

Narkoflom i «norsk» ferieparadis

Narkoen flyder i Løkken

Lokalpolitiker kræver druk i Løkken stoppet

Drukfester fortsætter i Løkken

Unges druk ødelægger ferieidyl

Løkken ønsker nyt image efter drukfester

Løkken savner ungdommen

Lykkeligt samarbejde: Iværksætteriet blomstrer i Løkken

Et paradys for begyndere: Løkken med
de bløde bølger - her har de surfing
på skoleskemaet

De vilde fester døde, men Løkken
lever videre



'When I say I live in Løkken, people ask me if it's noisy'

A critical analysis and discussion of the life, death, and rejuvenation of a popular Danish holiday destination as viewed by local stakeholders and residents



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Abstract

The seaside town of Løkken in the North of Denmark has been subject to much interest in the past 20 years. As the town has undergone a major transition since it began its status as a tourist destination in the beginning of the 1900s with a focus on its beach, which offers the perfect place for bathing in the summer. The town then began introducing night clubs and bars and quickly built up a reputation of drunken teens and violence in the beginning of the millennium. As local irritation towards this reputation grew, the local municipality ultimately chose to change the licenses of night club owners, which had a drastic effect on the night club tourism. This specific form of tourism disappeared and left Løkken as a ghost town with financial struggles for around ten years. As the interest of entrepreneurs began to be directed towards outdoor tourism, new business moved to town and helped Løkken to rejuvenate.

On the basis of the above described life cycle of Løkken, the following problem statement was found to be relevant: *How has Løkken as a tourist destination evolved in the later years through the viewpoint of local stakeholders and residents?*

In order to examine this problem statement and find clarity, I chose to reach out to local stakeholders in Løkken both through an online survey shared in a popular Facebook group for residents and other people with an interest in Løkken, but also by interviewing local businesses. I conducted five semi structured interviews with the union Løkken.dk, the local DMO Løkken Turistbureau, sweet shop Bolcheriet, Hotel Løkken Strand, and North Shore Surf, which is behind a surf shop and surf school in Løkken.

My main findings pointed towards an agreement that the choice to remove night clubs in Løkken was too drastic and not constructive for the town. However, there also seems to be a consensus of preferring the new type of tourists, which favours outdoor tourism and the natural surroundings of Løkken as they are viewed to be more respectful. Interestingly, however, is that some informants argued that the media painted an untrue image of Løkken, which was exaggerated and perhaps even more harmful than the tourism in itself. Now there is a challenge of attracting the new kind of tourist and making Løkken an attractive place to visit all year.

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Introduction

The destination of Løkken is situated in the North of Denmark and is the home of 1600 residents and several local businesses. The town has become home of a rising surfer milieu in the later years, which is a stark contrast to its past. Though the town has been a popular place for beach holidays for hundreds of years, the town itself has gone through a major change in the past 20 years; The early 2000s featured a small town with between 14 and 16 night clubs and bars, which every year in July were filled with young people from all over Scandinavia. This provoked local residents as the noisy guests went on pub crawls, urinated on street corners, and fought each other in their drunken state. This irritation became too much to bear after international media as well as large Danish media outlets began to share the story of a town out of control, which should not be visited. As a result, the local municipality of Løkken-Vrå had multiple meetings on what to do in order to put an end to the loud and unwanted visitors. Ultimately an abrupt halt of some of the regulations for night club owners was forced on the area, which gravely changed the scope of the tourist destination and arguably even caused an identity crisis for Løkken town in the following years. As the town lacked a sense of direction in its tourism after the desire to rid itself of the reputation as the Ibiza of the North, the focus was put on attempting to attract families with children. For years, this seemed like a more or less impossible goal, until the attractiveness of Løkken's outdoor possibilities became clear as outdoor tourism became increasingly popular in Denmark through the 2010s.

Problem field

In 1980, Richard W. Butler introduced a model of how a tourist destination's lifestyle may evolve over a period of time (Butler 1980). Though it has been subject to several updates and alterations, the model has proved applicable to many tourist destinations worldwide and could be helpful when examining the challenges of a destination in order to avoid stagnation and decline as a result of overtourism (ibid.). By applying the model to a certain destination, which overall follows the stages of the model, it may be possible to understand the challenges and perhaps even predict the future of the destination and its challenges. But what if the destination in question already followed the stages presented and is thriving? What happens after the rejuvenation of a destination?

Problem statement

How has Løkken as a tourist destination evolved in the later years through the viewpoint of local stakeholders and residents?

Research questions

How do residents and other stakeholders of Løkken view

- the tourism in the area in a Danish context previously and now?
- the different forms of tourism in Løkken in previously and now?
- irritation among residents in Løkken previously and now?
- the development by tourism actors in Løkken previously and now?

By gaining insights into the viewpoints on different areas within tourism in a Danish context, different forms of tourism, irritation among residents and development by tourism actors, I hope to develop my knowledge in Løkken's past and present as a tourist destination. Hereby, I aspire to hold the gathered knowledge together with the TALC model by Butler (1980) and thereby understand how Løkken as a case can help add on to the model, because it arguably follows the stages of the model throughout its life cycle.

Presentation of chapters

The chapters of this thesis are as follows: The context chapter will aim to present the case of Løkken's newer history in order to clarify for the reader the scope of the thesis. Therefore, it is placed in the beginning of the thesis, as I thereby want to allow the reader to understand the thesis and its focus throughout the other chapters. Thereinafter, the literature review will present the different texts, which I will utilise in my analysis chapter to discuss my findings. Further, the literature review features presentations of the TALC model (Butler 1980), which I also found important to present early as it is one of the main parts of my thesis. The next chapter is the methodology, where I will present my ontological, epistemological and methodological worldview after which I will explain my research process as well as argue my choices and why this method was chosen. Then follows the analysis chapter, which follows the TALC model (Butler 1980) and its stages and then separates the data under each stage into themes, which I found through coding my collected data. Here, I aim to discuss the data by holding it together with the findings of other researchers in their studies, as presented in the literature review. Lastly, the conclusion chapter will present the main findings and discussions of the study as well as limitations and possibilities for future research.

Context

The seaside town of Løkken in Northern Jutland, Denmark, has been a popular tourist spot ever since it opened its first hotel in 1985 (SOURCE). Before then, the main focus was on commercial fishing, this, however, was still in focus and also benefitted from the visitors (ibid.). From there, the facilities for tourists were expanded with a rising number of accommodations, beach facilities, and night clubs. The latter rose in popularity, and while the beach of Løkken was still a popular spot for families to visit, the night club tourism in Løkken seemingly became much more interesting for media to focus on. From the beginning of the millennium, the stories of violence, drugs, and sex filled many headlines about the town, and heavily influenced the view of the destination. In the years between 2002 and 2005, large media such as Ekstra Bladet shared stories of young people acting out in what was known as '*Fucking Fed Ferie*' (fucking awesome holiday, own translation) (Ekstra Bladet 2002). However, one of the most influential factors on Løkken's reputation may be that the large Norwegian newspaper outlet Verdens Gang, shared a story in 2002 warning parents about Løkken and its problems with narcotics and gangs (VG 2002). Here, one of the main contributors to the article was the head of the Christian night watch at the time, who told stories of how many drugs were available in town with warnings that young girls easily could get drugged through their drinks (ibid.). This specific article in itself received much attention among Danish newspapers (Staehelin & Schmidt 2002; Nilsson 2002) while another article revolved around how the locals in Løkken did not like how the Christian night watch was present in town at all (Kristeligt Dagblad 2002). Further, the residents of Løkken seemed chocked about the Norwegian media coverage, as it was not found to be true or representing reality in town (ibid.). However, the following years, the resilience among some residents became increasingly outspoken. As some local businesses chose to arrange pub crawls and other forms of packages including holiday and drinking, meetings in the municipality of Løkken-Vrå became more and more frequent and some members wished for a complete shutdown of the night clubs (Politiken 2003; Ekstra Bladet 2003; Fyns Amts Avis 2003; Fyens.dk 2003; DR.dk 2003). One member stated how it was critical how young people were vomiting in her flowers and knocking over fences in town and on those grounds, she would work towards a change in night club licenses (Politiken 2003). This, however, was not realised for a few years, as the media coverage in Denmark and Norway still wrote critical articles on how crime and drunken youngsters was taking over Løkken as the small town with 1500 residents at the time had around 40,000 visitors during the month of July (Larsen & Quist 2004;

Jyllands-Posten 2005) and new initiatives such as the concept of '*Fucking Fed Homo-ferie*' (fucking awesome homo-holiday, own translation) for gay visitors were introduced (Devold 2004).

However, the parties ended abruptly in 2005, were the licenses of night club owners were in fact changed in order to make the restaurants and clubs in Løkken more regulated and less free to sell cheap alcohol and arranged drinking binges to young people (Fjordbak & Guldbrandt 2021). This had a massive impact on the tourism in Løkken and some residents have later shared how the town "died" and lost many tourists at this time (ibid.). As a result, the night clubs of the town began to close down one by one while the many camp sites, formerly popular among young visitors, were destroyed in order to build new tourist accommodation of high quality (Kanstrup 2006). Further, the municipality of Løkken-Vrå was included into the municipality of Hjørring in 2006, which meant that the residents in the area would have less close contact with the local politicians (Arkiv.dk 2022).

In the following years, the town struggled to attract the type of tourist desired by locals (Fjordbak & Guldbrandt 2021), however, the investments in new tourist facilities were highly present and shows how the determination of locals was directed at families with children and senior citizens to visit instead (Bjerrum 2008). The lack of young visitors did start to worry some local business owners, who wanted to reintroduce some of the parties and drinks for young people, though some residents were still hesitant (TV Nord 2012). Instead, the local tourist union wanted to focus on active holidays for young people rather than bars (ibid.). A new project of renovating the pier in Løkken gave new hope that the young and active people would come to Løkken and use the beach for their activities after being "shocked" by the sudden shut down of Løkken's night life (Christensen & Steffensen 2014). It did, however, prove challenging to attract young people to Løkken again and in 2016 the arrangers of a youth camp for young people in Løkken had to face the fact that they had far too few participants to carry out the camp (Bøje 2016). Meanwhile, the fishing fleet in Løkken was facing difficulties and several challenges as the number of fishermen in town was receding and the economy therefore increasingly tight (TV Nord 2017). At the same time a new initiative in town completely changed the scope of the tourism in Løkken once again. As the pier project was finished the sea surrounding Løkken became a popular spot for surfers, and this ultimately helped entrepreneurs introduce new businesses. For example, North Shore Surf opened a surf school, a surf café and later a restaurant combined with a surf shop in town (TV Nord 2018). This called for an

increase in collaboration between local stakeholders, which strengthened the tourism in the town once again (ibid.). Hotels, local music festivals, and tourist facility outlets joined forces and helped the town towards a new image (TV2 Nord 2017; 2019). As the town provided more and more different facilities both in and out of the natural elements, the town has many offers for families, though the young people are still not visiting for parties (Pilgaard 2019; Sønderup 2019).

Today, Løkken is renewed and everything from car races in the sand (Hukiær 2020) to surf clubs (Vores Løkken 2020; Vores Løkken 2020; Thomsen Møller 2022) is welcome in town. Several news stories have revolved around how Løkken was known as '*Nordens Ibiza*' (the Ibiza of the North, own translation) after which it closed down, died and then was rejuvenated (Barsøe 2021; Fjordbak & Guldbrandt 2021). Similarly, the town has become increasingly attractive for newcomers and is facing a boom in its number of residents with fully booked spaces in the local kindergarten (Amelung, Møller & Damgård 2022).

Literature review

After researching the field of tourism destination analysis and resident resistance and irritation, I was able to identify four main categories relevant to my research of Løkken's development and changes in the later years. Before reviewing some of the relevant literature within these fields, I found it relevant to examine prior use of the Tourism Area Life Cycle (Butler 1980) in studies of destinations and their evolutions. Therefore, examples of this have been placed firstly in this literature review after a description of the seminal model from 1980. The overview of the model will then serve as a basis for the rest of the relevant texts, which will then be reviewed in order to identify the gap in literature filled by this thesis.

