interviews will be of an explorative kind, the interviews will not be very structured, but they will be guided by the three parts of the interview, which were presented in the section 2.5. *Gathering and processing empirical data.* The reason why the interviews will not be very structured, is that it is important that the respondents are allowed to elaborate their answers, so it is possible to understand their opinions which is in accordance with constructivism. Questions for the interviews will be elaborated so they will be exploratory and seek for the respondents' opinions and not in a way where the respondents will not be allowed to elaborate answers and thereby give insight in their constructions.

2.8. Analyzing empirical data

This section will explain how the data will actually be analyzed.

According to Steinar Kvale, different methods for analyzing interview data exist (Kvale, 2007, p. 103). In this thesis Steinar Kvale's ideas about *meaning interpretation* is the approach that will be used. Meaning interpretation has to do with elaborating the words used by respondents and extracting meaning behind these words (Kvale, 2007, pp. 107-109). Typically, by using the approach, the researcher focuses on particular quotes and finds meaning from that (Kvale, 2007, p. 109). Using this approach means that the researcher behind this thesis will pay attention to what is said by the respondents of the interview, as well as she will pay attention to what is left out, and how these things influence the meaning. This means that the author will not only look at what is obvious, but she well read between the lines as well.

In addition to the above-mentioned it is important to stress that the ideas about meaning understanding is very important to this thesis as the opinions that the respondents share with the researcher is what provide the basis for the suggestions presented in the analysis.

The approach is connected to hermeneutics, as meaning is only discovered by gaining an understanding in the respondents' opinions (Kvale, 2007, p. 197). By investigating the respondents' opinions and attitudes it is possible to verify or falsify the researcher's pre-understandings, for instance the one that the visitors would be interested in a visitor app, and whether the theories presented are in accordance with what will be discovered after having conducted the interviews, and in during that process the hermeneutical spiral movement will be carried out providing the researcher with a more profound insight.

3. Theoretical framework

The following sections constitute the theoretical framework of this thesis upon which the analysis will be shaped by. The theoretical framework will consist of theory about co-creation, digital tourism, experiences, tourist motivation, and lastly, expectations and satisfaction. These specific theoretical approaches have been chosen for this research, as the author of this thesis believes that they can aid in creating an adequate and useful analysis and in answering: "*how is it possible to develop content for a tourist app for visitors of the city of Frederikshavn with the objective of enhancing the visitor experience,*" (problem formulation, red.) and: "*what kind of content should it contain?*" (problem

formulation, red.). Co-creation is a useful concept for this thesis, as it explains how it is possible to create and extract knowledge and ideas through engaging in a dialogue with the user and, thereby, gain competitive advantage. By using co-creation, the researcher behind this thesis is able to investigate the visitors of Frederikshavn interviewed for this thesis' preferences and use these in order to create valuable suggestions for the app. It is then used to explain how it is possible to develop the content and, through the process of co-creating, investigate what should be included in the app. Digital tourism will be included in connection to the claim that tourists have become more digital and order to explain how digital solutions can enhance the tourist experience, which is also the aim of this thesis. The theory about digital tourism will then be used in order to understand and explain why it is important for destinations to provide digital solutions, in this case, for information searching in relation with traveling to Frederikshavn. Theory about experiences will be included in order to explain why it is important to focus on the individual and in order to explain the stages the tourist goes through before, during and after searching for information about a destination. Lastly, theory about motivation, expectations and satisfaction will be included in order to explain how a person's expectations will influence her level of motivation towards using the app.

After the theory has been presented, the rationale behind including the different theoretical aspects will be clarified further, and the theories will be connected to this thesis.

3.1. Co-creation

As it was stated in the beginning of this thesis, co-creation is a process in which the company enters in a dialog with the consumer. Therefore, the process is not only a process that the consumer gets value from. The company will get insight in the tourists' needs and demands in return, and thereby it will be in a position where it will have a competitive advantage over some other companies (Binkhorst & Dekker, 2009, p. 315).

By using co-creation, the consumer is able to participate in the process of generating their own unique and personal experiences (Binkhorst & Dekker, 2009, p. 314) (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004, pp. 7-8). Co-creation in the tourism industry is increasingly popular, as the tourists wish to not only see for instance a show as a spectator but to engage in the experience, meaning that the tourist wishes to interact with the destination or experience she has on a vacation. In order to create awareness and satisfy consumers it is necessary for companies to know the consumers.

As it was mentioned in the introduction, there has been a shift in the relationship the company has with its consumers. Before the shift, it was the company alone who decided upon all actions and developments, and consumers were not included (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004, p. 6). Prahalad and Ramaswamy advocates for a different practice, namely the one of co-creation. This approach is important to consider, as consumers today desire to co-create value by interacting with the company (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004, p. 6). These types of consumers are typically characterized as: "informed, networked, empowered, and active," (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004, p. 5). Co-creating involves all kinds of interaction between the company and the consumer (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004, pp. 10-11), but what is common for these interactions is that they create and extract value (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004, p. 5).

The ideas of Prahalad and Ramaswamy are very similar to the ones of Hird and Kvistgaard, who argue that tourists should participate in creating their experiences (Hird & Kvistgaard, 2010, p. 40), and who therefore support the idea that the consumer should be included in generating initiatives that can influence the experiences a consumer will have when for instance using a product or visiting a destination. According to Hall and Williams, customers should be seen as an idea bank which holds a lot of innovative ideas that the company can make use of (Hall & Williams, 2008, p. 9), and that is in accordance with the ideas of Prahalad and Ramaswamy as well.

There are various examples of companies who use the approach in the process of developing products or services. For instance, there is the Swedish company, IKEA, which includes the customers in both developing products and in its marketing decision. The company considers co-creating with its customers a main driver for developing innovative products and for staying creative (Mompó, 2014). Another example is the Danish company, LEGO. The company has used the approach for a long time. The way in which this particular company uses it is by allowing the customers to suggest different ideas for creations, and amongst these a winner is found based on which idea has the most votes (the votes come from other customers). The winning creation will then be sold worldwide, and the winner will be rewarded a percentage of the sales. By including the customer in this way, the company is celebrating their loyal customers, and they reward them for participating in the innovation process. (Milbrath, 2016).

In order for the company to be able to ensure co-creation of value, there are four factors that must be considered. These are: *dialogue, access, risk-benefit,* and *transparency.* The first factor concerns the dialogue the company engages in with the consumer. From this the company can gain information

about the specific consumer (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004, p. 11). The company can only enter in a successful dialogue with the consumer, if the consumer has the same access and transparency to information (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004, p. 6). The risk-benefit factor concerns how it is possible for the consumer to assess the risk or the benefit of buying a product or an experience (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004, p. 9).

However, there are risks combined with co-creation as well, the author of the thesis argues. When the company uses the approach, it does not have full control over the outcome of the process, as it will not be able to control the results that the process will bring, and that can damage the company. However, as the book *Co-creating and Well-Being in Tourism* by Antónia Correia, Juergen Gnoth and Metin Kozak argues, it is possible to secure successful co-creation in a tourism context by being open for innovation, new concepts, and new experiences proposed by the customer included in the co-creation process (Correia, Gnoth, & Kozak, 2017, p. 72). This means that when investigating the preferences and ideas of the visitors of Frederikshavn, the researcher must be open towards innovation ideas and suggestions in order to secure as successful a co-creation process as possible.

Even though there are certain risks connected to using co-creation, the author of this thesis holds the opinion that it is highly beneficial when creating a visitor app, as the app will only be useful for the visitors if it contains content that is of their interest or necessary for them in any way. Therefore, it is necessary to investigate what they would prefer to be included.

In this thesis, co-creation is used as a tool that influences the outcome of the analyses, and in order to investigate the needs and opinions of the visitors of Frederikshavn. The way in which the approach will be used in practice is by conducting the interviews where these opinions will be investigated. To explain it in short: co-creation is used in order to explain how it is possible to develop the content of the app in a way that allows the researcher to get an insight in the tourists' preferences and make sure that the ideas for the content will actually be of value for the tourists.

Furthermore, the approach has been used in relation to tourist experiences, as the objective of creating the app is to enhance the experiences the visitors have when visiting the city. Additionally, like it is the case with the IKEA, this thesis seeks to include the consumers in both developing the product (the app), and it seeks to include them in the marketing decisions as well. During the interviews conducted for this thesis, the interviewees will be asked how they would like the app to marketed, meaning that their answers will influence the suggestions for promoting the app which will be presented in the analysis. The reason why the interviewees will be asked this particular question is that it is important

to know how to promote the app so the consumers will come across it; it is necessary to find out which channels should be used as a means of reaching the consumers. If the extent of the thesis would have been larger, theory about promotion would have been included in order to make a more profound analysis and further validate the suggestions regarding the promotion. However, as the promotion of the app is not something that can happen before the app would be actualized, and therefore it is not the most important aspect of the analysis.

By using co-creation as an approach for this thesis, it allows the author to include the visitors of the city in Frederikshavn in order to create content and suggest solutions for the app that are useful for them.

3.2. The digital tourist and digitally enhanced tourism

Another way for destinations to increase their level of competitiveness besides co-creation, in which a company can make use of the technological development in their favor is through the emerging concept of *smart tourism destination* (Jovicic, 2017, p. 5)*. In this case, the word 'smart' is another way of saying 'intelligent', and it emphasizes the smart use of things that are embedded in or enhanced by technology which has the ability of enhancing the tourist experience (Jovicic, 2017, p. 3). Just like it is the aim of co-creation, smart tourism destination is particularly concerned with the opportunities and importance of aiming at enhancing the experience the tourists have when visiting the destination. However, in this case, it is enabled by integrating ICTs (Buhalis, Tussyadiah, & Ziang, 2015, p. 143). The integration of ICTs can also be thought of as the most important aspect of smart destinations (Gretzel, Koo, Sigala, & Xiang, 2015, p. 180). As it was mentioned in the introduction, ICT stands for 'information and communication technologies', and it covers different kinds of technological communication devices. ICT has become very important in any tourism context, as tourism to a very high extent involves information-searching, and it is therefore often dependent on these technologies. The concept of a something being 'smart' is therefore not an unfamiliar or new concept for tourism (Gretzel, Koo, Sigala, & Xiang, 2015, p. 180).
Consequently, ICT is applied when a destination develops an app as is the subject of current thesis.

Additionally, deriving from digital tourism is the concept of *digitally enhanced tourism*. Digitally enhanced tourism is about using the digital possibilities already available in order to try to further improve the quality or the extent of a tourist experience. Not only can the modern technologies make it possible to ease the travel bookings or replace a printed guide with a digital one, but it can actually intensify the entire tourist experience significantly. Digitally enhanced tourism seeks to improve the

tourist experience before, during and after the visit, so it aims at influencing and improving all phases of a visit, and it seeks to treat each visitor as a unique individual with their own needs, interests, goals and expectations of the visit (Benyon, O'Keefe, Quigley, & Riva, 2013, p. 524).