The Tourism Area Life Cycle

The Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC) model was firstly introduced by Richard W. Butler in 1980 (Butler 1980) and has since then been a highly used model, as it introduces the possibility of theoretically predicting the future of a destination's development (Rodriquez et al 2008; Russel & Faulkner 2004). The model has been revisited and reviewed subsequently both by Butler himself (2000; 2004; 2006) and by other researchers (Benedetto & Bojanic 1993; Baum 2010).

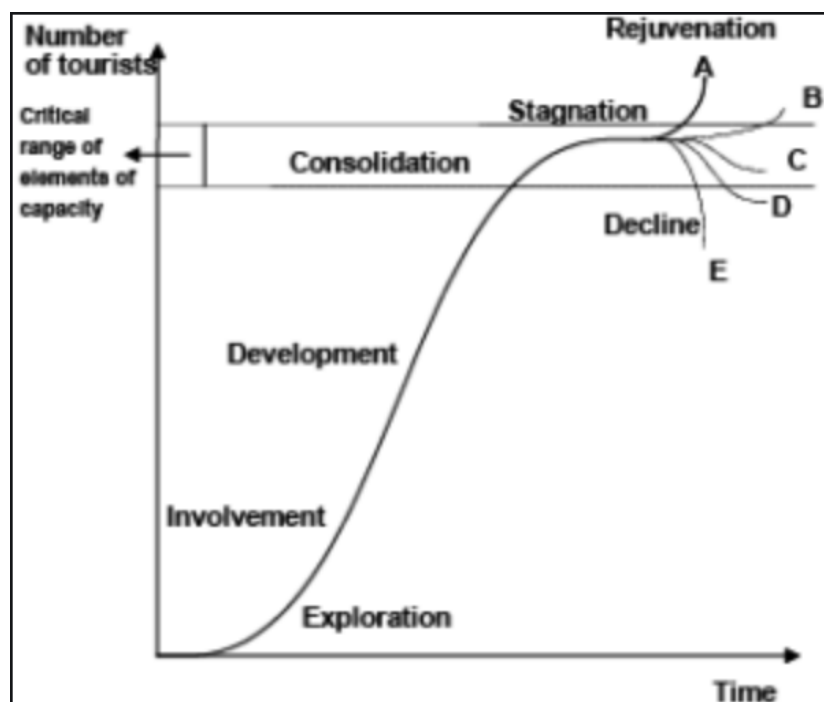


Table 1: The Tourism Area Life Cycle model by Richard W. Butler (1980)

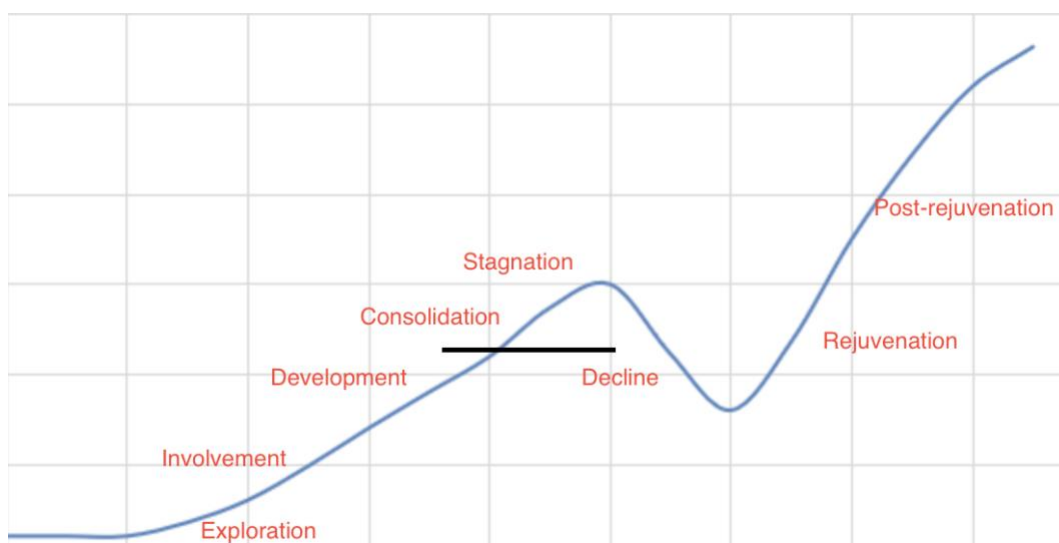
The model introduces six hypothetical stages, which a tourism destination may experience in its lifetime (Butler 1980). The first step, *exploration*, describes the destination before any marketing or tourist attractions have been created to accommodate tourists (ibid.). Once facilities either partly or primarily for visitors is introduced, the destination enters the *involvement* stage (ibid.). During these first stages of the destination life cycle, the involvement with local residents is expected to be high and the *involvement* stage could also show examples of how certain seasons are more attractive to visitors (ibid.). The advertising of the area will increase in the *development* stage, where locally provided services have also been replaced by larger chains provided by external contributors (ibid.). Further, '*Changes in the physical appearance of the area will be noticeable, and it can be expected that not all of them will be welcomed or approved by all of the local population*' (Butler 1980, p. 8). The next stage is referred to as *consolidation* and describes a period where the destination faces visitor numbers, which exceed the number of residents, the economy of the area is reliant on tourism, and some irritation among residents can be detected (ibid.). However, the growth rate will begin to slow down, though it is still on the rise (ibid.). As can be seen on Table 1, the *consolidation* stage is also the first stage to reach the so-called *critical range of elements of capacity* area of the model, which primarily describes the number of tourists via the y-axis. When the area reaches the *stagnation* stage, the capacity of the destination has been reached (ibid.). This further means that '*Capacity levels for many variables will have been reached or exceeded, with attendant environmental, social, and economic problems.*' (Butler 1980, p. 8). Several actions must be taken in order to keep up the number of visitors, as the area is now heavily reliant on the tourism as the accommodations and other tourism facilities require many visitors in order to survive (ibid.). This stage also marks a period where the area is no longer fashionable or true to its natural surroundings and history. From there, Butler (1980) describes how the destination can either face *decline*, where the destination is no longer attractive to visitors, or *rejuvenation*, where the destination rebrands itself with new attractions for the visitors (ibid.).

The TALC-model has been commented on and revisited as some researchers found a few limitations to the model. Rodríguez et al (2008) found through their study of the island of Tenerife as a tourism destination that the model is highly descriptive and lacks a focus on sustainable factors and their impact on a destination (Rodríguez et al 2008). This viewpoint is valuable to this study, as it highlights how the model cannot stand alone in an analysis of a destination. Therefore, the analysis will feature the model as a chronological overview of Løkken with arguments of how the stages evolved. Then findings within the field as well as my own empirical data will serve to further

analyse and examine these stages. This choice was made as I mainly agree with the findings of Rodríguez et al (2008) and find the model slightly too descriptive to stand alone, so without utilising the findings of other researchers, this study would not be able to discuss Løkken's progress in depth. This will be explained further in the method chapter.

Also, Russel & Faulkner (2008) argue how the model is limited in the sense that it should not be linear, but rather built up as a circle: *'It seems odd that the tourism area life cycle is represented graphically as quasi-linear. When combining it with chaos principles, highlighting the change cycles within each stage, it seems appropriate to represent the combined model as cyclic'* (Russel & Faulkner 2008, p. 563). Seemingly, changing the model into a circular shape is mainly useful for Russel & Faulkner (2008), when applying the element of chaos theory to TALC. However, for this thesis, the circular version of the model seems somewhat irrelevant, as Løkken arguably follows a more linear graph in its later and most well-documented years. This argument will be further explained in the analysis chapter of this thesis.

For this thesis, the model is very much applicable to the case of Løkken as a tourism destination. However, an addition to the model could be to consider whether it is always a case of either *decline* or *rejuvenation* (Butler 1980; Butler 2000, Butler 2004; Butler 2006) once the capacity of the destination is reached. As will be explained in the analysis, the destination in question may experience both of these stages one after the other. This could change the shape of the model and even add to the length of the graph.



Tourism in Denmark

Broegaard (2020) suggests that rural Danish tourism shows many examples of *translocal* residents. In other words, residents who only live and/or work in the area in high season (Broegaard 2020). The study also highlights how the rural area in question may be preferred when it comes to entrepreneurship in these more or less remote areas. Further, it argues that a *translocal* perspective could be useful in future studies (ibid.). For the case of Løkken as a tourist destination, this text adds to the notion of the new entrepreneurs coming to town and why it is attractive for them to open a business in the area. As this study is focused on the Danish island of Bornholm, it is highly applicable to my study since both destinations are in Denmark and from there face similar challenges. However, this can also be seen as part of the gap in research as it is important for this study to stress how it is situated on an island and how that affects Bornholm as a destination. In the case of Løkken, it is arguable that even though it is not situated on an island, the area is rural enough for the concept of *translocalism* to be relevant.

Through researching for the case and prior findings within the field, a study on the attractions in Løkken and two other similar destinations was found. When arguing how fishing may go from important economic factor in a rural destination to mainly a form of museum, Ounanian (2018) presents arguments and findings from local stakeholders in these three destinations. For Løkken specifically, she found that '*Its fishing fleet is small with five active commercial boats, but the fleet is important to local identity and part of the attraction of Løkken for tourists*' (Ounanian 2018, p. 290). From this paper, it is clear that the interviewees prefer the small fleet of Løkken to remain an active one and not to become a part of the museum telling its story. This study shows one part of the destination, which will also play a role in how the stakeholders of Løkken now describe the tourist attractions of Løkken. The study further examines how authenticity may or may not play a role for tourists visiting these areas in order to experience 'the real destination'. When held together with the development of Løkken, this model could be applicable to its former stages of the TALC-model (Butler 1980). Further, the some interviewees commented on the disappearing fishing fleet with much worry and see it as a challenge to keep it, as will be discussed in the analysis.

In a study from 2013, Halkier (2013) argues how often times, Danish destinations are governed by local enterprises, who have much to say in changes made in the destination. This finding and viewpoint was then further supported by an argument elaborating on how these are often affected

by short-termism and localism (Halkier 2013). For this study, these findings are highly relevant and useful in terms of localism. Halkier (2013) exemplifies how some areas may benefit from innovative rather than traditional methods. However, there is also a gap in this literature, which I hope to fill with this paper; it mostly identifies the problem rather than provide different forms of understandings or significance to concrete destinations. In other words, Halkier's (2013) study provides a general overview of the challenges, yet has not clear or specific findings from one destination to support his arguments. This thesis is, contrarily, built up around one specific case and not as general and applicable to other destinations as Halkier's (2013) text.

Different forms of tourism

As mentioned in the previous part of this literature review, the residents of Løkken can sometimes be considered somewhat *translocal*, the emphasis and focus of this subcategory will also include part-time residents of Løkken, who still feel attached to the town and therefore is considered a valuable stakeholder. As found by Varley & Semple (2015), the concept of *friluftsliv* in Nordic destinations may cause the elements of business and pleasure to mix. This text is mainly relevant to this research as it seeks to investigate why slow adventure and being in nature makes for an attractive tourism destination and/or place to live. The arguments rely on how nature is home for the residents and an important part of their everyday (Varley & Semple 2015). For this literature review, I argue that the text is somewhat limited since it does not consider a specific destination or even country for its findings. Therefore, my findings can add on to the text and further build upon the viewpoints made here. This specific form of tourism can be held together with data describing Løkken and how outdoor tourism is important to the destination in a different way than other texts from this literature review.

When it comes to natural areas, sport tourism may be an increasingly popular form of tourism. In their study, Newland et al (2021) discovered how attendees at a sport event in a natural park in California considered their own behaviour and how sustainably they were acting. They also raised the question of when it is okay to alter and change nature to accommodate tourists, who wish to use these areas (Newland et al 2021). They ultimately concluded that untouched areas were very attractive to their respondents though this form of tourism can also be seen as highly harmful to the area in which it takes place. However, the social and economic growth within other aspects of this destination is also highly detectable. In other words, there will likely be changes in these kinds of natural areas after becoming a tourism destination (ibid.). These changes can, of course, be

considered either positive or negative. The study was conducted using a qualitative method consisting of interviews with attendees of a sport event. This makes for an in-depth study of the answers, but if they chose to combine the study with a survey, it could have created a more extensive and broad examination of the area. Thereby, my thesis should be able to add onto this form of study by providing both a survey of private residents and visitors of Løkken and the more public aspect of local businesses and stakeholders.

When considering the focus on outdoor tourism by Løkken today, its history featuring a very different kind of tourism should also be examined. It is found to be important not to merely claim tourism focused on alcohol and parties to be a negative form of tourism. Bell (2008) used his study to explore the opinions of locals in popular party destination and found that not all residents found the effects thereof to be all negative. However, it seems that the benefits of the so-called *alcotourism* are more present for people working in the tourism industry of the area than for the residents (Bell 2008). Irritation among these was therefor also highly visible in Bell's (2008) findings. As this paper is highly exploratory, it does not have any specific examples of places, where his findings may be applicable. This could be argued to be a gap in this literature, which my thesis then will examine more in depth with one concrete example instead of the more general nature of Bell's (2008) paper.

Irritation among residents

As the early 2000s' Løkken has been compared to destinations like Ibiza, where nightclub tourism is prominent, an academic article on this subject could arguably help add to this literature review. Therefore, the findings Serra-Cantalops & Ramon-Cardona (2016) in their study on Ibiza and how this specific form of tourism affects residents has been chosen as valuable for my thesis. Interestingly, Serra-Cantalops & Ramon-Cardona (2016) found that the opinions of the residents of Ibiza were seldom taken into account and they did not have much of a say in the possible changes in the destination. Even though resilience among the residents was detected, the tourism industry on the Mediterranean island is considered too important and great to down-scale (Serra-Cantalops & Ramon-Cardona 2016). This view is highly relevant to my study of Løkken and the findings of this study will therefore be held together with my own, all the while considering the other differences in the destinations. Still, their study is limited in that it does not necessarily provide deeper insight into the opinions of residents other than the quantitative survey, which serves to highlight their views (ibid.). I would argue that my thesis does directly build on top of this specific article, however, the

findings of my survey and interviews could provide an example of how to do further research in Ibiza and other destinations.

When considering who should be held accountable for the contentedness of residents, it could be useful to firstly examine whether overtourism can even be managed. The answer to this wonderment was attempted answered in 2020, when Mihalic & Kuščer (2020) conducted a study named *Can overtourism be managed? Destination management factors affecting residents' irritation and quality of life*. In this study, Mihalic & Kuščer (2020) introduces a model, which may help researchers of similar fields understand how different actors within tourism may be able to control harmful and unsustainable tourism in certain areas and destinations. The model (table 2) shows the different possibilities of combinations of influential factors on the tourism destination of the Slovenian city of Ljubljana. As the researchers of this study state in the conclusion of the text, this study is somewhat limited to the views of residents and does not consider other stakeholders' opinions on the matter (Mihalic & Kuščer 2020). Further, the model is arguably highly quantitative in its nature and therefore may lack some of the deeper understandings providable by qualitative interviews with stakeholders. This should therefore be a positive add-on made in my study of Løkken.

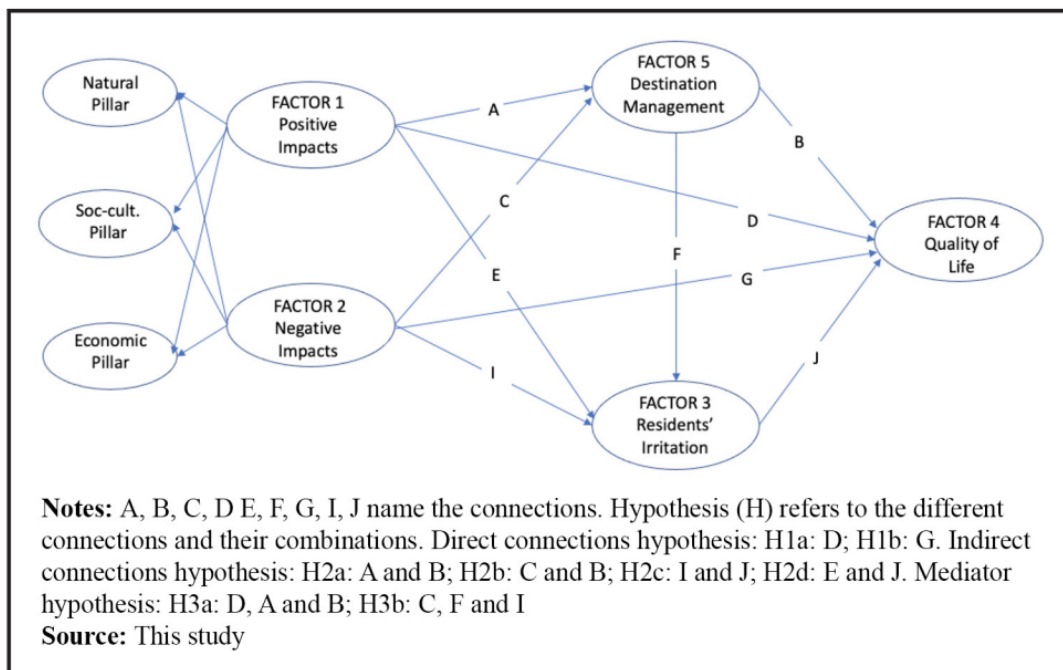


Table 2: The model by Mihalic & Kuščer (2020)

It may not be entirely agreed upon by everybody in the destination, when someone claims that it is suffering from overtourism. As can be seen by the 2020 study carried out by Sæþórsdóttir et al (2020), the media has much to say when it comes to labelling a place as such. In Iceland, the later years have featured a sharp increase in numbers of tourists, and this has resulted in heavy media coverage of the island claiming that it was on a path of unsustainable shifts and damage, which ultimately will ruin Iceland. As such both traditional media and social media mentions may have much to say when it comes to branding a destination negatively or even wrongly (Sæþórsdóttir et al 2020). Interestingly, this study argues how the media may perceive Iceland as a place filled with tourists who create changes and harm the island, but local residents still wanted the tourism to continue as it is one of the most important economic sectors for the island (ibid.). This could also explain why local stakeholders do not take action against tourism in order to control it (ibid.). This text does not, however, go much beyond the findings of many media mentions of overtourism in Iceland. For example, the study does not feature the opinions of residents in the form of data collection made by the researchers themselves but rather utilises former research and their findings concentrate heavily on the quantity of media coverage rather than whether the residents agree with them in order to verify the findings.

Development by tourism actors

The relationship between stakeholders with interest in a destination's tourism and the residents of the area is unpacked by Tércio et al in an academic paper released in 2022. Here, the impact of tourism is focused upon with special emphasis placed on how the residents are affected in a Brazilian coastal destination (Tércio et al 2022). Additionally, the residents in developing areas may be affected by tourism and overtourism in a different way than other, otherwise similar destinations (ibid.). The study builds upon a survey of residents and their desire to evade their homes during high season as well as their demographic including age and occupation (ibid.). However, the study does not examine the views of the residents further after concluding that they in fact have a desire to leave their home because of an impending overtourism. Thereby, the study leaves a gap in terms of why the evasion is happening and could potentially benefit from a more qualitative study as an addition to the findings. As such, the study argues that the evasion is happening as a result of overtourism when it could also be caused by other factors. However, the study presents a highly relevant problem, where residents of a certain area feel the need to leave their homes in high season.

Therefore, the study is also applicable for my thesis as it places some of the responsibility with the tourism actors of the area (ibid.).

In a 2022 study, Mao-Ying et al (2022) presents an argument concentrating on how the citizens of a tourist destination can help creating a more successful destination by showing positive advocacy in the area as a result of strong ties to the destination. Further, the study highlights that the hosts of the destination can help build the destination and concludes that this engagement can actively enhance the experiences of the tourists in the area (ibid.). The study presents the terms community citizenship behavior (CCB) and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), which revolve around whether the residents and the local businesses of the area as hosts can participate in development of the area. The study ultimately concludes the importance of CCB and OCB by use of a positivist and quantitative questionnaire. The focus is mainly put on two rural towns in China and the unique culture of such a tourist destination may prove difficult to apply to other destinations in other parts of the world. Had the study included more qualitative sampling, it may showcase the views on CCB and OCB in a more nuanced way and allowed further interpretation of the matter. However, the study still highlights the importance of local support, which makes it highly relevant to discuss and include in this thesis.

Further investigating the subject of resident participation, Songyi et al (2021) also presents a study on the importance hereof. This study examines the residents' views on and relationship with tourism development in a hillside village in Korea (Songyi et al 2021). Building upon previous studies, the main findings of this paper show how the residents have a tendency of having a positive view on tourism development if they perceive the outcome of the tourism in the area to be positive (ibid.). Thereby, the development in the area can be further enhanced if the residents already have a positive view on the impact of tourism (ibid.). This conclusion was found by use of a survey featuring random people in the area, who then made their response by use of a Likert scale (ibid.). This study, like other ones reviewed in this chapter, relies solely on quantitative data even though it revolves around the local opinion on the matter (ibid.). I therefore argue that it could have benefitted from a qualitative angle as well as the survey in order to understand the matter further and make use of examples from interviews or the like in the examination of the findings. The survey, however, is highly relevant to my study of Løkken since it features opinions of residents in a tourist destination, which can be applicable when conducting a similar study.

In a 2011 paper, Savage et al (2011) groups together studies and findings revolving around stakeholder collaboration and the usefulness hereof. The *social problem-solving* mechanisms describes the special relationships of these stakeholders (Savage et al 2011). One of the main findings points towards how businesses could benefit by collaborating to solve the so-called *messy problems* rather than attempting to take care of these independently (ibid.). This finding is highly applicable to my study, because it presents the idea of refraining to merely see each other as competition and instead work towards the same goal (ibid.). As will be discussed in my analysis chapter, the stakeholders of Løkken have found ways of improving the destination through different forms of collaboration. I do, however, realise that this study is not specifically focused on a tourist destination or challenges in tourism in general. This arguably helps me to fill a gap of stakeholder collaboration within a tourism destination. Further, their study builds upon the findings of other researchers and they do not collect their own data to support their claims (ibid.). This is something I hope to contribute to through my thesis.

Method & Methodological Considerations

The aim of this chapter is to present and justify my chosen method as well as map out why these methods were helpful in providing clarity for my problem statement. As will be explained in this chapter, the TALC model (Butler 1980) has been used as an analytical frame and therefore the main objective of my study has been to analyse Løkken's development as a tourist destination and how it follows the life cycle by Butler (1980) yet serves an example of how the model can be further developed.

Ontology

For this thesis, reality is built up around the utterances made by informants and replies given by respondents in my collected data. In other words, what is said to exist by the informants is seen as being true (Daymon & Holloway 2011). Thereby, their reality is based on their personal worldview and the reality they find themselves in and is biased in some way (Kuada 2012). This further allows me to discuss my findings from what other researchers have found to be true in former studies. As the utterances in the interviews are based on how the informant view a certain part of Løkken's tourism destination development, these may sometimes differ from one another and it is not possible to point to one truth or answer to a statement. On example from my data collection, which will also be presented and discussed in the analysis chapter of this thesis, was when several of my informants agreed that the choice of closing down all clubs and bars in Løkken created a sudden shut down and quietness of town, whereas the representative from Bolcheriet did not experience it as such. Rather, they argued that the clubs in Løkken slowly closed over time because the visitor numbers declined as a result of new trends in society. In my study, society is the social world of Løkken, which is perceived as local, yet not entirely unique as it is still influenced by other factors in Danish society (Bitsch Olsen & Pedersen 2019). The subjective utterances and replies are what shapes the perceived reality of the tourism in Løkken. This allows me to place the argument that the phenomenon is constructed through the discourse hereof (Daymon & Holloway 2011.).