ICT and the concept of smart destination are of great importance for this thesis, as the thesis seeks to enhance the tourist experience, and a way in which it is possible to enhance experiences is by engaging in being a smart tourism destination. Furthermore, as it was mentioned earlier, tourists have become more dependent on technology when making decision about their travels, and therefore it is important for destinations to consider the value and types of technological possibilities for information searching it offers the tourists. Additionally, as the concept of smart tourism destinations has much to do with innovation, the author of this thesis argues that implementing smart tourism destination initiatives is a way in which a destination, like Frederikshavn, can stay competitive and satisfy its visitors.

3.3. Experiences

Experiences are of a subjective character (Hird & Kvistgaard, 2010, p. 44), which means that experiences differ from person to person. Two persons can be involved in the same activity or see the same thing and yet experience it in completely different ways. This is in line with the beliefs of constructivism which suggests that people are unique and have different constructions. A good experience is one that gives the person who experiences something a physical and psychological reaction. In the moment when a person has an experience, the person gains experience, and through this process, the person has gained knowledge as well, and the person has learned something that is new for her (Bouchet, Jantzen, & Vetner, 2011, pp. 26, 41-42). In this way, experiences can be very important for people, as they can gain much from them besides just the experience itself. Furthermore, as experiences differ from person from person, it is very difficult to construct experiences that would be perceived as valuable to the general audience, meaning that it is close to impossible to construct experiences that an entire audience would consider valuable.

When talking about tourism and innovation, it is important to keep in mind that the most tourist products are intangible, and that tourists are not only consuming experiences, but that they are producing them as well simultaneously (Hall & Williams, 2008, pp. 11-12) (Dickson & Ford, 2012, p. 180). This means that tourist experiences cannot exist without including the tourists in some ways, and since the tourists plays a central role in creating the experience, it is important to know their preferences and wishes in order for the experiences to be valuable. Furthermore, as tourists seek

experiences of value, as it was mentioned in the introduction, it is necessary for the destination or company facilitating the experiences to know what these tourists deem valuable. Therefore, it is beneficial to invite the tourists to participate, which is in line with what has been argued previously in this thesis in connection to co-creation (Binkhorst & Dekker, 2009, p. 314). In connection to innovation Binkhorst and Dekker argue that companies have to develop new things in order to satisfy customers, because they will get used to the things that are presented to them (Binkhorst & Dekker, 2009, p. 313), which means that companies must always be creative and innovative.

Additionally, experiences can touch customers more than products or services. However, these are not tangible. They are subjective, and they change constantly, and therefore, they can be difficult to define (Binkhorst & Dekker, 2009, p. 312). From this it can be argued that when having visited a destination, the tourists will more likely remember the experiences than the services, and therefore it is necessary that the tourist has positive experiences at the destination. The experience environment in tourism is made up of all the people and things that surround the human being, meaning many factors influences the tourist experiences at the same time (Binkhorst & Dekker, 2009, p. 319).

The tourist furthermore has an experience network (Binkhorst & Dekker, 2009, p. 315), which changes depending on which stage of the travel the tourists is at. For instance, when the travel decision is made, and the tourist has left her home experience environment, the experience network changes accordingly (Binkhorst & Dekker, 2009, pp. 320-321). These stages can be divided into a *before, during* and *after* stage. The before stage is the one in which the tourist is at her home experience environment. In this stage, the tourist is living her usual 'everyday life', where she is with her family and friends at home. This is before she will search for information about the travel. The during stage is when she anticipates what will happen during the travel, and where she will plan the what to do. At this stage, the tourist will search for information and plan the trip. The last stage, the after stage, is the one where she is away for her home experience environment. The after stage is when the tourist is actually staying at the destination participating in different activities interacting with different people (Binkhorst & Dekker, 2009, pp. 320-321).

In this way of viewing tourism as an experience network, various stakeholders co-create and engage in creating the tourist experience. A network similar to this is complex and immense, as tourists are situated in a world filled different ways of obtaining information such as the internet and mobile phones, travel agencies, guides and so on (Binkhorst & Dekker, 2009, p. 311).

For the work undertaken for this thesis, the during and after phases are of most importance. This is the case, as the thesis seeks to obtain knowledge about what the tourist anticipates and expect from a tourist app and how it can actually be a factor that can contribute in enhancing the experiences they have at Frederikshavn. In that way, the theory about the three phases is not directly used in order to investigate the expectations for the trip or what they are interested at doing while staying at the destination. The author of this thesis is aware that the theory is intended to function as something that explains the stages the tourist go through in connection with traveling. However, the author still claim that it is possible to use aspects of the theoretical considerations in order to explain what they will go through when being introduced for a touristic app and when using it.

The ideas about innovation and that companies must develop new things in order to satisfy the consumers is a great asset to this thesis, as it suggests that the app could be valuable for tourists visiting Frederikshavn as it is a new way for tourists to seek information about this specific city. Furthermore, it suggests that the app should change some of the information presented or some of the functions in order to stay relevant and interesting for its potential users.

3.4. Tourist motivation

The motivations of an individual are the driving-forces behind her decision-making and her actions. During the process of deciding whether a person should for instance use a certain product or not, her motivations will eventually influence the decision she ends up making (Bowen & Clarke, 2009, p. 88) (King, Marshall, Snepenger, & Usyal, 2006, p. 140). This means that the (potential) visitors of Frederikshavn will be influenced by their motivation when deciding whether to use the app or not. The term motivation can be described as the foundation from which it is possible to assess the satisfaction an individual gets from a certain experience (Bowen & Clarke, 2009, p. 88), which means that a person's motivation will influence her satisfaction obtained from an experience.

In this thesis, motivation can be described as factors, both apparent or latent, that influence a visitor to act in a certain way. This way of defining the term is inspired by Clarke and Middleton (2001), who describe motivation as a dynamic process and argue that it has to do with a gap between the felt need and the decision to act (Bowen & Clarke, 2009, p. 88) (King, Marshall, Snepenger, & Usyal, 2006, p. 140). This is important for this thesis, as it seeks to investigate the needs of the visitors of Frederikshavn in order to suggest how to influence their decisions towards using the app.

In order to understand motivation from a social point of view, Aristotle once said that: "man is by nature a social animal," (Fontrodona, 2013, p. 27). This idea is supported by most thinkers. It is something that most individuals have experienced, that human beings cannot exist without other people. Even though people have times, when they need to stay for themselves and reflect upon things in solitude, it is inevitable that they will feel alone eventually and need to co-exist with others again. The reason for this is that we need to relate to other human beings. The only way in which people are able to realize their full potential is by taking part in a social context. However, even though people might seem similar in many ways based on Aristoteles' ideas, people are individuals, and they act for different reasons. This is where motivational theory plays an important role, as it offers different frameworks from which it is possible to explain these varying kinds of motivations (Fontrodona, 2013, p. 27). This is also in accordance with the notions of constructivism that allows for acceptance of different peoples' different meanings.

Roughly speaking, motivation can be divided into three categories. Firstly, there is a category including reasons which are referred to as the *extrinsic reasons*. These reasons have to do with results that are externally obtained. These might be tangible as well as intangible, and they follow human interaction with the environment in which we act. The second category is referred to as the *intrinsic reasons*. These are reasons to act that lie within the individual. It is not possible to obtain rewards from the environment in which we exist, but it is possible from the within the subject for instance by fulfilling a certain goal or engaging in activities we enjoy or acquire skills from. Lastly there is the category which is referred to as the *social reasons*. These are the reactions our actions cause in other people, especially the reactions from those people with whom we interact. This category looks at the environment, like the extrinsic reasons do as well, but this category is more preoccupied with people rather than tangible things (Fontrodona, 2013, p. 28). This means that a person and her opinions are very much able to influence other people with who this person interacts and their opinions as well.

Most actions are caused by a mixture of all three types of reasons (Fontrodona, 2013, p. 28), which means that when wanting to motivate an individual to act in a certain way, it is beneficial to speak to all three types of the motivational categories at the same time. The suggests that the recommendations for the content of the app not merely will be based on the respondents' answers but very likely also on the theoretical knowledge. This is, the author claims, as the thesis seeks to investigate how to influence tourists to use the app. In that regard, motivational theory will be used in order to explain and understand what can be driving forces behind the respondents' motivation towards using the app.

The purpose of that is to investigate how it can be possible to influence (potential) visitors to use the app.

The considerations about motivational factors are important for this thesis as they explain how it is a person's motivation that ends up controlling how this person will act. This means that it is important for the author of this thesis to be aware of the importance of elaborating content for the app that contain features which have a motivational effect on people, as it is the motivation that will influence their attitudes towards the app and their willingness to use it. Furthermore, it brings awareness to the fact that people might have both apparent and latent needs, and that it is important to investigate both types in order to influence the visitors' actions.

Furthermore, the theory about the three categories of motivation explains the different types of motivational reasons, and that it is important to try to speak to all three in order to influence the visitor to act in a certain way. The theory about these three categories will influence the process of conducting the interviews, as the author of this thesis is now aware that these exist. She will, as a consequence, pay much attention when the tourists will explain what can motivate them to use the app, as she will relate the respondents' answers to the three categories later on if possible.

3.5 Expectations and satisfaction

Satisfaction can be described as a: "cognitive and affective reaction to a prior consumption experience," (Coltman, Dolnicar, & Sharma, 2015, p. 152). This quotation emphasizes that satisfaction will entail some kind of reaction. It is necessary to investigate the expectations a visitor has for the app, as the expectations will eventually influence this visitor's satisfaction with the particular app. Furthermore, like it is the case with the author of this thesis, the tourists will very likely have pre-understandings of apps based on their prior experiences, and these will influence the expectations towards the tourist app. These expectations may not be about the particular content of the app, as the tourists might not have come across any tourist apps before, but they might be about the design of the app, as they may have preferences based on having used other apps. These expectations will, eventually, influence the tourist's motivation regarding using the app, and this can be explained by the model below:

PRE-UNDERSTANDING	→	EXPECTATIONS	→	SATISFACTION/ DIS-SATISFACTION

Model 2: Illustrates a process which is a determining factor in influencing a person's level of satisfaction with something. It shows how a person goes from having certain pre-understandings and expectations towards something to being either satisfied or dissatisfied with it. The model is developed by the author of this thesis.

In connection to visitor expectations, Oliver suggests that a guest has expectations before a visit, and after this visit, the visitor will compare these expectation to what she has actually experienced during the visit. If the experiences are valuable and better than the expectations suggested they would be, the guest will be most satisfied, and she will be more inclined to consider re-visiting the destination (Uysal & Yoon, 2005, p. 47). These considerations clarify why it is important to understand the visitors' expectations towards the app, as these will influence whether her attitude towards the app will be positive or negative. If the app does not live up to her expectations, she will, according to Uysal and Yoon, be less inclined to keep using the app, as it will be dissatisfactory for her.

According to Pizam and Milman, one of the central aspects of tourism is to investigate the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of the visitor, as it influences whether the visitor in inclined to return to a destination or not (Pizam & Milman, 1993, p. 197) (Uysal & Yoon, 2005, p. 46). Furthermore, if a visitor is satisfied, she is more inclined to return. This means that it is very important for this thesis to find out what the visitor expect from the app in order to avoid the risk of her not wanting to use it. Furthermore, as the author of this thesis argues that the visitor experience will be enhanced by introducing a touristic app, the visitors will likewise be more inclined to return to Frederikshavn, as she will be more pleased with the stay if it is aided or supported by such a technological solution. However, it is important to mention that there are types of tourists who will not return to a destination, even though they have had satisfactory experiences there. This is because they simply crave new experiences (Alegre & Juaneda, 2006, p. 684). However, these aim here is still to try to influence the experiences positively and increase the possibility of visitors returning.

The rationale behind the choice of including motivational theory and theory about expectations and satisfaction in this thesis is that it is necessary to understand that there are different reasons behind being motivated to act in a certain way and what these reasons might be. It is necessary for the author of this thesis to be aware that something that influences one visitor may not influence another. This is as people are different and have different perceptions about reality. Theory about expectation is

included at it is inevitable to investigate when evaluating if something will be satisfactory or not. It is necessary to know what the visitors expect from the app in order to elaborate the content for it and in order to know if it will be satisfactory for the visitor. Even though the visitor theory presented in this thesis concerns tourists' expectations for and satisfaction with a visit, the author claims that the same theory can be applied to describe their behavior in connection to the app, as the same process will determine whether they will be satisfied or dissatisfied with the app.

The following chapter will explain how the questions will be formulated, and which questions will be asked, and afterwards the data will be presented.

4. Formulating the questions

The main purpose of the interviews is to gain insight in the respondents' subjective opinions and needs concerning the app content. These opinions can only be drawn out by allowing the respondents' freedom in their elaborations. This means that the questions to be asked must be formulated as open questions without clues leading the respondents to answer in a certain direction. For instance, a question can be formulated leading the respondent to a yes- or no- answer: would you like the app more if it has a find-your-way function? When asked this question, the respondent is more likely to answer yes or no and not elaborate his or her actual opinion about what the app should contain for him to be more satisfied with it. Therefore, the question should be rephrased: which features should the app contain for you to be satisfied with it? This question allows the respondent to elaborate and by herself come up with possible features, the app should contain. To address respondents with open-typed questions is in line with the constructivist idea that all people have their own subjective opinions and in order to get to know them, the researcher must allow for personal responses, not before-made answering options.

The data collection will take place in downtown Frederikshavn, where the author of this thesis, together with an aid, will reach out to individuals and firstly clarify whether they are visitors to the city. The aid is a former student of the Tourism program at the university of Aalborg, who has read what has been written so far in this thesis in order to understand what the central aspects are. After the respondents have been found they will be asked to join in a short interview concerning content for an app that can improve the leisure experience in Frederikshavn. The aid will assist in finding respondents, taking notes or asking questions. The reason for using an aid is that if only the author of the

thesis was to conduct the interview, important knowledge might get lost due to difficulties with the task of taking notes, recording, and interacting with the respondents – all at the same time.

The questions that will be asked will probably differ a little from respondent to respondent. This is due to the great possibility that respondents will elaborate answers in different directions, and the interviewer must attempt at asking questions that further elaborate the respondents' answers. This is a hermeneutical step as it secures a broader and more profound understanding of that particular respondent's subjective meanings. In the following, a list of questions will be elaborated. These are "ground questions" which will be asked all respondents. In the interview, some respondents might answer some ground questions without the interviewer asking them, therefore, not all questions will be asked in the same words as stated here. This outlie will, however, give an impression of the kind of interview that will be conducted, and what kind of information the investigation might result in.

It is furthermore important here to raise the subject of how expectations and satisfaction are connected. This is important as if a person does not have any prior experiences with apps, it is very possible that she does not have any preferences or expectations for the app. As it is not very easy to generate any useful ideas with people who have no prior experiences with, and thereby perhaps no expectations about apps either, the author of this thesis argues that people with knowledge (to any extent) about apps will be preferred as subjects of the interviews which will be conducted later. This means that people with no preferences about apps will be sorted out as a way to help secure that ideas of value will be proposed.

When a respondent is found, he or she will be introduced to the objective of the questioning (the answers given will be treated confidentially, and used in a Master´s Thesis with the purpose of elaborating content for a tourist app for the area of Frederikshavn).

As stated earlier in the thesis, there are three themes concerning the app, that the empirical data will be used to research. These are:

1. what visitors of Frederikshavn interviewed for this thesis expect of a touristic app containing information about the city of Frederikshavn
2. how these visitors can be motivated to use such an app, and,
3. which factors the visitor consider contributing to creating a satisfactory overall visitor experience in Frederikshavn for him/her.

These three themes lead to the necessity to retrieve answers to the following questions.

- Which features should the app contain for you to be satisfied with it?
    o Hereunder: what features should any app as a minimum requirement contain for you to use it? (this is linked to the question under the second objective of motivation: what is the minimum need to be present for you to want to use any app?)
    o This question is asked in order to find features of the type that Kano calls 'must be' features.
    o This question is of great importance as the interviewees maybe have pre-understandings of apps and how these can and should function, and this pre-understanding will influence and determine their expectations towards the app. These expectations must, as a minimum, be met in order for the app to be successful.
- What features should be included in order for the app to exceed your expectations?
    o This question is asked in order to find features a what Kano calls 'delighters', and these are functions or features that would not be missed if they were not there.

The second theme revolves around the visitors' inclination to use any app, and whether the interviewee think that they will use the app or not. Therefore, questions regarding motivation must be asked, like it was the case for the before-mentioned questions.

- What is as minimum needed to be present for you to want to use any app?
    o This question is asked in order to find out whether the respondent has any minimum requirements for any app, he/she uses. It is related to the motivation because it refers to the usage of any app, not the tourist app in particularly.
- Do you think an app like the one you described would be useful and for whom?
    o This question is asked in order to see whether there is an actual need or wish for the app, according to the respondent.
    o Perhaps the app is more or less useful to different groups of visitors, according to the respondent.
- Do you think you would use an app like this with the features you described when visiting a certain area?
    o This question is important to ask to find out whether a respondent would use the app, regardless of her statements of the usefulness of the app.

- Would you be more inclined to use an app when searching for information about a trip than other platforms providing information?
    - This question is included in order to find out whether the respondent would prefer an app when searching for information or not.
- How would you like to find about out that an app like this one exists?
    - This question is asked in order to investigate how the respondents would be most likely to be made aware of the existence of the app in order to find the right ways to promote the app.

The third and last theme of the interview regards the contributing factors to the respondent's experience of visiting Frederikshavn

- Have you visited Frederikshavn before? (how many times..)
    - This question clarifies if the respondent is a first-time visitor. In the analysis it might be possible to detect differences in attitudes and desires for the app among first time visitors and returnees.
- If respondent is a returnee: why have you returned?
    - The answer to this question aids in clarifying the draws of Frederikshavn
- Where have you found information about experiences in Frederikshavn in connection to your visit?
    - Clarifies where and how the respondent finds information.
- Which kinds of information did you search for?
    - The answers to this question clarifies which kinds of information would be beneficial to include in the app in order for it to satisfy some of the needs of the visitors.
- Did you find this information before or during the trip, and are there any differences in the kind of information you search for before the trip and the information you search for during the trip?
    - According to the statement in the introduction of this thesis, tourists engage mostly in on-site planning; therefore, it would be interesting to see whether respondents of this thesis plan experiences before or during as well. Additionally, it is interesting to ask about the differences on the information searched for before and during the trip, as the interviewee is then asked to elaborate ideas for information that can be beneficial to include for the app to be useful both before and during.

- Is there anything regarding the information search before the trip to Frederikshavn that has made you think that there is some information or features that are missing out there?
  - Answers will clarify whether the respondent could have any suggestions that could be included in the app, which is not already to be found on the internet, or which is difficult to come across.
- Would an app like the one proposed with the features you named be a factor that could contribute in you returning to the destination?
  - This question is asked in order to find out whether the respondent considers the app to be so beneficial and useful that such an information tool could be a factor that would motivate him/her to return to a destination. The answer to this question can furthermore indicate whether the app would be able to have an impact on the tourist experience or not. If the respondent says she will not use the app, it would not be able to influence her experiences in Frederikshavn as she will not use it.

The interviews will be conducted in Danish with Danish visitors, and if any Swedish or Norwegian visitors are willing to be interviewed, the interviews will be either in Danish or English, and all other nationalities will be interviewed in English unless they speak Danish. However, due to the season in which the interviews will be conducted (winter), it might not be possible to be able to find any foreign tourists to interview, and even if there are foreign visitors present, they might not be willing to carry out an interview in another language than their native one. Even though this might be the case, the author of this thesis still hopes that she can find a common ground, as tourists have become more digital, and most of them therefore would very likely appreciate a digital tourist app whether they have one nationality or another.

During the interviews, notes will be made, and the interview will be recorded if the respondent allows so. The interviews will be semi-transcribed, meaning that the entire conversations will not be transcribed. However, the transcription will include key quotes, which will be used when relevant in the analysis. These transcriptions are attached as appendix 1-6. The recorded interviews are also attached, together with an interview conducted by email.

In the analysis of the responses, quotes taken from interviews will be translated to English and a clear reference to the summary of the respondent's answers, that provided the quote, will be made. From the reference it will be evident which interview the quote stems from, which appendix it is to be found

on, and on which page. As stated earlier, the constructivist paradigm allows for subjective opinions to be sought out. This is done here with the interview method. Afterwards, common beliefs or a common ground will be located among the answers. These common beliefs are made up of accordance between different respondents' answers, if these exist. It is the outcome of the analysis of interview data that provides common beliefs (factors to which two or several respondents agree on) which will constitute the proposals of the app content.

In the following chapter, the analysis will be elaborated.

5. Analysis

Based on the knowledge and information obtained during the foregoing chapters, an analysis will be developed. The purpose of the analysis is to generate knowledge that can be used in order to answer the problem formulation adequately, and this will be done by looking into the data obtained from the interviews through the theoretical framework presented earlier. The analysis will consist of three main parts.