Epistemology

From the point of view of this thesis, knowledge is held by the residents and stakeholders of Løkken. Therefore, the interviews aim to highlight the phenomenon of tourism in Løkken, because I as a researcher believe that this way is the most relevant method for their knowledge to be shared in a way that allows me to make an in-depth analysis. Also, I base my findings and knowledge of

Løkken primarily on what my informants and respondents have shared in my data collection as a means of intersubjectively understanding the social world of Løkken town (Kuada 2012). The knowledge was as mentioned also found by a survey, which provided a broader view of some of the opinions of private interests of Løkken. This knowledge is seen as valid since it is uttered by the people who live through it. In other words, the knowledge is acquired through my interviews and survey (Daymon & Holloway 2011). Thereby, I see this knowledge as something you gather through experience by having a stake in Løkken in some way. Not only residents have this knowledge, which is why other stakeholders such as returning tourists were also included in the data collection process. The perspectivist nature of this thesis means that the reality presented in my study is interpreted reality meaning that the way the informants interpret the world becomes reality (Bitsch Olsen & Pedersen 2019). Knowledge is considered to be highly subjective because reality in this case is dependent on the informants' view of what is real and what has happened in the social world, in which they find themselves (Kuada 2012; Bitsch Olsen & Pedersen 2019).

Methodology

As my main objective for the study was to examine Løkken's development, through a lens that follows the TALC model (Butler 1980). Therefore, the study is perceived as mainly deductive. Bitsch Olsen & Pedersen (2019) describes deductive studies as a way to “*rationaly deduce empirical regularities based on theory*” (Bitsch Olsen & Pedersen 2019, p. 115). However, rather than attempting to ask the informants and respondents questions, which would fit into each stage of Løkken's life cycle, I chose to allow the respondent to share their views on more current themes, as I found these to be relevant for them to answer as a form of expert on the area. For example, the early stages of a tourist destination life cycle include *Exploration*, *Involvement*, and *Development* (Butler 1980). For the case of Løkken, these stages have taken place between 30-100 years ago, which arguably makes it more relevant for my research on these stages to be based on secondary sources. This will also be presented later in the chapter. The methodology as such is therefore my deductive approach to interviewing and surveying as a means of exemplifying how Løkken follows the TALC model (Daymon & Holloway 2011; Kuada 2012).

Description and Justification for the Study

This methodology is appropriate for my studies, as it allows me to showcase the view of visitors in Løkken as well as some of the most important stakeholders through interviewing. Thereby, the

interests of those who can and aim to direct Løkken as a tourist destination in whichever direction they find appropriate, is taken into consideration, as they arguably will be the most important for the destination in the future.

The Sample and the Setting

The size of my sample has allowed me to focus on a few respondents in a deeper way than if the sample had been larger. I hope to create a study, which provides an in-depth examination as possible (Daymon & Holloway 2011). Daymon & Holloway (2011) further suggest that: “(...) *rather than enhance qualitative research, a large sample may harm it as the research is likely to lack the depth and richness of a smaller sample*” (Daymon & Holloway 2011, p. 218). I found the number of interviews in the final product useful, as the respondents all represent different tourism actors, have different views on tourism and why it is important to Løkken. Further, the informants participated because they have a genuine interest in Løkken as a destination and place to live, which further added to the narrations through their enthusiasm (Brinkman & Tanggaard 2010; Long 2015; Frederiksen et al 2017). In the following, the informants from my stakeholder interviews will be presented.

Name	Active since	Type of organisation	Place of interview
Bolcheriet - Løkken	2001	Shop / Factory	Telephone
Løkken Turistbureau		DMO	Microsoft Teams
Hotel Løkken Strand	2016	Accommodation	In person
North Shore Surf	2017	Outdoor experiences	Microsoft Teams
Løkken.dk		Union	In person

Bolcheriet – Løkken

The sweet shop in Løkken has existed since 2001 and the owners hereof live in the centre of Løkken to this day with their family (Bolcheriet 2022). Every year, many guests visit the shop and see how the candy is made up close (ibid.). The main customer group of Bolcheriet is, according to the informant in the interview, families with children but the informant is still considered to be very important for this thesis, as they have been present through several stages of Løkken's life cycle. The interview with the informant from Bolcheriet was in the form of a phone call after request of the informant. The interview guide was used when found necessary, however, the informant needed little to no directions in the form of questions, and therefore the interview was highly narrative, and the informant had much freedom to express their views (Daymon & Holloway 2011). As the

questions were found to be answered in a fulfilling manner without much interference, the informant gained more control of the narration.

Løkken Turistbureau

The local DMO of Løkken is part of VisitNordvestkysten, which covers the coastal area from Hirtshals in Northern Jutland to Thorsminde in the Western part of Jutland (VisitNordvestkysten 2022). The bureau has a physical presence centrally in town and has a souvenir shop along with an information desk for tourists to receive inspiration and information on the area (ibid.). The interview with the informant from Løkken Turistbureau took place on Microsoft Teams and was the longest of the five interviews. The main focus of the interview was put on the challenges and tasks of everyday operations in the bureau and was therefore mostly useful in the later stages of Løkken's life cycle. In this interview, the majority of questions in the interview guides was not utilised either, as several of the relevant areas for the scope of the thesis was also covered. As was the case of the above described interview with Bolcheriet, the narrative and control of the interview was thereby placed with the informant (Daymon & Holloway 2011).

Hotel Løkken Strand

This hotel is relatively newly opened and offers 16 rooms close to the centre of Løkken town (Hotel Løkken Strand 2022). The hotel collaborates with several other stakeholders in Løkken, and its owners reside in town and has done so since 2016, according to their interview (Hotel Løkken Strand, appendix 5). This stakeholder was found to be relevant since it works closely with the tourism industry in Løkken and therefore has valuable and tangible knowledge in the field. The interview itself was carried out in person at the hotel with two representatives, since they were both interested in the scope of this thesis and were both available on the day. The interview was therefore unique from the other interviews because it featured some discussions and agreements by both informants, who were able to support and remind each other of different thoughts on the matter. The interview was also free, yet controlled by some questions in order to secure relevance.

North Shore Surf

The surf school and café on the beach of Løkken opened in 2017 and have been a successful business in the town (North Shore Surf 2022). Several of my respondents and informants argue that the surf culture on the beach of Løkken created by the owners of North Shore Surf, has helped Løkken immensely in reinventing itself after 10 years of identity crisis (appendix 1-5). Therefore, I

found this stakeholder to be very important as a contributor to my knowledge of the tourism in Løkken. The interview took place over Microsoft Teams and the representative answered a few questions in depth and narrated freely and interestingly had much to add after the interview was ending, which also ultimately was included into the findings. Once again, I found that the enthusiasm and genuine interest in Løkken added to my interview with this informant because the length of the narrations and explanations clearly were affected by the knowledge and connection of Løkken (Brinkman & Tanggaard 2010; Long 2015; Frederiksen et al 2017).

[Løkken.dk](#)

The union of Løkken.dk does not have a website, however, the representative from here describes it as: *'It's a combined business, trade and tourism union and it was created by putting together different unions'* (Løkken.dk, appendix 4). The union has meetings, where different stakeholders in Løkken have the opportunity to discuss matters from the town and thereby reach common agreements. The informant has been active within development of Løkken since the early 2000s and is therefore a valued addition to my data collection, as they have been able to share stories and views on how the town has developed as a tourist destination and residential area since then. The interview with this informant was held physically in the office of the local DMO, Løkken Turistbureau, in Løkken. For this interview, the informant was also given much room to express and narrate and questions were merely used as a way of guiding the narrations in the most relevant direction (Daymon & Holloway 2011).

[Data Collection](#)

For the interview guide and survey statements, the type of questions was mostly based on my findings in the literature review including the TALC-model by Butler (1980). This helped me immensely in my content analysis-based coding, which I will explain in the next section of this chapter. As I knew my areas of interest from the literature review, I could create questions and statements for the informants to respond to in a manner that would hopefully allow me to examine the views of the participants in a meaningful way.

[Survey](#)

This project includes research based on both quantitative and qualitative data (Frederiksen et al 2017; Kuada 2012; Daymon & Holloway 2011). The quantitative aspect primarily comes from a

survey, which I created in Qualtrics and then shared in a Facebook-group called ‘*Løkken hele året*’ (*Løkken all year*, own translation), which has 9,9 thousand members in the time of writing, including residents and other people with an interest in Løkken town.



The above Facebook post reads:

*‘Dear residents of Løkken and other Løkken experts.
Where should the tourism of Løkken be heading if it was 100% up to you?
I’m studying tourism on Aalborg University and is in the process of writing my university thesis about Løkken and how the town has gone from a popular place to party to changing its focus to outdoor and family oriented tourism, because I’ve visited many times in my life and when my parents bought a house in town, it became my second home.
Therefore, I would be very happy and thankful if YOU have time and want to spend two minutes on this online survey. All you have to do is write if you agree or disagree in a few statements and then give deeper replies in the end, if you want.
Thank you so much! Your opinions mean everything for my thesis!’ (own translation)*

My data collection procedures consisted of firstly creating a survey for the residents and tourists of Løkken based on the literature, I found relevant for my literature review. The survey consisted of statements, which the respondent then had the possibility of sharing the degree to which they agreed to the statement on a scale of strongly disagree to strongly agree on a Likert scale (Long 2015). I chose to create the survey as such in order to make it as effortless for respondents to share their views in the hopes of gaining as many responses as possible. Also, this form of survey provides richer data than other survey forms, however, it is also important to note that I through my survey

do not have a goal of generalising my data. Rather, I wish to examine the views of some residents and other people with strong ties to Løkken in order to expand my knowledge in a way that allows me to see the current state of the destination. In the end of the survey, I included two more open questions, where the respondents could share their views in a freer way, if they were interested. Some respondents chose not to add anything further, but this factor did not have an effect on the rest of my findings. As surveys are sometimes criticised for not showing the entire viewpoint in a meaningful context (Bitsch Olsen & Pedersen 2019) a mixed methods approach to my study was found to be appropriate (Frederiksen et al 2017; Daymon & Holloway 2011).

Interviews

For the qualitative data, I carried out five interviews people, who are stakeholders of Løkken in their professional life. Therefore, these people are considered representatives of their organisation rather than private persons. However, this will not mean that any personal anecdotes or observations mentioned in the interviews are not useful in this thesis. For the areas not coverable by my own collected data, secondary data has been utilised.

Primary data	Secondary data
Interviews with business owners and other stakeholders of Løkken	Websites (e.g. VisitNordvestkysten, North Shore Surf, Løkken.dk etc)
Survey of residents and other private persons with a stake in Løkken	Articles (e.g. Verdens Gang, Vores Løkken, TV2 Nord)

I reached out to around 20 potentially relevant respondents but ultimately conducted five interviews. This sample size is, as mentioned earlier, seen as sufficient for the scope of my study. The interviews are ‘conversations with a purpose’ and the narrative enquiry with few questions is prevalent (Daymon & Holloway 2011) meaning that the interviewees had much freedom to express their views and experiences without a large number of questions guiding their narration. The interviews were formerly planned and thereby, the setting was somewhat formal. However, the conversational nature of these, including the goal to allow the informant to narrate their experience of Løkken as a tourist destination made the interview situation more informal and relaxed (ibid.). Further adding to the qualitative nature of the research is the difference in the interviews. As a

researcher, I found it important to create a natural, conversation-like atmosphere in the interviews, which made every question different depending on the prior response. Therefore, the interviews also ended up differing greatly from one another. My developing knowledge in the subject also meant that my questions – both follow-up and original – were altered as the process went on. The interview guide was not followed strictly as I made sure to provide the needed space for informants to respond to the question and often times, the informants covered my areas of interest without me having to guide them in a specific direction throughout the interview (ibid.). I also found it particularly important to be an active listener and use encouraging prompts in order to create a comfortable and open space where they could feel free to narrate. This included nodding if the informant could see me, complimenting their narrations in a way that let them know that it was very useful knowledge they were sharing, and being more vocal if the informant could not see me.