The first will be a presentation of the interviewees' ideas for the app and an analysis of the empirical data and. The second will be elaborated from a correspondence with an expert from *VisitDenmark* who has knowledge about designing apps. He will be introduced to the findings obtained from the interviews (mainly ideas which the author of this thesis does not know whether can be designed in an app or not), and he will furthermore be asked to come up with additional suggestions based on his experiences with tourists' preferences and needs. The expert will be drawn in to validate or dismiss the suggestions presented for him. The additional ideas may only be presented if the expert believes that the author of the thesis has not gained all the relevant information from her respondents. The author will give the expert the opportunity to present other ideas as she hopes it will give her a more profound insight in tourists' preferences and wishes than the insight that she has gained from the interviews. This is a way of ensuring that the author will move upwards the hermeneutical spiral and get a more detailed understanding of tourists' preferences towards the app.

The third part of the analysis will contain a presentation of what the app should include based on the first part of the analysis combined with the expert from *VisitDenmark*'s assessment, opinions, and ideas and some additional ideas or thoughts will be presented based on what has already been discussed.

5.1. Analyzing the interviews

For the interviews, people of different gender, nationality, age etc. were sought for. This was done, in order to be able to paint as versatile a picture as possible and see whether it might be possible to discover common beliefs amongst people with different backgrounds and demographics. The author and her aid were able to find people from different age groups (from twelve to almost fifty). However, the author only had the opportunity to interview one person who is not Danish, as others were not prepared or willing to be interviewed, but the author still argues that this person's answers can give an idea of how other people with the same background might feel.

The first interview was conducted with two Danish men in their forties, the second with a Danish woman in her forties, the third with a Swedish girl (12), the fourth with a Danish woman in her mid-forties, the fifth with a Danish woman in her twenties, and the sixth with a Danish man in his twenties. The interviews and the analysis of them will not be presented in chronological order in accordance with their number, as that would take up a lot of space. The author has instead decided to present the questions in chronological order and then list the relevant answers to these questions in an order which seems logical. However, it will be evident which opinions are shared by which interviewee(s). When addressing a certain respondent, this could be, for example, the woman from interview 5, she will be referred to as *respondent 5*.

The respondent of every interview's answer or opinion may not be presented for every question. The reason for this choice is that the author of this thesis does not believe that all answers are relevant to include in order to understand their constructions, and some answers might not be important.

During the interviews, it became evident that all respondents had knowledge about apps. This means that all respondents might already have preferences about apps, as they all have a pre-understanding of apps and how these can and should function, and these pre-understandings will influence and determine their expectations towards the app. Furthermore, these pre-understandings about apps will influence their motivation towards using the tourist app, as the pre-understandings influence their expectations about the app. For instance, if the app were to be developed and it did not live up to the expectations, the interviewees will not be inclined to use it. Before the respondents' answers to a given question will be presented in the following, the question regarding the answers will be presented above in order to make it easier to create an overview.

The first question asked was:

Which features should the app contain for you to be satisfied with it?

Regarding this question, respondent 5, 6 and 7 all agreed that the app should be easy to use, and respondent 7 elaborated that: "Nobody wants to use apps that are difficult to use. I believe that for an app to be successful, it should be designed in a way that makes it easier to use the app not using it," (interview 7, appendix 6).

As it was explained in the section about the basic belief behind the thesis, people are unique individuals with different constructions, however, some constructions might be shared amongst some individuals. This seems to be the case here. This means that it can be suggested that a common belief can be detected as several respondents (and thereby perhaps many other visitors) share this opinion, and that the app should therefore be easy to use in order meet the needs of most people possible. It should be stressed in this connection, that when talking about a common belief, the author of this thesis does not claim that all people necessarily share the same opinion about certain things. It should rather be understood as a means of explaining that some opinions might be shared among some people, and from these shared opinions it can be possible to explain how many people relate to certain things. These respondents serve as an indicator of what other tourists might feel, however, saying that for instance 50 percent of these interviewees has a certain opinion about something does not necessarily mean that 50 percent of people in the world agree with that. It does, however, indicate that there are others that have the same opinions as well.

Furthermore, several respondents argued that they think that the app needs to contain information about the city, places to eat, attractions, and hotels, which means that the app needs to contain information about practical issues that can meet the needs which the psychologist *Abraham Maslow* labels the *physical needs.* These are the physical needs that must be met in order for the individual to have a normal day (Buskbjerg, n.d.). Respondents 1 and 2 agree that the app must contain information about practical issues such as parking possibilities. This indicates that most tourists would prefer it if the app could contain practical information that would meet their physical needs. Furthermore, respondents 1 and 2 and 3 stated that it must include information about what to experience in the city. By saying that they need to be able to find information about what is there to see, the respondents express that they have a need for experiencing things while traveling, and these needs can be categorized as self-actualization. These needs are very important to many people, as it has to do with doing something extraordinary and creating memories (Buskbjerg, n.d.). This indicates that the app should

not just focus on meeting one type of needs, but it should rather focus on meeting several in order for the users to find the information adequate or useful.

These ideas about content that must be included represent the respondents' expectations for the app. As the model elaborated by the author of this thesis in the theoretical framework presented earlier explained it, the expectations are based on pre-understandings (probably based on experiences with other apps), and these will influence the satisfaction. This means that if the types of information presented above are not included in the app, the respondents will not be satisfied with it as it will not live up to the expectations. It is very important that the users are satisfied with the app, as the author believes that the app's "lifespan" will be shortened significantly if people are not satisfied with it. This believe is supported by the statement mentioned earlier about tourists' motivation to return to a destination that suggests that if a tourist is not satisfied with a destination, she will not be likely to return. Even though this statement is developed to explain tourist behavior in relation to rechoosing a destination, the author argues that it can be used to explain their behavior in relation to the app.

What features should be included in order for the app to exceed your expectations?

When asked what the respondents would find useful but not miss if it was not included (delighters), different opinions were clarified. First of all, one respondent of *interview 1* and *2* argued that the app could contain a function that allows the user to see when certain places are crowded. However, this idea would maybe be more beneficial to include in an app for a more visited or crowded destination such as Skagen (especially during summertime), or Copenhagen, as these destinations are very known destinations among many tourists. This means that if the app mentioned in this thesis would be realized, it could be beneficial to include other Danish cities in the app besides Frederikshavn. There are times or seasons during which the city might be more crowded than usual though (for instance during Christmas), and during this season, such a function might be useful for some visitors. However, as this is not a function which other respondents express the need for, and as it is something that the respondent of *interview 1 and 2* believes should not necessarily be included, the author claims that the function is not necessary to include.

The other respondent of *interview 1* and *2* would prefer it if it could be possible to book a table at a restaurant on beforehand, and respondent of 7 stated that he would like it if it would be possible to buy a ticket for an attraction on beforehand: "(…) this would make it easy. In this way, I could just show up at the attraction and show them the ticket on the app and everything will just run smoothly," (interview 7, appendix 6, page 10) This indicates that the respondents and probably other tourists as

well would prefer an "easy" solution which is booking table or buy a ticket for a place before physically going somewhere. If the app would contain a function that allows the user to book a table on a restaurant on beforehand, the app has the ability to let the user avoid the problem of ending up without a place to eat. This is what the book *Marketing Communications* refers to as *problem avoidance.* Problem avoidance is when a consumer is motivated to make sure that they can avoid a certain problem in the future by, as they believe that this problem might occur (Dahlén, Lange, & Smith, 2010, p. 58). In this regard, the app can be a factor that eliminates the risk of experiencing this particular problem.

Respondent 4, on the other hand, said that it would be nice if the app could include a function that allows the user to find information about previously visited places, perhaps so the visitor can see the places she has already visited and, in that way, keep track of it. Respondent 5*,* however, expressed that she would not consider information about the city to be something that was necessary to include, as it was the case with other respondents. This underpins the notion of the constructivist ontology that people have different ideas and opinions about certain issues; in this case some respondents argue that information about the city must be included, and others argue that it is good but not necessary to include. Even though the respondents might not agree on the degree of necessity of this type of information, it can still be argued that there is a common ground that suggests that this should be included.

Respondent 6 and 7 additionally stated that they would prefer it if the app would offer discounts on for instance food, attractions, or other offers. This indicates that these respondents could be motivated to use the app as they can be extrinsically motivated by gaining this reward of saving money. Furthermore, as it was explained in the theoretical framework, most people are influenced to act based on a mixture of the three types of motivation (intrinsic, extrinsic, and social), and therefore the author of the thesis will search for examples of types of intrinsic and social motivation during the rest of this part of the analysis, in order to describe what can influence visitors' level of motivation towards using the app.

What is as minimum needed to be present for you to want to use any app?

When asked this question, respondents 1 and 2 agreed that an app must be easy to use, and this support the claim of the author, that this particular app must be easy to use as well, and it must be user-friendly.

Respondents 1 and 2 furthermore stated that an app must meet certain needs, and this is in line with the notion of Maslow and his theory about needs. A fundamental idea integrated is Maslow's

framework is that people will always seek to satisfy these needs (Buskbjerg, n.d.). This supports the idea that the app should contain functions or information that allows the needs of the visitor to be satisfied in order for the app to be successful.

Respondent 3 explained that she would use an app if it provides some sort of entertainment, and the same opinion is shared by respondent 7 who also mainly uses apps for entertaining purposes, but he furthermore argues that he prefers apps that can give him knowledge as well. These opinions suggest that the app should include some entertainment functions as well, perhaps something that allows the user to gain knowledge while still being entertained. None of the respondents elaborated whether this function or app content should be a game, but it can be interpreted from these opinions, that some entertainment functions or aspects should be included, and that the app should acquire knowledge from in order for them to want to use it.

The above described example is an example of an intrinsic reason behind motivation which could make these two respondents, and probably other visitors as well, more inclined to be motivated to use the app. When looking at these considerations combined with what has already been clarified about the respondents' motivation in the analysis, it can be suggested that some tourists may be more influenced by one of the reasons behind motivation than others. However, as the different respondents seem to be motivated by all three reasons, it can be argued that the app should be designed so it will be able to appeal to all three.

Lastly, respondent 5 answered that she could be influenced to use the app if other people would give it positive reviews. This indicates that this respondent could be motivated to use the app because of the social reasons, as she trusts in other peoples' opinions. Whether these opinions stem from people in her network or from blog posts or similar is unknown, but it is possible to conclude that the respondent can be motivated through interaction with others. This interaction can, furthermore, result in the respondent acting in a certain way. This is an example of how other people's opinions can have an effect on an individual's level of motivation and, eventually, their actions.

The author of this thesis, however, argues that the specific example of social motivation mentioned above (positive recommendations from others) is not something that can be existent before someone has actually used the app, as this is necessary in order for people to know whether they are satisfied with it or not. In that way, this type of motivation is highly influenced by whether the app has the ability to motivate the user intrinsically, extrinsically, or both as people must be motivated in order to use the app and, eventually, review it. Hopefully, these reviews will be positive, so the potential

users of the app can be motivated by a mixture of all three types of motivation, as this, as mentioned in the theory section about motivation, typically has the strongest influences on people.

Do you think an app like the one you described would be useful and for whom?