Data Analysis

After having carried out my data collection, I chose to firstly code my interviews using the context analysis method presented by Erlingsson & Brysiewicz (2017). Inspired by their examples, I primarily used the TALC model by Butler (1980) to colour code the statements by the informants according to which part of Løkken's life cycle the quote revolves around. For example, the below quote was found to be descriptive of the *consolidation* phase:

'It was wild. It was a big party town. It really was (...) We had people arranging drinking'
(Løkken.dk, appendix 4)

I held together the interviews with the TALC stages in order to find the themes as introduced by Erlingsson & Brysiewicz (2017). I chose to name the themes after TALC stages in order to make my chronological order in my analysis. This was very helpful and allowed me to find the relevant quotes for each stage effortlessly after my coding process was finalised. As was presented in my literature review chapter, I found four main categories of research within the field: Tourism in Denmark, Different forms of tourism, Irritation among residents, and Development by tourism actors. These categories grew out of my used literature and after grouping together these categories, I was able to further divide my interview findings into categories. If I were to exemplify using the above quote, I would argue that it belongs under the Different forms of tourism category, because it speaks into the findings of Newland et al (2021), which I have placed in this category as well. From there, I could analyse my findings by discussing them from the findings of other researchers and

thereby see if my findings were similar to theirs. I coded my survey results using the same procedure and firstly found out which of the TALC stages the result in question revolved around. Then I further divided it into categories from my literature review and from there was able to use it as a meaningful way to see examples of views from stakeholders in Løkken. Since my interviews and surveys were carried out in March and April of 2022, I could not expect to collect my own data for each TALC stage. I therefore used secondary data such as articles and websites on the history of Løkken for the first three stages of the TALC model as presented in my analysis.

Theoretical Framework

In order to analyse my collected data after coding it in the above described manner, I introduced every theme by presenting my arguments of why this part of the TALC model was relevant for examining this part of Løkken's life cycle. For example, I started the Stagnation segment of my analysis by firstly presenting the stagnation of Løkken after the night clubs and bars began to close down in 2004. This helped me to justify my analysis structure further and make a cohesive chapter of my findings. Doxey's irridex model is similarly utilised throughout my analysis where it is found to be useful in terms of detected irritation of residents (Doxey 1975). However, the main part of the analysis is carried out by use of the theory presented in the literature review chapter.

Validity and Reliability

On the basis of the phenomenological theory of science of this thesis, it is important to note that I myself am a research tool in this situation. The reliability of this study is therefore a subject of discussion. My findings depend on my own background and another researcher would ultimately find different conclusions than me if they carried out the same study (Daymon & Holloway 2011). A phenomenological study can never be completely reliable or objective but is rather an exemplification of the researcher's findings on a basis of their 'lifeworld' intertwining with that of their data.

In terms of validity, this study is arguably generalizable in the context of my addition to the TALC model being applicable to future studies, where similar life cycles can be seen (Daymon & Holloway 2011). However, the data collection of my work does not provide a directly applicable case, which other destinations can use one to one as a model of how their life cycle has panned out. Rather, the procedures I employed in order to construct a new add-on to the TALC model could be

applicable to other cases, though a completely similar case is highly unlikely to exist (Daymon & Holloway 2011). As stated earlier, the relevance of my chosen methods are based on the point of view that the data collection will enable me to understand the tourism in Løkken, which was missing before after gathering knowledge from local stakeholders (Bitsch Olsen & Pedersen 2019). This further helps me to fill the gap in literature, which I found after researching for my literature review.

Ethical Considerations

For every conducted interview, I made sure to inform the participant of what the utterances were to be used for. In this way, I assured the person of the usefulness of the interview, while letting them know how I wanted to transcribe the interview and then analyse it. As I began each interview with an introduction to my subject and goal for my thesis, the informant could then create their own image of the process and understand the direction of the study. I only received oral consent to use the utterances, but I find this to be sufficient as I do not aspire to share my findings outside of the university. The informal nature of the interviews also called for an oral agreement rather than a formalised and thereby less conversation-like situation, which was highly desired on my part (Daymon & Holloway 2011). As for the surveys, they were completely anonymous, which is arguably the most efficient way of protecting a respondent.

Analysis

The aim of this analysis is first and foremost to present my findings in a cohesive and understandable way. As I coded my data, I found the most relevant quotes and survey results and divided them after their relevant time period into themes. I then further divided each theme into categories, which have grown out of the literature I read and discussed in my literature review. I then discuss each category by holding together my own findings and the findings of other researchers in order to reach a conclusion.

Past

For my analysis of the past TALC stages (Butler 1908) for the tourist destination of Løkken, I firstly will introduce the *Exploration*, *Involvement*, and *Development* stages. These were found to have happened around 50-100 years ago, which ultimately made me make a choice of including them based solely on external sources, since my primary sources have mainly provided me with insights from the past 20-25 years. Still, the beginning of the chapter seeks to map out the early beginning of Løkken as a tourism spot, while the *Consolidation*, *Stagnation*, and *Decline* stages will feature more in depth analyses with my own collected data.

Exploration

The first mentioned stage of the TALC model (Butler 1980) revolves around the time before the tourism in the area is commercialised or tourist attractions have been built. For the destination of Løkken, this period took place up until the end of the 1800s, where the first tourist facilities were introduced (LøkkenHistorie 2022). In this time period, the main focus was put on fishing, as it was before many transport or communication connections had been made here (ibid.). The area did, however, get a mention in the diaries of the well-known Danish author and poet Hans Christian Andersen, who visited Løkken in 1859 (Visit HC Andersen 2022).

Involvement

According to Butler (1980), this stage of the TALC model features the beginning of the tourism in the destination. For this thesis, I would argue that the real tourism in Løkken was started around the time where Løkken Badhotel opened in 1895 (LøkkenHistorie 2022). At this time, the so-called ‘bathing guests’ were welcomed to the town for the first time by a hotel in the area (ibid.). A few years later, in 1908 (Falsig 2021), the town’s trademark white bathing huts on the beach were

introduced as a way for private owners to enjoy the beach in summer. These are still present on the beach to this day and further adds to the image of Løkken as a tourist destination for summers on the beach (ibid.). Butler (1980) also argues that the involvement stage is when the destination firstly starts to change its scenery in order to accommodate tourists. In terms of building new facilities, this is found to be true for the area of Løkken.



Image 1 depicting the bathing huts of Løkken (Koogi 2014)

Development

This stage of the TALC model (Butler 1980) is characterised by many changes in the destination, which are increasingly uncontrollable by the local residents. Further, the changes to the original destination will be noticeable in order to accommodate the tourists, which are attracted through an increase of advertising (ibid.). The 1900s in Løkken are noticeably less covered by media than other parts of its history. However, it is documented that the building of the pier was finalised in 1931 while the local tourist attraction of Strandpavillionen opened the year before (LøkkenHistorie 2022). Further, the transport connections were improved much in this period with good bus routes being introduced both in the 1930s and 1970s (LøkkenHistorie 2022; Christiansen & Eggert 2016).

Consolidation

The consolidation stage in Løkken featured visitor number exceeding the population number and irritation among residents. The visitor numbers were still on the rise, but the rapidity of the rise in numbers had decreased. The town had developed a clear image with a focus on parties and drunk, young people, who went on pub-crawls through town and stayed at the local camp sites in cheap tents. Different media had also noticed the party culture in Løkken and had begun to give it more attention.

Tourism in Denmark

Løkken town was part of the municipality of Løkken-Vrå until 2007, where it was emitted into Hjørring municipality (arkiv.dk 2022). The tourism in Løkken has, however, been subject to a collaboration across municipalities earlier, with other tourist destinations, as well as today:

'In the municipality of Hjørring, there has always been a tourism board in Løkken together with Lønstrup and Hirtshals' (Løkken Turistbureau, appendix 1)

For this thesis, I would argue that a tourism destination is more prone to localism and short termism (Halkier 2013), if the municipality is smaller. In other words, the municipality of Løkken during its party phase, may have panned out completely different, had it already been part of Hjørring municipality at the time. The focus at the time was arguably more on how the residents felt about the image of Løkken, which will be further discussed later, than whether the entire municipality gained from this form of tourism. As Halkier (2013) presents in his study, these Danish destinations, which are governed by smaller local enterprises, could be subject to localism, as it mostly focused on how the residents felt about the image and type of tourism in the area rather than how to develop the area and its tourism. The short termism of the Løkken-Vrå municipality mainly revolves around its lack of planning. This will be examined further in the next part of this analysis.

Different forms of tourism

The type of tourism found in Løkken today is very different from that of two decades ago. Back then, the focus was not put on outdoor tourism in the same way as we see today. Instead, young people utilised the beach as a place to sleep off a hangover and the forests were perfect for camp sites (Fjordbak & Guldbrandt 2021). However, the young people also went into town and thereby clearly added to the image of the town (ibid.). Residents often saw the young people walking through town when they went clubbing and pub-crawling:

'In 2001 there were still a lot of parties and such. And it was younger people, who went clubbing. (...) They stayed at the camp sites and it was fun. They also came in large crowds from the camp sites through Søndergade and went from bar to bar and that. So, it was a party' (Bolcheriet, appendix 3)

This quote exemplifies how the nature was utilised in Løkken even before the focus was put on outdoor tourism. This is particularly relevant to my thesis because, as I wrote in my literature review, Newland et al (2021) found that in some cases, the harm done to a tourism area is sometimes ignored, because the economic benefits from that tourism is more important to the destination's local stakeholders. Therefore, the idea of selling arranged trips and opening more clubs seemed to be a popular idea in the beginning of the millennium:

'It was wild. It was a big party town. It really was (...) We had people arranging drinking' (Løkken.dk, appendix 4)

Newland et al (2021) argue that changes to a destination is somewhat impossible to avoid when tourism is introduced. These changes could be both natural and social. In some ways, Løkken has faced both of these types of changes, because the campsites for young people may have caused harm to the elements. Similarly, areas close to sand dunes may be aware of erosion or the dunes being worn down after many people have walked to and from the beach. The quote above is also applicable to the literature in my literature review chapter, because Bell (2008) has findings, which are second to these quotes. He found that even though businesses may find it very desirable to attract young and drunk people, because they are a good way of increasing their income, the residents of the area may not agree on this unless they in some way benefit from the alcotourism (Bell 2008). This specific tourism developed in the consolidation stage and became more intense:

'Well, it developed and became crazier and crazier. And then there were drugs and those Ung Tours, right?' (Hotel Løkken Strand, appendix 5)

As will be unpacked in the next part of this analysis chapter, the rumours of young people taking drugs in Løkken is still going strong. Another informant added that they had never seen drugs being taken in Løkken, but still had a feeling they were there. From my findings, I understand that they coexisted with the other elements of the tourism at the time, but even if they were merely a rumour, these rumours ultimately had much to say in how Løkken developed as a destination in the years that followed.

Irritation among residents

In this stage of Løkken's Tourism Area Life Cycle, it faced several reactions both internally from residents and externally from media. As mentioned earlier, the tourism in Løkken in this time period relied heavily on the partying youngsters, who visited the town in July every year. The tourism also featured families with children, which also stretched out over other seasons (Fjordbak & Guldbrandt 2021), but this was not as big of a focus in media and when the informants of my interviews thought back on this period, they often commented on it somewhat similarly:

'Yes, people got more and more drunk and broke stuff on their way around town on pub-crawl. They broke fences, urinated, vomited and stole bikes. All those things, which are negative. Because they still spent a lot of money in the town. But they didn't behave nicely, the young people. I think that was the thing, too. That they got sick of their bad behaviour and didn't have respect for anything. They just didn't care' (Hotel Løkken Strand, appendix 5)

This quote most of all showcases the problems and negative aspects of tourism in this stage of Løkken's life cycle and why some residents began to feel irritation pointed at the tourism. If I were to hold it together with Doxey's Irridex Model (1975), I would argue that at this point, the residents of Løkken showed signs of *Annoyance*, which is characterised by the first signs of misgivings among residents directed at the tourism in their home area. Since the number of tourists were increasing and businesses were arranging trips for young people to go on a party vacation (Fjordbak & Guldbrandt 2021), this could also be a root for irritation because it no longer was about the residents or how they wanted the town to develop. The turn of events featuring arranged drinking would evidently make the intensity of the drunken tourists increase, which also caused another highly triggering development for Løkken:

'And as it became more and more intense, it also became interesting for the media. And I think that was one of the things... We faced a true media storm at one point, and I think that was what put an end to it, in some way' (Løkken.dk, appendix 4)

This quote by the representative from Løkken.dk is particularly interesting, because other destinations have faced similar dramatizations made by media. Specifically, as I presented in my literature review, Sæþórsdóttir et al (2020) found that many international media outlets have written about Iceland as a destination close to ruin because of its heavy tourism in the later years. Even though the coverage of the impending "natural crisis because of tourism" in Iceland says one thing, residents of Iceland were found to welcome tourism and were not worried about the harm of tourism. During my interviews, I found that multiple informants found the media coverage to be misrepresentative of reality at the time. This particular form of communication can arguably be

even more harmful to the destination than that form of tourism in itself. This media coverage could scare people away from wanting to visit Løkken at all, even if it was a family only interested in a trip to the beach in daytime. Through my research, I found that multiple media inside and outside of Denmark have written stories on the matter. The large Danish TV-station TV2 Østjylland aired the documentary “Løkken amok” in 2003 (Fjordbak & Guldbrandt 2021), which showed young people partying and drinking. This documentary has later been criticised by residents of Løkken for being untrue and exaggerating, which is also what I found in my data collection. Another media coverage, which caused a reaction among residents in Løkken, was when the Norwegian newspaper Verdens Gang wrote an article on how Løkken was a dangerous destination and Norwegian parents should keep their teenagers from visiting there (Verdens Gang 2002). The arguments were that gangs operated in Løkken and sold drugs to tourists as part of a gang war. The informant from Løkken.dk commented on these types of media coverage like so:

‘But it creates an image. And you get enough of that drinking image, when you live here permanently’ (Løkken.dk, appendix 4)

For my thesis, I argue that the media coverage warning people to visit Løkken could be even more irritating than the party tourism in itself. Further, this irritation pointed towards media rather than guests as a result of a new, negatively viewed image could push towards a wish for change. As will be uncovered later in this analysis chapter, this could have been the trigger for the next stage of the TALC in the case of Løkken. Another example of media exaggerating the state of the party town is explained by the representative from Bolcheriet in Løkken:

‘I think it was in 2004, where it was shown in TV, mostly. The party was almost over by then. It had begun to decrease. Because you could see in Ekstrabladet, or wherever it was, that they had to stage bottles and take pictures of them. We lived in Søndergade at the time and it was quiet’ (Bolcheriet, appendix 3)

This quote underlines the desperation of media to create a story without necessarily being the most truthful. It also shows an example of locals not finding the party tourism to be irritating. Rather, the informant explained throughout their interview that because families with children have always been there, they benefit heavily from the tourism in Løkken. As was found by Serra-Cantallops & Ramon-Cardona (2016), residents on Ibiza also view tourism as an important source of income and not always a bad thing. As the tourism is not seen as problem, but as an economic advantage,

overtourism could appear, but that has never been the case for Løkken, says the representative from North Shore Surf:

'But I wouldn't say that there has been overtourism. It hasn't exceeded the maximum capacity. There has always been enough room at all the restaurants here. Maybe some of them are fully booked some days, but then there are others that aren't. So, it's all about how you go about it' (North Shore Surf, appendix 2)

This quote exemplifies how stakeholders can work together in order to prevent tourists of feeling the maximum capacity being reached. In this interview, I learned how stakeholders in Løkken collaborated on sharing tourists with each other. This is relevant to the findings of Mihalic & Kuščer (2020), who discussed whether overtourism can be managed in a way that conserves the destination instead of harming it. This finding proves that this can be achieved, if the stakeholders work together. If one restaurant is full, the entire destination may benefit from them informing the tourists of other restaurants nearby, where there is room for them.

Development by tourism actors

As Mao-Ying et al (2022) found in their study, community citizen behaviour (CCB) is a highly useful way of developing a tourist area. Here, the residents grouped together and created a team of local people, who wanted to help the young people in the night life of Løkken:

'But back when Løkken was really hot we started a group called Natteravnene. We went out in yellow jackets to see what was going on and to help if there were problems and such' (Løkken.dk, appendix)

According to Mao-Ying et al (2022), CCB can be an important measure towards a successful tourism destination. This form of collaboration is an example of residents, who wish to translate their strong ties to their hometown into helping the tourism industry. This showcases how the residents were aware of the issue of violence and drunkenness in Løkken, but rather than attempting to end it, they chose to develop a strategy where the parties can continue all the while keeping the young visitors safe.

Stagnation

Løkken does not follow Butler's (1980) to a tee. For example, in the stagnation phase, rather than the destination taking multiple actions because it wants to keep its visitors, Løkken's municipality

created the stagnation, because of the irritation directed at the image given to the destination by large medias. Løkken may have been reliant on its tourism, but the local municipality still focused on its wish to change the image with drunken teenagers and drugs rather than worrying about its local businesses and stakeholders. Thereby, there were some economic problems at this stage as well as the impact on the surrounding area, as mentioned in the previous part of this analysis chapter.

Tourism in Denmark

As was examined earlier, the municipality of Løkken-Vrå made the ultimate decision of changing the scope of tourism. Even though some informants found the type of tourism of the early 2000s to be very little problematic, the main opinion seemingly revolved around restoring the image of the town, which to some was very problematic:

'But it was hard for this little town to have this reputation. It became worse. And then the municipality went and stopped... I mean, they did it by referring to the places, which sublet them and told them not to sublet to anyone below the age of 25. And that puts a stop to it' (Løkken.dk, appendix 4)

This quote shows another example of the residents of Løkken and their localism in terms of wanting to remove the image regarding alcohol and partying teens. It was evidently important to the town to restore their broken reputation to a degree that prompted a drastic response and clear consequences. This was further commented on by the informants from Hotel Løkken Strand:

'So, they became tired of that. But from that to making a complete lockdown... I don't think anyone had expected that to happen. I don't think anyone liked it, either. I don't even think anyone thought it was a good idea. Besides the municipality' (Hotel Løkken Strand, appendix 5)

This quote highlights how the irritation of residents made them want change. However, they may not have wanted all bars to close in this way, as it seemed like a dramatic and unnecessary act. Instead, my findings showed several cases of residents and other stakeholders, who miss the young people and criticise the fact that the town closes down every night at 9 o'clock. The quote below is an example of a private stakeholder from my survey, who wishes some young people would come back to town without wrecking it and focusing on drinking binges:

Dejligt med den udvikling som Havs har gang i. Det klæder byen og området. Lidt mere for unge uden at det bliver druk. Masser af fokus på natur og bæredygtighed og lokale oplevelser

The quote reads: *'Lovely development by Havs. It suits the town and the area. A little more for young people without the drinking. Lots of focus on nature and sustainability and local experiences'*. From these points, I also derive how some decisions have been made without clear agreement from the residents and local business owners. This further adds to the findings of Halkier (2013) who, as stated earlier, found that some Danish destinations are subject to short termism and localism. Throughout my findings, I am also able to conclude that there was no plan to what were to happen to the focus of Løkken's tourism after these local laws were put into force. This finding is also seconded by Halkier in an interview with the local TV station TV2 Nord in 2021 (Fjordbak & Guldbrandt 2021). This clear sign of short termism has arguably gone over the heads of the public in Løkken, however, I also believe that the municipality did not foresee the next couple of years to look like they did. This will be further analysed further in the coming sections of the analysis. The following comment by the representative from local DMO Løkken Turistbureau also exemplifies how the decision was mainly political:

'(...) before they made a political decision' (Løkken Turistbureau, appendix 1)

Of course, the meetings, which were carried out prior to the shutdown also featured the unhappiness of residents, who wished for change as their properties were also affected by the drunken youngsters, but the negative economic effect in the following years were not a desirable impact for the residents either, which will be examined further later in this chapter.

Different forms of tourism

The shutdown of the clubs and bars in Løkken was a period in time, which was experienced differently depending on the informant in my interviews. For example, the representative from the sweet shop Bolcheriet had the following comment to how the town began its change in the beginning of the 2000s:

'I remember it as a slow progression. That there were less and less visitors. That the parties just became fewer and fewer. Slowly and steadily things will close down' (Bolcheriet, appendix 3)

From this quote I derive that not all residents and business owners had the same experience of how Løkken's night clubs closed down. Most informants agreed that the shutdown was sudden and had large consequences because the municipality chose to create new local laws. However, the representative from Bolcheriet did not experience it as such. Instead, they believe the night clubs

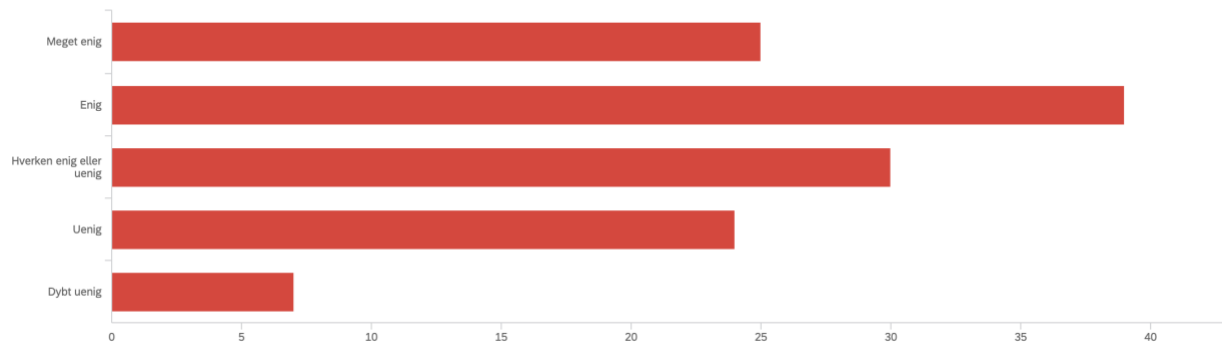
closed because the visitors lost interest in the town, which made them close as a result of the lack of income. It is still important to note that Bolcheriet has been focused on families with children since it opened its doors in Løkken in 2001. Therefore, the quote also seconds the findings of Bell (2008) as presented in the literature review chapter. As Bell (2008) found, local business owners may not view the alcotourism as negatively as residents, as they still have an income no matter the kind of guest. The saying is still relevant and interesting because it helps me view difference in opinions and further adds to the media over-dramatization of the matter.

Irritation among residents

At one point, the irritation of the residents grew from *Annoyance* to *Antagonism*, which is characterised by verbal and physical expression of irritation (Doxey 1975). Here, the local residents chose to hold meetings, where they verbally expressed this irritation toward this specific form of party tourism, which was mentioned on several occasions by different media, as mentioned earlier. The meetings were between the tourism board, local stakeholders and the municipality of Løkken-Vrå, which was Løkken's municipality before it became part of Hjørring municipality (Fjordbak & Guldbrandt 2021). These ultimately resulted in the municipality changing the local laws, so it would become more difficult to own pubs and clubs in Løkken (ibid.). After this, almost every club and pub in Løkken started closing permanently, which was also mentioned by several informants:

'Historically, because of the development, the local residents closed it down, as they didn't want parties and a town filled with young people, who only came to party and maybe didn't benefit the town image' (North Shore Surf, appendix 2)

Residents of Løkken reportedly wished the town image to change as well as making room for other forms of tourism rather than the party tourism taking up the media's attention. Through my survey, I found that residents and other people with an attachment to Løkken still found tourism with a focus on alcohol and parties to be problematic for the town:



As mentioned in the previous section of the analysis, the media coverage was exaggerated and not entirely representative of the actual destination as experienced by local residents. However, this finding proves that some irritation was present and detectable among residents. This is somewhat of a contrast to what Sæþórsdóttir et al (2020) found in their study, where residents of Iceland disagreed with much of the stories posted about overtourism in Iceland, but the two findings can still be held together, because they still represent a question of damaging image to a tourism destination. The informant from Bolcheriet shared a statement, which arguably showcases the result of the damaged reputation as a result of the stories published by large medias:

'I think it happened because fewer people came up here, so the bars closed. I don't know if there were any license issues at some point or... But then there were some holiday homes, which didn't want to let to young people, because they wrecked it etc' (Bolcheriet, appendix 3)

Further, this statement by the representative from Bolcheriet is interesting because it shows that local business owners noticed a change even if they were not aware of the actions taken by the municipality. This is a meaning unit is an exemplification of how overtourism can be managed, which was also discussed in my literature review by help of the findings by Mihalic & Kuščer (2020). Even though the town never suffered from overtourism in its capacity (VisitNordjylland 2019), the irritation and need for change is arguably a sign of believed overtourism in some form in the eyes of local residents. As will be discussed in the next parts of the analysis, this form of tourism management was not as successful as was the hope for the local municipality.