After the interviews were all conducted, it became evident that all respondents believed that an app could be useful. From this it can be suggested that there is a solid foundation for suggesting that an app could be useful for most tourists when visiting a destination. Respondent 3 argued that it would probably be useful for most people; tourists as well as locals. This opinion was shared by respondent 6. Based on this statement, the extent of the relevance might not just include tourists, meaning that referring to it is solely a touristic- or visitor app may not be sufficient.

Therefore, it could be argued the name of the app should be one that lets the user (tourist as well as visitor) know that it can be useful for them.

Respondent 5 said that: "Well, I definitely think that that would make sense to have," (the app, red.) "Especially if it does not only include Frederikshavn, but allows you to choose amongst different cities," (interview 5, appendix 4, page 5).

This gives the author of this thesis a foundation for suggesting that if the app would be realized it could be expanded to include other cities than Frederikshavn. This would, as she explains, mean that the visitor would not have to download other apps when visiting another city.

Respondent 4, 6 and 7 agreed that they would find the app useful, and 6 and 7 furthermore argued that it had to contain relevant information. Respondent 7 furthermore explained that he likes it when he does not have to find information on several different webpages, which indicates that he would prefer it if he had the opportunity to find all relevant information at one place.

Do you think you would use an app like this with the features you described when visiting a certain area?

For this question respondents 1 and 2 answered that they would use it if it was easy to access. One of them elaborated that it is necessary for people to know about the existence of the app as he, as he explains it: "I do not look in app store, every time I travel to a new place," (interview 1 and 2, appendix 1, page 1). This indicates that the respondent would not necessarily actively search for such an app, but that it should be promoted in some way(s) in order for him to be made aware of its' existence. The interviewees' suggestions about promotion will be presented later in the analysis.

Respondent 3 stated that she would use the app as well: "Yes, always. There is this London-app, which I download every time I go there," (interview 3, appendix 2, page 1). This indicates that the respondent likes the idea of finding travel related information through apps, and that she already knows what can and should, according to her, be included in the app.

Respondents 4, 6 and 7 would also use the app if available, and respondents 6 and 7 both use the Danish words 'i hvert fald' or 'bestemt' which in English can be translated to 'definitely'. By using the word 'definitely' regarding the question of whether a respondent would use the app or not, the respondent expresses certainty. This certainty is important as it indicates that it might be easier to influence people who share this opinion to use the app as they seem to have positive pre-understandings about touristic apps.

These answers underpin the notion that mobile devices are one of the most important aspects of the tourist experience for some tourists. The author of this thesis claims that the app would have the possibility to add value to these respondents' experience. This is, as the respondents explain, because they would very likely be willing to use the app, and as the app would provide information about what the respondent can experience during the stay. Furthermore, if the respondent would be aware of the app before traveling to Frederikshavn, the app would have the possibility to influence and add value to the "before" phase of the travel as well. In this way, the app will be able to influence different phases of the tourist experience. Suggestions on how to promote the app will be presented later.

Concludingly, it is possible to state that all respondents could thereby be willing to use the app.

Would you be more inclined to use an app when searching for information about a trip than other platforms providing information?

This question was not asked respondents 1 and 2, 3, and 4, as it was formulated just after these interviews. The author and her aid agreed after these interviews that it was a relevant question to ask as well to investigate what the respondents would prefer. If the respondents would express that they would prefer other possibilities, this might indicate that the app would be irrelevant or unnecessary.

Respondent 5, 6 and 7 all stated that they believe they would prefer using an app when searching for information about an area rather than other platforms. Respondent 7 elaborated that the reason why he would typically prefer an app could be that: "The phone is ready almost whenever you are, and typically you are able to find what you are looking for within a minute if having the right app," (interview 7, appendix 6)

The author therefore believes that many tourists would be inclined to prefer using apps for information searching in this connection as there seems to be a common belief amongst the respondents that the app would be preferred by them.

How would you like to find about out that an app like this one exists?

As mentioned earlier in this thesis, the question has to do with the promotion of the app and it seeks to investigate how the respondents believe they would be most likely to be made aware of it. The opinions about the issue of promotion are not the most important aspect of this analysis, but it is still important to look into the different types of promotion that could be used in order for the app to be noticed by potential users.

Respondents 1 and 2 argued that they would prefer it if the app could be promoted through signage at the city entrance. If listening to the recording of the interview the interviewees' answer about the signage, though, it might seem like the answer was mostly said in jest. However, the answer still informs the author that the interviewees would prefer the promotion of the app to be obvious rather than subtle.

Respondents 4, 5, and 6 all argued that they believe that the app should be promoted through social media, and 4 and 5 argued that *Facebook* could be one of the best places to promote it in order for them to notice it. Respondent 4 furthermore argued that it should be promoted through the social media *Instagram*. Respondents 5, 6, and 7 explained that they would also like it if the app could be recommended to them by friends. This idea about promotion through friends supports the notion mentioned in the theoretical framework that a person tends to be influenced by other people in their network and their opinions. However, this last kind of promotion is not really possible to initiate or trigger before the app has already been used by some people.

Respondent 6 and 7 both thought that the app should be promoted through news channels, and respondent 7 furthermore argued that a good idea would be to promote the app through a collaboration with hotels.

The possibilities of promoting the app will be further elaborated in the second part of the analysis.

Have you visited Frederikshavn before? If yes: how many times – and why have you returned?

All respondents of the interviews said that they had visited the city prior the visit during which the interviews were conducted. This indicates that most of them already know something about the city, and therefore some of them might have some preferences about information that must be included in

the app based on this knowledge. For instance, respondent 4 and respondent 5 argued that they enjoy experiencing *The Reef,* which could indicate that they consider information about *Scandic The Reef* to be very important to include in the app. Respondent 6 said that she mainly returns to the city because of the Christmas lights, which could indicate that it would be beneficial to include some information about these decorations as well.

Respondent 7 said that he has mainly returned to the city because of the experiences it has to offer. This indicates that he is especially motivated to visit the city because of his self-actualization needs. As he travels to Frederikshavn to have these experiences it seems that his home town or nearby area does not have similar experience offers. Based on this wondering, the author of this thesis argues that the app must include information about the experiences in Frederikshavn city that are unique or different from the ones that can be experienced at other destinations. In this way, it is possible to motivate some people to visit based on these unique attributes. The author claims that by focusing on promoting these unique attributes or experiences, the visitor will be more motivated to visit Frederikshavn as tourists seek unique experiences (Binkhorst & Dekker, 2009, p. 311) (Crossland, 2017).

These specific attributes are not identified by the respondent, but it is still worth mentioning this possibility of attracting visitors, and it is important to mention in order to understand one of the driving forces behind motivation regarding visiting a destination.

Where have you found information about experiences in Frederikshavn in connection to your visit, and which kinds of information did you search for?

This question is a way of indirectly asking which kinds of information would be beneficial to include in the app without actually asking about it.

Respondents 1 and 2, 3 and 6 explained that they mainly search for information about a destination online. This is in line with the assertion about tourist that they have become more digital, and that they have become more informed as a result. The internet is the home of tons of different information, and most people have access to it whether this is through a mobile phone, a computer, or another device. Furthermore, the fact that the respondents mainly searches online supports the claim that it is important for a destination such as Frederikshavn to offer digital solutions for its visitors.

In connection to which kinds of information the respondents search for, respondent 5 said that she primarily searches for information about the different kinds of indoor activities when she is travelling during winter as she often travels with her son.

Did you find this information before or during the trip, and are there any differences in the kind of information you search for before the trip and the information you search for during the trip?

This question is interesting especially as it seeks to investigate whether the respondents mostly engage in on-site planning, like it was mentioned in the introduction that most tourists often tend to do. It is furthermore interesting, as it allows respondents to reflect upon and explain about information that could be relevant to consider both before, during, or maybe both phases of the information-searching process.

After having conducted all interviews, it became clear that the respondents were not all preoccupied by on-site planning. Most respondents explained that they search for some information during the stay, but respondent 3 argued that she prefers planning her trip on beforehand. However, she also explained that she during the trip has a tendency follow up on the information searched for before the trip, and these are typically things she might have missed when searching before the trip: "You want to know about what kinds of events are happening during the time you are visiting a destination," (interview 3, appendix 2, page 3) Therefore, she argued, information should always be up to date. By making sure that the information presented in the app (e.g. what goes on when the respondent is at the destination) is always up to date, the app can be a factor that enhances the visitor experience significantly, as the app, if used by the visitor, will minimize the risk of the visitor not experiencing these things or obtaining incorrect information.

This is also a way of trying to influence the tourist experience in a positive direction. If some information is not up to date or incorrect, the author of this thesis argues, many tourists could feel mislead, and, in that way, their experiences could be influenced in a negative way. For instance, if the app shows that an attraction or similar closes at six in the evening and it closes at four, the tourist might feel mislead by the app and she might not have time to explore the certain attraction. As it was argued in the theory section about experiences, experiences have the power to touch customers more than a product or a service. Therefore, the author of this thesis argues that these negative situations must be avoided if possible in order to avoid that the experiences will be of a negative character.

Respondents 1 and 2 and 5 argued that they mainly search for information about accommodation before, and this is also the case with respondent 7. Respondents 1 and 2 and 7 also explained that they mostly search for things to experience during the trip. Respondent 5 primarily searches for information during the trip, and she elaborates: "It has to do with something like: the weather is bad today, and we have already experienced the indoor swimming facilities. What are we going to do now?"

(interview 5, appendix 4, page 5). This supports the suggestion of including information about indoor experiences in the app, and it is in line with the claim that most tourists mainly engage in on-site planning.

Is there anything regarding the information search before the trip to Frederikshavn that has made you think that there is some information or features that are missing out there?

Respondents 1 and 2 agreed that most information is already existent on the internet, but that it is spread across different websites. Therefore, they additionally agreed that it would be a good idea if the information could be found at one place instead of several.

As it was mentioned earlier, respondent 5 is very interested in what kinds of indoor experiences a destination has to offer, especially during winter. However, she argued that information about indoor facilities are often very hard to come across, which indicates that she would find information about these facilities very useful. This furthermore indicates that tourists have different wishes and needs when traveling. For example, respondents 1 and 2 did not seem to travel with their kids during the time in which the interview was conducted, and therefore, they might not be as inclined to visit these indoor facilities to the same extent as respondent 5 and her son. This means that there must information included in the app about experiences that speak to every kind of tourist.

Respondent 3 did not mention anything that she considers to be missing, but she did argue that there should be an overview of the things the city has to offer. She elaborated that these things could be divided into categories in accordance with what type of information that they might represent (whether it is an experience, a restaurant and so on). This means that she, and perhaps other potential users as well would prefer it if the app is designed so there is a list (overview) from which the user can select whether she wants to know something about for instance experiences, and then she will be able to have another list with the specific offers that the city has might have regarding experiences. In that way, the user is able to choose whatever she thinks she would like to use or experience.