Development by tourism actors

As has been discussed throughout this chapter, the change from party town to ghost town was somewhat drastic and sudden. The following statement by the informant from Løkken.dk

exemplifies how the change was made by the municipality and seemingly happened from one day to the other:

'I think we had 14 clubs when we topped. They disappeared with a blink of an eye when they chose to close it down (...) But it was simply an action made by the municipality, which ended the party' (Løkken.dk, appendix 4)

As was found by Songyi et al (2021), if the stakeholders in question does not themselves benefit from tourism, it is more rarely something they support and wish to sustain. For the case of Løkken, it was decided that this specific type of tourist was problematic and did not affect the image of the town in a positive direction. This may have a say in why the municipality took such drastic actions towards a change in the tourism scenery. Therefore, they did not view the positive sides highly enough to wish to sustain it (Songyi et al 2021). Further, the findings of Mao-Ying et al (2022) with regards to CCB or OCB is also applicable to this statement because it revolves around the importance of support by local businesses and other stakeholders. Evidently, Løkken could have benefitted from a clearer sense of direction as well as the support for its tourism industry by the local municipality rather than a restraining law, which ultimately caused harm.

Decline

This stage of the TALC model features several large changes to the tourism destination and its focus. For Løkken, this specifically meant a lack of direction after many of its tourism attractions such as clubs and bars were forced to close. Instead, Butler (1980) presents how there will be a large amount of turnover in this period when it comes to people moving to and from the destination. For Løkken, this also meant that pop-up shops opened and closed as the town became more and more quiet (Fjordbak & Guldbrandt 2021).

Tourism in Denmark

As mentioned in the earlier sections of this analysis, there were some confusion within Løkken when it came to the new focus of the tourism in town after the shutdown of nightclubs. This caused some worry to appear amongst locals and the representative from Løkken Turistbureau describes it as such:

'After that, the town had a bit of an identity crisis. Who were our guests? What was the purpose of Løkken? What were we good at? What should we do in the future?' (Løkken Turistbureau, appendix 1)

As a result of the abrupt shutdown of nightclubs after the local law was changed, the town had trouble attracting new tourists. The focus was put on marketing towards retired people and families with children, but this effort was not very successful at first (Fjordbak & Guldbrandt 2021). This is interesting, because it further adds to the argument presented by Halkier in 2013. The localism (Halkier 2013) of the municipality is present in this case, because the focus was put on how to make Løkken a better and more attractive tourist destination for families as well as getting rid of the reputation surround alcohol, sex, and violence. Instead, the collaboration between Løkken and other destinations may have been a way out of the identity crisis (Savage et al 2011). This idea will be further discussed later in this segment of the analysis.

Different forms of tourism

As a stark contrast to what had previously been the focus for Løkken as a tourist destination, the new lack of direction featured quiet streets and even though it may firstly have seemed like a positive change for some locals, this view changed and the representative from Bolcheriet highlights the troubled period in the following quote:

'There was a period, where it was cool that it was quiet, but then again not that cool that there was nothing. Where the doors were closed at nine' (Bolcheriet, appendix 3)

This quote shows how the local view was changed and how the destination realised that the quietness in the streets at night was not necessarily a good thing. Both my conducted interviews and my survey has several replies stating how the complete removal of nightlife in Løkken was not desirable. Perhaps the real wish was to merely tone down the noise and the amount of businesses arranging drinking, as was also described earlier in this analysis chapter. Bell (2008) also showed an example of how alcotourism could be a positive thing to some residents, as their income could depend on it. This was and is the case for many businesses in Løkken (Fjordbak & Guldbrandt 2021) and interestingly, the informants from my study never saw the drunk tourists in Løkken as a real problem. Rather, it would seem like it was mainly residents, who didn't benefit from the tourism directly as well as the municipality, who wanted the clubbing culture to end as quickly as possible. This would, in other words, confirm that Bell's (2008) findings are applicable to my study as well. Further, it would seem that the poor reputational aspects were in fact more irritating than the tourism itself, as will also be pointed towards later in this analysis.

Irritation among residents

As the wish of many residents reportedly was to tone down the loudness and messiness of the young and drunk visitors, the dramatic change in the number of tourists was not unproblematic either. As described earlier, multiple informants and respondents expressed how they missed some of the nightlife tourism, which was prevalent in the beginning of the millennium:

'The young people disappeared. Or the young people who partied pretty much disappeared. Because the camp sites were closed and all that' (Bolcheriet, appendix 3)

As was concluded by Serra-Cantalops & Ramon-Cardona (2016), the party tourism of Ibiza may irritate residents. However, they still wanted the partying guests to be there, because they are very important for the economy of Ibiza (Serra-Cantalops & Ramon-Cardona 2016). If this view had been shared by stakeholders of Løkken, the choice of changing the local law may not have been made. The real reason behind the choice was, however, arguably mostly caused by the bad press and reputation, which had followed Løkken in the years leading up to the shutdown (Fjordbak & Guldbrandt 2021). Further, the tourism industry may well have changed very much even if the law had not changed, as a shift towards travelling to other destinations to go on drinking holidays was also happening at this point in time (ibid.).

Development by tourism actors

The development in Løkken changed in this time period. As the uncertainty grew, the local stakeholders similarly seemingly were confused as to where to focus their efforts in terms of a new group of tourists. Throughout my data collection, I found that local stakeholders in different businesses as well as the residents were unsure of what to do next:

'Since we came, I've always thought that Løkken has moved forward. Maybe there were some uncertain years, but otherwise... We had a few years where we didn't really know what we were or where to go' (Bolcheriet, appendix 3)

The above quote exemplifies how Løkken is a destination, which has been developing in the eyes of this informant. However, this development was paused during the decline and in the years, where Løkken faced an identity crisis. If one were to refer to the findings of Mao-Ying et al (2022), there was a clear lack of CCB and OCB in this period and the time leading up to it. This I conclude on the basis that in some ways, the citizens of Løkken did not work as hosts towards the tourists, who were there to party and drink. Therefore, the development of this form of tourism was brought to a halt.

Unfortunately for Løkken, it also brought a halt to the rest of the tourism in the area in some ways. This was further highlighted by the respondent from Løkken.dk:

'The moment it became forbidden to sublet to young people under 25, the camp sites were empty and were sold immediately. It didn't take long before project managers bought them and built housing there. And then the town was quiet. Completely silent. A few years went by where it was quiet. It was a truly exciting period. At that point, we thought we would become a tiny village and then die' (Løkken.dk, appendix 4)

For this thesis, I argue that the local businesses of Løkken at the time of the peak of the so-called Fucking Fed Ferie-period were not considered when the choice to put restrictions on the nightclubs was made. Instead, the wish for a new image to future potential visitors became more important and there was no plan as to how to replace the income, which was previously made from the young and drunk tourists. This can also be held together with the findings by Songyi et al (2021), who on the basis of their study argue that if the perceived effect of tourism is positive, the residents will find it to be a good thing. This positive view on the outcome of tourism may well be what was missing in the case of Løkken and what ultimately made the residents wish for change. Had the local enterprises been considered more in the context of changing the tourism focus of Løkken, the decline of the destination may never have happened. The informants from Hotel Løkken Strand shared the following problem, which could be an important factor in terms of why the decline took place:

'Before, there were five or six different unions (...) And all of them worked towards their own goals. They didn't really collaborate' (Hotel Løkken Strand, appendix 5)

Later in this analysis, the results of stakeholders collaborating will be discussed with some of the other collected data. Arguably, the fact that the stakeholders of Løkken were not collaborating in the same way as can be seen today is one of the reasons behind the decline of the destination, which lasted several years. As Savage et al (2011) argue in their article, stakeholder collaboration can be a very useful way for organisations to work together to solve the so-called 'messy problems', which may be shared across businesses. In this case, the 'messy problem' was the alcotourism in Løkken, which was not satisfactory to the local residents of Løkken. Instead of having a joint solution with both businesses, residents and the municipality of Løkken-Vrå, the municipality and the residents had the final say and without having a plan for the future of the destination, these stakeholders focused on the short term solution of removing the – to them - annoying tourists. What was not

foreseen was that not only did the town lose its most important group of tourists. It lost many other groups of tourists as well.

Present

The current state of Løkken as a tourism destination will be examined and unpacked in this following part of the analysis. Firstly, the *Rejuvenation* of Løkken will be analysed using my findings as a means of building on top of Butler's (1980) model, where the destination either faces *Decline* or *Rejuvenation*. The case of Løkken proves that there may appear a rejuvenation after the destination lost the interest of visitors and thereby this part of the analysis helps me to present a new way of using the TALC (Butler 1980) model. Lastly, this segment will feature an analysis of the so-called *Post-Rejuvenation* stage, which is a stage I am introducing through my findings.

Rejuvenation

According to Butler (1980), the rejuvenation of a destination can happen after stagnation as an alternative to decline. Thereby, the destination either declines or rejuvenates (Butler 1980). However, for the case of Løkken shows that after a decline, a rejuvenation can take place as the next stage of the Life Cycle. Therefore, I add this stage onto the existing model as a way to explain how some destinations may experience rejuvenation after decline rather than directly after stagnation. The different examples of how Løkken was rejuvenated will be presented and analysed in the following segment of the analysis.

Tourism in Denmark

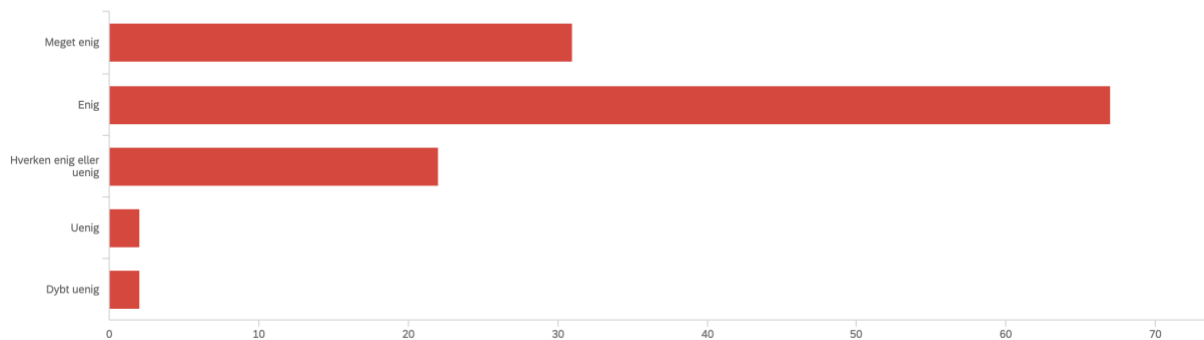
As was found by Broegaard (2020), rural areas in Denmark are increasingly attractive to entrepreneurs even if these do not have an ambition of living at the destination. The rural Danish areas present a way for the entrepreneurs to utilise the natural environment in their business and this has been the case for several new entrepreneurs in Løkken as well. Businesses such as North Shore Surf and Outnature have arguably been a major influence on Løkken's rejuvenation, as these entrepreneurs saw an opportunity in a remote area with many natural facilities. The representative from Bolcheriet remembers the change as such:

'And Jonas and his brother, Kasper, opened... And then what happened was that some other types started coming down there. The young people are coming back' (Bolcheriet, appendix 3)

The rejuvenation of Løkken was created after new young people started visiting the town and utilising its natural areas. This is a view shared by nearly all my informants and the respondents of my survey similarly seem positive towards the change in tourists in Løkken. The new focus on outdoor tourism was the focus of the second statement in my survey, where the result shows that the majority of the respondents view the new focus on outdoor tourism as a positive thing and wishes for it to continue on its path. As can be seen on the screenshot of this result below, almost 70 respondents agree that the focus should be put here, while 30 strongly agree:

Udsagn 2 - Fokus skal ligge på outdoor-turisme

Sideindstillinger ▾



I derive from this that the findings of Broegaard (2020), but also Halkier (2013), are very applicable to my study and supports my findings in a useful way. Innovation and entrepreneurship have largely been found to be the answer to the decline faced after the alcotourism experienced in the beginning of the millennium (Broegaard 2020; Halkier 2013). From my data collection, I can conclude that the informants and respondents agree that the entrepreneurs improved the tourism in Løkken immensely:

'But this change wasn't something we planned. It was pure luck. One thing was that these two brothers came home, and they have a mission. But the fact that they see it as an area for business is what's most important. That they wanted a surf school here. I think that's what's most important. And they've been successful too' (Løkken.dk, appendix 4)

Though this quote from the informant from Løkken.dk may firstly state that it was “lucky” that Løkken was rejuvenated, it ends up adding to the argument that the fact that Løkken has many natural resources have attracted newcomers and entrepreneurs to the area. The trend of outdoor tourism has been on the rise in the later years (Dansk Kyst- og Naturturisme 2022; Erhvervsministeriet 2019) and is viewed as a highly positive win-win situation for most of my

informants and respondents. This further adds to Broegaard's (2020) findings, because the attractiveness of rural areas is very tangible and visible through the responses in my data collection. However, it may not solely have been thanks to the new surf and outdoor culture in Løkken that the rejuvenation was made possible. As Løkken town became a part of Hjørring municipality in 2007 (arkiv.dk 2022), the focus of the area's tourism possibly changed:

'One thing is that it's become more transparent what the municipality expects of the tourism in its area' (Løkken Turistbureau, appendix 1)

From this statement made by the representative from Løkken Turistbureau, it is clear that the localism and short termism (Halkier 2013) of the former municipality of Løkken-Vrå, hopefully will be less likely, because a larger number of inhabitants will have a say in the development, while also being able to follow it, thanks to the new transparency. In Halkier's (2013) study, innovation is seen as one of the main ways of avoiding short termism and localism. For the case of Løkken, this seems highly true, because the innovation presented by the entrepreneurs has been highly beneficial and has helped the town immensely in both economic and social terms (Halkier 2013).