Lastly, respondent 6 argued that she thought that it was difficult to find information about the different shops' opening hours. This indicates that it would be useful for the tourists, and maybe the locals, as respondent 3 argued earlier, if the app would contain information about opening hours. This information should perhaps not only be in relation to shops, but other things as well as it is relevant to know whether a place is opened or not before visiting. In this sense, the app can be a factor that

enhances the tourist experiences, as the visitor by using the app can avoid going to somewhere in vain and end up dissatisfied or unhappy.

Would an app like the one proposed with the features you named be a factor that could contribute in you returning to the destination?

After having conducted all interviews, the author realized that all respondents thought that the app could be useful in different ways. Most respondents argued that the app would influence them either to return or to at least experience more things while visiting the city than they would have done otherwise: "I think it would make me want to experience a lot of things during the stay," (interview 5, appendix 4, page 6). This indicates that the respondent believes that she would know more about the things to experience if she could use the app.

In this connection, it is interesting to mention that respondent 4 told the author of this thesis that she came to Frederikshavn the day before conducting the interview, meaning that she had only stayed for no more than a day. Respondent 4 believed, like respondent 5, that if she would have a similar app, she would know more about what to experience in the city. This answer combined with the one from respondent 5 gives the author of this thesis a foundation for suggesting that the app could, if not motivate the user to visit Frederikshavn, motivate them to choose to stay in the city for a longer time than they would have done now where they do not have the opportunity to use a similar app. This suggests that if the information most relevant for the (potential) users were to be included in the app, the visitor would be more willing to use it, and they could, as a result be more inclined to stay for a longer time or return to experience more of the experiences they have been made aware of through the app.

One respondent from interview 1 and 2 argued that an app in itself might not have a direct influence on his motivation towards returning to Frederikshavn: "Not necessarily. It depends on what is there to see," (interview 1 and 2, appendix 1, page 2) This means that the city must have other interesting attributes than solely the app in itself.

However, the other respondent stated that: "It could have an indirect influence, for instance if you find places on the app that you would not have found otherwise," (interview 1 and 2, appendix 1, page 2). This particular answer leads the author of this thesis to think about respondent 5's assertion about the lack of information about indoor activities. She would probably be more motivated to visit a certain destination based how much this destination has to offer when it comes to these indoor

activities. Therefore, the app must include information about these activities for users with the same needs to be aware that these activities are there, and in order for them to be more motivated to visit the destination.

Even though this particular example regarding indoor activities might not be as relevant for respondents 1 and 2 as respondent 5, it still clarifies the importance of including information about restaurants, experiences, attractions, or whatever that may meet the needs of the user. In this way, the user will, the author argues, perhaps be more inclined to choose Frederikshavn as a destination to visit.

Lastly, respondent 5 explained that she would not necessarily choose a destination based on the app, but that she would more likely use the app when having chosen the destination. This indicates that even though the app might not be the reason why she visits the destination, it can still add value for her.

All in all, the respondents seemed to think that a visitor app would be beneficial for them when traveling, which gives the author of this thesis confidence to carry on with the analysis, and to suggest that the app is a tool that can enhance the tourist experience. When it comes to these experiences, the respondents have not directly mentioned how their experiences could be enhanced or whether the app would enhance them or not. However, the author claims that it can be read between the lines or interpreted from what they expressed that it would more than likely be a reasonable solution.

Additionally, as it was mentioned in the theoretical section about experiences, companies must develop new things in order to satisfy consumers, as they will get used to and bored with the things presented to them. Therefore, it is important for any company, in this case destination, to be creative and think of new solutions when wanting to satisfy their consumers. The author of this thesis believes that an app can be a successful way of satisfying the consumers, as tourists have become more digital, and as it is a new way for the destination of Frederikshavn to be presented for the (potential) visitors.

The following section is the part of the analysis in which the ideas for the app content will be presented. However, before these will be unveiled, some of the respondents' ideas presented in the first part of the analysis will be presented for an expert from *VisitDenmark* by e-mail in order to find out whether he believes that the ideas are realistic or beneficial. The expert is named Ulrik Lerche, and his official title is Digital Platform Manager. The correspondence will be attached as appendix 7. When including quotes from the appendix in the analysis, they will be translated to English, as the

correspondence on the appendix is in Danish. The quote will be followed by a reference from which it will appear which appendix the quote stems from.

5.2. Analysing the correspondance

Firstly, Lerche was asked to consider whether he would believe that the following ideas for content for a tourist app for Frederikshavn would be useful or beneficial to include:

1. A function that allows the user to see when a certain place is crowded.

Regarding this idea, Lerche argues that he does not believe that a similar function would be useful in Frederikshavn. This is in line with what the author of this thesis argued earlier in the analysis. The reason for this might be that Frederikshavn is not usually very crowded, and therefore the function would be unnecessary.

2. A function that allows the user to book a table at a restaurant through the app.

Regarding this idea, he argues that the app would have to compete against bigger organizations such as *Tripadvisor* or national book-a-table systems. This suggests that it might be more beneficial if the app could link to for instance *Tripadvisor* or another system that allows the user to book it; if not directly through the app then through a link. In this way, the app would not have to compete against these systems.

3. A function that allows the user to "tag in" when he or she is visiting or has visited a place in order for the user to keep track of what has already been seen or experienced.

Lerche seems to consider this idea to be useful, and he elaborates: "Good idea. Perhaps it could be possible to use *Instagram* in some way. I have noticed that some of my friends use *Instagram* to find certain places when we are traveling together," (Lerche, appendix 7). This indicates that it would be very beneficial to include a similar function in the app, in which the user can see what kinds of places are visited by other users. This can, the author of this thesis argues, be considered as a way of recommending a place indirectly, as it can show which places are visited the most or visited by the *Instagram* user's followers.

4. A function that allows the user to buy tickets for an attraction through the app, so the user would not have to physically buy a ticket.

This idea is the one, Lerche seems to consider the most valuable, as he says: "Great idea with a big market (…)," (Lerche, appendix 7). As Lerche believes there are many people who are interested in this solution, the author of this thesis argues that the function would be very beneficial to include in the app. He furthermore elaborates that *VisitDenmark* has a similar function on their webpage. However, even though the function is available on the webpage, the author of this thesis still argues that it would be beneficial to include in the app, as the idea is that the app should be, if not the only, then the primary place in which the user will find information about the city. Lerche additionally says that there is an international startup that has received millions of Danish Kroner through funds based on a similar idea. This supports the claim that this idea is valuable, not only by people outside the IT industry but within it as well.

Lerche was then introduced to suggestions about how the app should be promoted in order for people to notice it. These suggestions are:

1. Signage at the city entrance.

This suggestion was, according to Lerche a: "Stupid idea," (Lerche, appendix 7). He argues that this is not beneficial as it is difficult to conclude whether it would influence people or not.

2. Promotion through social media or through another app (for example *Facebook* or *Instagram*).

Lerche argued that this suggestion is better than the first, but does not elaborate further. The author of this thesis therefore suggests that this suggestion is useful as several of the respondents argue that they use Instagram or other types of social media and highlight these as the places from which they would be most likely to notice the promotion.

3. Through collaboration with hotels that have information about the app at the hotel (for instance in the form print advertising.

Lerche considers this to be better than the first as well, indicating that the idea would have the potential of influencing the visitor. However, the author of this thesis does not necessarily believe that this way of promoting the app would be as successful as promoting it on social media. This is, first of all, as most respondents of the interviews seems to be preoccupied with social media, meaning that the promotion would reach many people through these platforms. Secondly, in order for the print advertising to reach as many people as through social media, the print advertising would have to be available at many different hotels, meaning that a lot of work must be done in order to sign agreements

with different hotels. However, both types of promotion can be used in order to not only be noticeable for people who use social media as an attempt to reach as many potential users as possible.

Lerche was lastly presented for the ideas about specific kinds of information that should be included (see appendix 7). Lerche stated that most of the information is already to be found on *VisitDenmark*'s tourist database. Even though the information is already available, the author of this thesis argues that the app is still relevant, and that the information should still be included in the app. The reason behind the claim that the app is relevant is primarily that the respondents of the interview seemed positive towards the idea of having a similar app. Furthermore, as one of the purposes of the app is to ease the information-searching process for the visitor and make them aware of most offers possible, the information should be available on the app as well. Additionally, the respondents expressed that they be more likely to prefer using an app than other platforms when searching for information about their travel. The author therefore believes that even though the information is existent on the internet, the app will still be useful for most visitors and perhaps, as suggested earlier, for locals as well.

Lerche furthermore has some thoughts about the idea of creating an app containing information about Frederikshavn. Firstly, he explains that he does not think that there should be apps developed for separate cities, as it is not easy to make people download an app and use it actively. He instead suggests that the app could contain information about the whole world, as people will not download a new app every time they travel to a new destination.

The author of this thesis acknowledges Lerche's opinion about expanding the app, and she partially agrees that it would be beneficial to expand the app. This is, as Lerche explains as: "For instance, people do not download a new hotel app every time they visit a new country," (Lerche, appendix 7), and as respondent 5 argues that she would like it if the app would contain information about other destinations than just Frederikshavn.

However, as this thesis seeks to enhance the visitor in Frederikshavn, the author argues that it would be beneficial to have the app, and that it should perhaps be expanded to include other destinations to be most successful or valuable for the user. Whether these destinations should be from all over the world or just Danish is another issue that must be discussed. Lerche argues that the app should be a "world app". However, as the problem which this thesis seeks to avoid or solve is that Denmark, in this specific case Frederikshavn, will lose tourists to other European countries based on negative or trivial tourist experiences at the destination, the author argues that the app should be developed, if not only for Frederikshavn then for destinations in the entire country. This will be further elaborated in

the section 5.4. *Quality of the research,* where the author will explain it in relation to the concept of *generalization.*

Based on the theory about smart tourism destinations and the respondents' attitudes towards the idea of creating a tourist app, the author argues that the app should not be expanded to include destinations in other countries. In order for Frederikshavn and the rest of Denmark to increase their level of competitiveness on the tourist market, and, thereby, meet the needs of most tourists, the author argues that Denmark must develop new technological solutions for the customer. This is, as it was explained earlier, because the user will get used to and bored with the solutions that they have already been presented for, and because it is a way for Denmark to appear as a destination that embraces the concept of smart tourism destination and integrates it in their promotion of the destination. Additionally, as it was explained in the theoretical section about the digital tourist, the aim of smart tourism destination is to enhance the experiences the tourists have when visiting the destination, and the aim of this thesis is to develop a solution that will, as well, have the possibility to enhance their experiences.

Lastly, the author argues that having a touristic app, whether it might cover information about Frederikshavn or the entire country, will be beneficial. This as tourists have, as explained earlier, become more dependent on technology when making decision about their travel, which means that the destination has to meet these needs for technological solutions.

The author does not reject the idea of expanding the app to other countries entirely, but she claims that is would be beneficial if the app is developed for Frederikshavn (or Denmark) first in order to come across an innovative destination with focus on technological solutions, and then it can be expanded later on.

Lerche additionally explained that before developing an app it is important to consider how it is possible to make money on it. In order to solve this problem, the findings of this thesis suggest, among other things, that the app could result in tourists staying in Frederikshavn for a longer time than they would have done without the app, which suggests that they would spend more money per visit as well. In that way, it can be suggested, the app will be able to have the ability to influence the turnover generated by tourism significantly.

The following section will present the recommendations for the app based on the respondents' preferences and the expert's suggestions. The section will consist of recommendations for the specific

content and design, recommendations regarding promotion of the app, and, lastly, it provides a few recommendations which can be considered if the app were to be further developed.

5.3. Recommendations for the app

The recommendations for the app are:

1. It should be easy to use: this answer is based on the respondents' pre-understanding about apps and their expectations about the visitor app of Frederikshavn. This suggests that the app must be designed so it will user-friendly.

2. It should be divided into categories depending on the types of information there is to be found under the particular category (for instance, restaurants, accommodation etc.) in order for the user to have a better an overview and navigate amongst all the different kinds of information. This is a way of making sure that the design of the app will appear as user-friendly.

3. It should allow the user to be entertained: some of the respondents from the interviews explained that they typically use apps for entertainment purposes. However, the respondents did not further elaborate what kinds of entertainment this might be in relation to the app. The author therefore suggests that this is something that could be further investigated if the app were to be realized.

4. It should include information about the practical decisions that are necessary to consider when visiting Frederikshavn, and these has to do with finding:

   a) A hotel to stay at or another type of accommodation: it is important for the visitors to know where they can stay.

   b) Restaurants: for some tourists, it is important that they can eat somewhere besides the hotel, and therefore it is a good idea to include information about restaurants.

   c) Experiences and attractions: as mentioned earlier, several of the respondents explained that they like having different kinds of experiences when traveling. This means that for the app to be valuable for the visitor, information about what the city has to offer regarding experiences and attractions must be included.

   d) Parking possibilities: some visitors travel to Frederikshavn by car, and they will need to know where it is possible for them to park it.

   e) Unique experiences in Frederikshavn: tourists seek and share unique experiences (Binkhorst & Dekker, 2009, p. 311) (Crossland, 2017). Therefore, it would be beneficial if the app could include information about experiences or attractions in Frederikshavn that

are unique. This information about unique experiences might include information about the festival *Tordenskioldsdage* which is a unique Scandinavian festival telling the story of the flag officer, *Tordenskiold*. During the festival, the guest is furthermore invited to participate in the story (Frederikshavn.dk, n.d.). This is an example of an experience that might be valuable to include in the app. This is, first of all, as the tourist is able to have a unique experience which is what often attracts tourists, and, secondly, as the tourist is invited to actively participate in creating the experience. It is beneficial that Frederikshavn offers these experiences that tourists can participate in as tourists are preoccupied with an: "existential state of Being activated by certain tourist experiences (…) it is derived from tourists' participation in the event rather than from merely being spectators of it," (Wang, 1999, p. 359). This suggests that it would be very valuable if the app would include information about experiences that let the visitor participate actively in them.

f) Indoor activity facilities: this is especially valuable for visitors who, like respondent 5, travel with their children. In this connection, the author believes, it would be beneficial to include information about the tropical indoor swimming facility, *The Reef,* as more respondents argued that they enjoy experiencing it which indicates that other tourists with similar preferences would be motivated to experience it as well.

g) Opening hours: this is important as visitors need to know when they can see or experience the things they are interested in. As it was explained earlier, it can have a negative impact on the experience if the visitor shows up at a place and cannot actually experience it. This is important to avoid, as this thesis seeks to enhance the visitor experience in Frederikshavn.

Functions that might be available on the app:

1. Buy ticket for attraction or experience on beforehand through app: this function should be included in the app as many people consider the function useful.

2. Check in – for instance through *Instagram*: by allowing the visitor to use this function, she is able to show her *Instagram* followers what places she visits. This means that it is a function that allows not only the user to keep track of the places she has visited but her followers as well, meaning that this function from which a certain place can be promoted through its' visitors.

3. Discounts on food or attractions: this is an example that can motivate the user extrinsically to use the app. By knowing that the app offers the user discounts on certain things or experiences,

the study in this thesis indicates, the visitor, and perhaps locals as well, will be more motivated to use it. However, it is difficult to find out whether these organizations would be willing to offer discounts through the app at this point of the process. The author instead suggests that it is something that could be investigated if the app were to be realized.

A few recommendations regarding the promotion of the app are:

1. Through social media/ another app: based on the thesis findings, the author suggests that one of the most successful ways of promoting the app would be through social media such as *Facebook* or *Instagram*. This is, as the respondents explains, as they would be most inclined to notice the information on these platforms or as they use these platforms more than others. It could furthermore be promoted through another app, which could be beneficial as the respondents believe they prefer using apps rather than other platforms in certain situations.

2. Promotion at hotels: this could be beneficial as some tourists stay in Frederikshavn for more than a single day and therefore choose to stay at a hotel.

3. Through news channels: two respondents argued that this would be a beneficial way of promoting the app.

If the app were to be further developed to include information about other cities in Denmark it should include:

1. A function that allows the user to choose a destination from a list where the different destinations appear in order to find information about that particular destination: this would be valuable if the app was to be expanded to include other Danish destinations. As explained earlier, the author of this thesis believes that it would be a competitive advantage for Denmark to have this kind of digital solution for tourists. As it was also explained, Denmark scores lower than other Northern European countries when it comes to tourists' level of satisfaction based on their stay at the destination. Therefore, the author suggests, that if the app were to be developed, it should only include Danish destinations, at least in the beginning.

2. A function that allows the user to see when a certain place is crowded: this is a function that could be possible to use for destinations such as Copenhagen where there are more people than there are in for instance Frederikshavn.

On a final note, these recommendations might not clarify every detail that should be included in the app. However, the analysis has suggested what is most valuable to include in a visitor app for tourists visiting Frederikshavn. The results of the investigation have illuminated some of the most influential drivers behind the respondents' actions, and they have clarified what they need from an app for it to be able to motivate them to use it. The following section concerns the quality of the research.

5.4. Quality of the research

In order to assess the value of the findings and reflect upon whether the knowledge is useful or not, the concepts of *reliability, validity, objectivity,* and *generalizability* developed by Steinar Kvale (Kvale, 2007) will be considered in connection to this thesis.

Reliability is defined by Joppe as: "The extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study is referred to as reliability and if the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable," (Golafshani, 2003, p. 598). This means that it has to do with reproducing similar findings under other circumstances.

In this thesis, reliability concerns whether it is possible obtain the same findings or to reproduce the results from a similar study or by a different researcher. In this case, this is not possible, as the researcher, as mentioned earlier, has influenced the outcome by selecting subjective types of analysis methods. The researcher acknowledges that her own pre-understandings and her constructions has influenced the outcome of the process. For instance, she is the one who has decided which questions were important to include in the interviews, and she is the one who interprets the answers to the questions. As people have different constructions and, thereby, different opinions, it is very probable that another researcher would have for instance formulated other questions or interpreted the answers differently, and this means that the finding and the analysis would have been very different.

Furthermore, the author of this thesis argues that even by using the same benchmarks as this researcher, another researcher would not have obtained the exact same results. The reason why is that people have different pre-understandings; for example, other people might not share the author's belief of pre-understanding about tourists as being very dependent on technology.

Additionally, the process of gathering the data used to answer the interview questions relied upon finding tourists to interview. Another researcher would most likely have found other tourists than the ones found be this researcher, and the answers would, as a result, probably have been different.

Perhaps the other researcher would furthermore have found tourists of other nationalities, and this could also mean that the results would have been different, as these tourists could have other needs or preferences. Regarding the correspondence with Ulrik Lerche, the author believes that other ideas or suggestions would have been obtained by contacting more professionals. However, even though these factors have the ability to influence and change the outcome of the process, the author believes that this thesis clarifies some of the preferences and needs of the digital tourists.

Validity concerns the "truth" or correctness of a statement. A valid argument is one that is well grounded, convincing and justifiable. In relation to social sciences, validity has to do with the issue of whether a particular method studies what it intends to study (Kvale, 2007, p. 122).

The question emerging from the knowledge about presented above about validity is then: has the combination of the qualitative interviews, hermeneutics, and meaning interpretation used in this thesis then been useful in order to answer: *"(...) how is it possible to develop content for a tourist app for visitors of the city of Frederikshavn with the objective of enhancing the visitor experience,"* (problem formulation), and whether the methods can help investigating: *"and what kind of content should it contain."* The author of the thesis had a pre-understanding before writing the thesis that it is essential to include the consumer in the process of generating ideas for the product. This idea was elaborated and supported by the concept of co-creation which stated that co-creation is beneficial as it includes the consumer, and as it is a way of creating competitive advantage. The researcher then conducted the interviews with visitors, not only in order to answer the problem formulation, but also in order to find out whether co-creation, and especially the method of interviews would be a useful way of including the visitors and generating ideas for content for the app. This means that the first part of the problem formulation was answered by using both theory and the methods. In this case, the author argues, this thesis is valid if seen from a constructivist, qualitative inquiry point of view.

The researcher must furthermore, continuously follow up on, question, and theoretically interpret the findings obtained in order to make sure the study is valid (Kvale, 2007, p. 123). This benchmark suggests that sources used as references must be checked and findings must be elaborated. For instance, a claim may be deemed stronger or more correct if it is supported by several sources. For some claims in this thesis, multiple sources have been used in order to support to claim. Furthermore, the author of the thesis has attempted to use sources written by as many authors possible as a way of further validating the sources. If more than one author has created the source, there are several people who support the claim. The findings of this thesis have been checked in the way that the expert

correspondence is included in order to know whether the expert believe that the findings are valuable or not and, if they are not, what he consider to be more valuable. The correspondence is then a way of attempting at reaching the most valid findings possible.

A method through which the findings could be validated in regard to this thesis is *pragmatic valida-tion.* This type of validation could be aimed for if the app was actually developed containing the ideas for content suggested in this thesis and if this would lead to success (Kvale, 2007, p. 126). It would be successful if the app could actually result in enhanced tourist experiences in Frederikshavn, or, if designed for the entire country, enhanced tourist experiences in Denmark.

Another factor that is of importance to consider when talking about validity is *communicative validity.* This has to do with the way in which the findings are validated through communication with the appropriate or "right" types of people (Kvale, 2007, p. 125). In this thesis, the appropriate people to address are someone that has experience with either designing or developing apps in relation to tour-ism as this person would then know what is realistic or beneficial to include in the app in order for tourists to be likely to use it. This person will then have the knowledge that enables him to give a qualified suggestion on how to use, change, or include new findings.

Furthermore, Kvale argues that it is important for the researcher to consider the concept of *objectivity.* Objectivity concerns, in this case, how research can be conducted in a way in which it can be bias free. This has to do with triangulating knowledge and leaving personal bias out (Kvale, 2007, p. 120). In this thesis, the knowledge obtained through the interviews combined with the knowledge deriving from the theoretical framework has been tested through the expert correspondence. However, due to her paradigm, the author of this thesis acknowledges that personal bias is impossible, as the results and analysis are influenced on the researcher's personal pre-understandings and experiences. Objec-tivity is then used as a means of distancing the researcher from the research, but as the researcher is the one conducting the research and controlling the process the most, she cannot be distanced com-pletely from it.

Kvale additionally argues that it is important for the researcher to consider whether it is possible to *generalize* the findings. When generalizing, the researcher is able to: "Transfer findings from one case to other cases," (Kvale, 2007, p. 127). In relation to this thesis, the generalizability would be used if the app would be developed for example for other destinations in Denmark, the entire country or the whole world, as suggested earlier. Because of the constructivist stance taken by the author, the purpose of this thesis has never been to generalize findings to other places as every case is unique,

but it is to investigate what could work in Frederikshavn. The preferences the tourists have in relation to the app might change depending on which destination the app should provide information about, and therefore it might not be possible to generalize the findings in this way. As is became evident some of the respondents from the interviews have certain understandings about what Frederikshavn has to offer and what information should therefore be included in the app. These tourist understandings might differ from city to city as cities are different. Therefore, the author has no foundation for suggesting that an app with that similar content could be useful for tourists visiting another destination. Even though a separate app for Frederikshavn may not be the most valuable solution in relation to tourism, the author still argues that the research must be concentrated on the separate destinations in Denmark in order to find out what the app should include of information about the individual destinations before potentially developing the app.

6. Conclusion

As this thesis has embraced the constructivist paradigm this has meant that the author acknowledges that it is impossible for her to be objective when undertaking this constructivism qualitative research. This is, as the analysis and its' results are highly influenced by the researcher's interpretation and pre-understanding combined with the theoretical knowledge and sources used throughout the thesis. The constructivist paradigm and the qualitative method has meant for this thesis that the researcher had played a central role in the investigation and for the results, as the results have relied on subjective on subjective findings and interpretations.

Throughout this thesis, several different themes have been presented and discussed. Firstly, the problem emerged from the introduction. It was described how Denmark as a tourist destination is not as successful as other Northern European countries when looking at tourists' level of satisfaction with the entire holiday experience. This is a problem that must be avoided as tourists seek experiences of value and that they will be less inclined to return to a destination if they have had negative or trivial experiences at the destination. The solution (visitor app) was then presented. Afterwards, the case was presented. This presentation contained information about the city of Frederikshavn and what to experience there, and it was explained why the city was chosen as the area to represent.

After the presentation of the case, the rationale behind choosing an app as the solution for enhancing the tourist experience was presented, and the advantages and disadvantages of the app were discussed. Based on this discussion, the author reached the conclusion that there were more advantages than disadvantages connected with the solution. One of these advantages is that the app speaks to the digital tourist, and that it allows the destination to come across as more dynamic and modern. Furthermore, the author argued that the app would very likely be able to enhance the visitor experience which were further elaborated later in the thesis.

Then the paradigm was presented, and its impacts on the research process and the outcome were presented, and the methods used for gaining and understanding the findings were presented. These included hermeneutics, qualitative inquiry in the form of interviews, and meaning interpretation, and contributed in allowing the researcher to both gain insight in the interviewees' constructions and understand and extract meaning from the data obtained.

The concept of hermeneutics explained and made the author aware of the process through which she gained understanding and, as the process progressed, continued to reach a higher point of

understanding. The concept of meaning interpretation allowed the researcher to read between the lines when analysing the data. The qualitative method allowed the researcher to gain insight in the respondents' constructions and reach a more profound understanding and paint a more detailed picture of the situation. The combination of these particular methods has allowed for the author to be able to extract meaning and understanding from the data obtained and answer the problem formulation from the point of view of a constructivist. Furthermore, the concept of validity has meant that the author has attempted at creating an analysis as valid as possible based on the benchmarks inherent in the concept.

Throughout the process of writing the thesis, the researcher attempted at finding out how it can be possible to develop content for a visitor app, and found out that the most appropriate method to use in that case was co-creation in the form of interviews. Through these methods, the author was able to investigate the tourists' preferences by including them in the idea generating process. In this way, the author was furthermore able to find ideas that would actually be valuable for the interviewees and the development of the app and investigate whether it was possible to suggest that there were some common beliefs amongst the respondents. Furthermore, the author included the concept of smart tourism destination in order to explain how the tourist experience can be enhanced if the destination is engaging in being a smart tourism destination. This is related to the claim that tourists are being more and more digital and, therefore, need digital solutions when traveling to or staying at a destination. The author therefore argues that it is necessary for Frederikshavn to offer different digital solutions for its tourists in order to meet their needs and, eventually, enhance their tourist experiences.

Throughout the analysis of the data, it became evident that there can be several common beliefs detected amongst the respondents. First of all, they all considered the app to be useful or beneficial for tourists or locals to use when visiting or staying in Frederikshavn. From the analysis of the interviews, it furthermore became clear that all respondents thought that they would use a similar app when traveling to Frederikshavn. This suggests that the app would have the ability to influence the tourist experiences, as this indicates that many other tourists would be willing to use it as well.

From the first part of the analysis, it became evident that the respondents could be motivated to use the app by different reasons. This means that these respondents would be motivated by extrinsic reasons. Lastly, some respondents expressed that they would be motivated to use the app if others would give it positive reviews, meaning that they would be motivated by social reasons. This means that, if the app was realized, it should aim at including content that triggers both intrinsic and extrinsic

reasons, and that it should aim at satisfying its' users in order for them to recommend the app and create the social reasons.

Regarding the content and the design of the app, the last part of the analysis demonstrated that the app should be easy to use and divided in categories depending on the kinds of information to find under the particular category. The respondents furthermore explained that they though the app should include information about practical issues such as accommodation, where to eat, parking possibilities, and opening hours.

The app should furthermore include information about experiences and attractions, indoor activity facilities, and unique experiences in Frederikshavn. It is especially important to include information about the unique experiences, as it was explained earlier, as tourists seek experiences of value, and that it is very possible that these experiences then would have the ability to attract tourists. The app could then be a contributing factor in enhancing the tourists experience. This is especially as it could mean that the chance of the tourist coming across the experience would be greater if it experience were promoted on the app, and, as the app would provide information about opening hours, so the visitor will avoid the problem of going somewhere without being able to experience it.

The app should additionally include information about indoor activities in Frederikshavn as it is information that is difficult for some tourists to find on other platforms. The author argues that, by allowing the tourists to use an app containing information about indoor activities, tourists with the need of experiencing these indoor activities will most likely will very likely be more satisfied with the stay, and their tourist experience would thereby be enhanced. In that way, the author claims that the app will have ability to enhance tourists' experiences in Frederikshavn in more than one way.

The analysis furthermore presented three functions that would have the potential of enhancing the tourist experience. The first was a function that allows the user to buy a ticket for an experience or an attraction on beforehand. This would have the ability to influence the tourist experience positive, as it would mean that the visitor will not have to buy a ticket at the attraction and therefore, she will not have to wait in line or experience problems related to the process of buying the ticket. The second was a function that allows the user to check in through for example *Instagram*. This function can allow the visitor of keeping track of the places she has already visited, and it can promote the places through the visitors. The last function was the discounts on food or attractions, which could motivate the user to both use the app and to eat at the restaurant or visit the destination, as by using the app, it will be cheaper than it will be without it.

Concludingly, the app would be useful for most tourists visiting Frederikshavn, and it is possible to investigate how to develop ideas for app content through the process of co-creating with the visitors. The tourists' needs regarding the app differ a bit from tourist to tourist, but most tourists need information about hotels, restaurants, and experiences to be included in order for the app to meet some of their needs, meaning that these kinds of information must be included. Additionally, the investigation underpinned the notion of constructivism that people are unique and have different constructions, however, some common beliefs might be detected amongst these. Therefore, the theoretical framework, and the methods used, have aided in creating an analysis that is in line with the beliefs of constructivism and that make it possible for the researcher to create an analysis from the constructivist point of view.

7. Reflections on the thesis and its' findings

From the thesis and the process of undertaking the research, some critical points worth mentioning emerge. If some of these points had been followed, the outcome of the study would had been completely different, and the analysis would have been more profound.

- The researcher has her own understanding of the respondents' opinions and how these should be interpreted and used, and another researcher would have another understanding. This means that the outcome of the process is highly influenced by the researcher's understanding and how she relates to the respondents and what they share with her. If the thesis had been written by more researchers, other perspectives would have been included, and a, as a result, the analysis would have been more profound.

- The first interview was between the researcher and two respondents. When two or more respondents participate in an interview simultaneously, there is a risk that one of these respondent's opinions might influence the other's, and the other way around. The researcher could had tried to separate the respondents in order to eliminate the risk of the respondents influencing each other, so that it would have been easier to investigate their own personal constructions, which would had been more in line with the constructivist paradigm. However, as the two respondents of interview 1 and 2 were both Danish men in their forties working within the same field, the author claims that they would very likely hold many similar constructions, or even the same constructions. This means that, at least in this case, it would perhaps not have changed a lot if the respondents were separated during the interviews.

- Another thing that could have been done differently is that the author could have chosen to use a mixed methods approach. This would mean that the author would combine the qualitative method with the quantitative, and, through this combination perhaps include more respondents and investigate whether they regard the ideas as important to include or not. In this way, the author would have been able to create a more profound analysis.

- The author could furthermore have spent more time on attempting to find more respondents of different nationalities than Danish. If more foreign tourists were interviewed, or if the researcher had only chosen to use foreign tourists, it is possible that the investigation would result in completely different conclusions, as these people would have different backgrounds and, thereby, they would very likely have some different preferences as well. However, the

author argues that it is very possible that tourists from most countries would find the app useful as the tourists have become more digital and seek these types of solutions.

- Lastly, if the author would have had more time after having developed the analysis, she could have reached out to restaurants or attractions in order to find out whether they would be willing to offer small discounts through the app. The author believe that some places might be willing to if they would be promoted through the app. In this way, the app and the restaurant or attraction would both gain benefits from the app. This is something that could be looked into if the app were to be realized.

8. List of appendices

1. Transcriptions of the interviews conducted with visitors of Frederikshavn, pictures of email correspondences with respondent 7 and with Ulrik Lerche

2. Recordings of the interviews:
- Interview 1 and 2
- Interview 3
- Interview 4
- Interview 5
- Interview 6

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