Different forms of tourism

Further adding to the argument that entrepreneurs and newcomers have helped the town of Løkken to grow out of its decline, some viewpoints regarding the new type of tourist to visit Løkken are relevant to this analysis. Firstly, the representative from Løkken.dk stated the following in their interview:

'And then we tried to market ourselves towards families with children. It became a little better. The beach is still the beach. So, we realised that we had to find out what we were and what we have in order to market that as a good thing. And we've always been well-known, so we went in on that for a while. And we also got hold of the families with children' (Løkken.dk, appendix 4)

The beach of Løkken is considered one of the most important selling points of the destination. All kinds of tourists have been drawn to the area thanks to the nature and few alterations to the natural environments of Løkken have been made. As was presented and discussed in the literature review of this thesis, Newland et al (2021) found that alterations in order to accommodate tourists may be a way for a destination to attempt to improve itself, which can make the destination less attractive to some tourists, because many of their informants stated that they prefer untouched areas (Newland et al 2021). As the beach of Løkken is heavily used for surf schools, outdoor activities and has many bunkers from the Second World War (VisitNordvestkysten 2022), this study is mostly applicable to

this segment when considering if the tourists themselves harm the area. This would be considerably catastrophic for Løkken, as the nature is the most important reason why people visit the town in their holidays. However, the town makeover has had many positive effects for Løkken town as well, states the informant from Løkken Turistbureau:

'There have been a few different projects. For example, the pier project, which was part of a town makeover. That gave a huge boost of the sights and first impression when the guests arrive in town' (Løkken Turistbureau, appendix 1)

As will be unpacked later in this chapter, the improvement of Løkken town through a makeover, has made the destination more attractive for people to visit and even to work in. As the rejuvenation is happening, more and more people choose to move to Løkken (Damgård et al 2022). From the findings of Varley & Semple (2015), it was concluded that *friluftsliv* is one of the reasons why people in the Nordic countries find it attractive to move to naturally beautiful areas in order to make a home in nature. By moving to Løkken permanently, residents achieve living in nature while having the facilities made possible by tourism. Thereby, the improving of facilities in order to accommodate tourists may ultimately help Løkken further, because it also receives more permanent residents as a result thereof.

Irritation among residents

When it comes to the local residents after Løkken was rejuvenated, it seems that that the level of irritation is relatively low compared to how it was in earlier stages of its life cycle. As discussed earlier, Løkken has become a more attractive place for outsiders to move to, which is contrary to other places in the areas covered by the municipality of Hjørring:

'What is also happening in town, which is amazing, is that the town is growing in population. Not many villages experience that. In general, Hjørring municipality is a place people leave. But in Løkken, we're growing' (Løkken.dk, appendix 4)

After obtaining a negative reputation in the early 2000s, Løkken's tourism has now developed from being a nuisance to its inhabitants to attracting new ones. It is not possible to conclude from my studies whether the tourism is seen as a directly negative or positive aspect for newcomers and potential newcomers, but I still derive from my data collection that because of the increase in outdoor tourists, the town is open in more seasons making it a more attractive place to live permanently. This adds on to how tourism can in fact be managed in a way that benefits the destination and its residents in a way that builds on top of the findings of Mihalic & Kuščer (2020).

For the case of Løkken, the harmful tourism was arguably the alcotourism in the former stages of the life cycle (ibid.). The local tourism actors of the destination have successfully changed and improved the destination and thereby, my studies have a similar conclusion to that of Mihalic & Kuščer (2020), where it is found that overtourism can be managed by tourism actors. However, instead of overtourism, Løkken has experienced harmful tourism in other ways, according to local stakeholders. The harm of earlier tourists compared to the new type of tourist in Løkken is highlighted in the quote below:

'So, the support we're feeling now is that people are welcoming the guests again because it's a completely different type of guest' (Hotel Løkken Strand, appendix 5)

The fact that residents welcome the new type of tourist as opposed to the former one, further helps me to discuss the findings of Serra-Cantalops & Ramon-Cardona (2016) as was presented in my literature review. The residents of Ibiza shared in the survey that the tourism is highly important industry, which has many benefits though it may irritate some residents. Therefore, the irritation is somewhat ignored by the local government, because the opinions of residents play a smaller role than the tourists (Serra-Cantalops & Ramon-Cardona 2016). The same goes for Løkken's residents, it would seem. Luckily, the resilience towards the tourists is low among the respondents and informants of my study. The main view from these are that the new kind of tourist is very welcome in Løkken.

Development by tourism actors

The local stakeholders of Løkken have much to say when it comes to development of the destination. In order to further help the town to rejuvenate, the previously mentioned town makeover was arguably a large factor. The renovations of different parts of the town have been beneficial to the tourism development and was commented on by the representative from Løkken.dk in the following quote:

'So, we fixed the pier. It was renovated, elongated, and widened a bit. So now it's more useful. Also, for tourism. So, we started marketing ourselves on that basis (...) But if you measure the turnover in shops and businesses today, the turnover is much, much higher now than back then in the club life. Even though it was wild back then. But the way the town is now is much better economically' (Løkken.dk, appendix 4)

When focusing on how Løkken rejuvenated itself in an economically and socially successful way, the findings of Savage et al (2011) are applicable because they present the finding of how so-called

“messy problems” can be managed through stakeholder collaboration. In this case, the messy problem faced in Løkken was the decline after the alcotourism in the early 2000. After the identity crisis and decline, the collaboration of newcomers, entrepreneurs, the local DMO and other local businesses helped clean up the town and thereby helped the town rejuvenate. Arguably, the change of municipality also had much effect on the new outlook of the town, since the mentioned renovation of the pier was a project created by the municipality of Hjørring (Realdania 2022; Hjørring Kommune 2022). Since many stakeholders in Løkken collaborate in creating a new and more attractive destination, the tourism in the town is expected and desired. Therefore, the following quote by the representatives from Hotel Løkken Strand is an example of how the change in tourism has been received:

‘There is a really positive vibe here and a new form of tourism in Løkken. And that’s also why we... I mean, when we started there was not a lot of hotel tourism here. It was mostly holiday homes and apartments. So, it’s about reaching a new form of guests, who are here for one or two days. On a form of transit’ (Hotel Løkken Strand, appendix 5)

This quote exemplifies how the new form of tourism in Løkken is met with a positive outlook from residents and local business owners. The findings by Songyi et al (2021) were presented and discussed in my literature review and shows how a tourist destination may benefit from residents having a positive mindset towards the tourism in their area as it may help the destination in improving its facilities for both tourists and residents. In Løkkens case, this finding is very relevant, because the fact that there is a positive view on the tourism in the area could mean that local stakeholders are more interested in developing new businesses here, which ultimately could make Løkken attractive for tourists as well as new permanent residents. In terms of which of the local stakeholders should implement change, the representative from Løkken Turistbureau shares the following:

‘We have a role in helping to develop the tourism (...) It has been like that always. In the end we’re here for our guests and the businessowners, so it makes sense to try and implement and channel some of the good actions, which are decided on’ (Løkken Turistbureau, appendix 1)

This quote can be held together with the findings of Mao-Ying et al (2022), which highlights how the hosts of a destination can help create a more successful tourism spot for visitors through their strong ties with the destination (CCB and OCB). Many respondents of my survey also stated that they feel strong ties with Løkken town, which according to Mao-Ying et al (2022) would make them ambassadors for Løkken and give them a wish to improve the town and perhaps even to attract

more visitors. Thereby, the positive view on tourism and the wish to improve the destination through being good ambassadors will help Løkken evolve in a way that is desired by local stakeholders.

Post-rejuvenation

After having rejuvenated itself, Løkken's present state shows signs of further growth and economic stability. My data collection shows optimism amongst respondents and informants, which also has much effect on the future prospects for the town. The future of Løkken will be discussed later in the chapter. This segment, however, builds upon my add-on to the original TALC model by Butler (1980), and describes the period after the destination rejuvenated itself and then continued its growth in several aspects.

Tourism in Denmark

When it comes to the post-rejuvenation of Løkken in a Danish context, the previous development in the town has made room for an interesting discussion of some of the new possibilities of the changed focus in its tourism. The optimism among local stakeholders help them to create new ideas and even involve the permanent residents of the town. An example of this is presented in the following quote:

'So, from the surf activity made by North Shore a surf club was made on the side, which helped make the residents a part of the surf environment, because there is a local union making surf a union activity on top of the tourism activities. And the same goes for winter bathing. There is also a winter bathing club, which also started in the same locations with a sauna and outdoor wellness. So, it's a parallel thing' (North Shore Surf, appendix 2)

Here, the representative from North Shore Surf explains how the local residents are included in the activities revolving around surfing on the beach of Løkken. The entrepreneurship of the founders of the North Shore Surf café and surf school have, as mentioned earlier, played a big part in the rejuvenation of the destination. As the founders come from Løkken and later returned, they knew of the town and how the rural and remote nature of the area made for an ideal place for their surf business. As Broegaard (2020) found in his study, the attractiveness of remote areas for new entrepreneurs is tangible and visible. The change in focus for Løkken has created a new market for outdoor tourists. However, one of the older attractions of the town is seemingly in danger and this presents one of the problematic areas for Løkken's development, which cannot directly be solved

by the outdoor tourists. The representative from Løkken.dk also comments on the development in the following quote:

'We're really fighting to keep the remaining fishermen. Right now, there's only one commercial fisherman left. There are some smaller boats too, but we want to do much to attract coastal fishermen. It's a really tough profession, because when they go out to sea and the waves are big, the boat will be wrecked. So, there is a lot of stuff there, but we really want to. Because there is some DNA in town regarding the fact that it's a fishing village. And it's huge for the tourists that they can go to the beach and see the boats bring fish' (Løkken.dk, appendix 4)

As can be seen in the above quote, the fishing fleet in Løkken is seemingly a big part of being able to offer an authentic experience for visitors. Even though the commercial fisherman in Løkken is not directly a part of the outdoor image, which many of my respondents and informants wish for Løkken to carry, it has an important historic and nostalgic value to residents and other local stakeholders. As Ounanian (2018) found in her study, the fishing fleet in Løkken is a part of the attraction for visitors. In order to remain authentic and not merely present the history of Løkken in a form of museum. My findings were thereby similar to those of Ounanian (2018) and as the fishing fleet evidently is smaller today than it was when her study was carried out, the uncertainty of Løkken's future as a fishing town is still very much present and seen as one of the main problems for the destination. Since the focus mainly is put on outdoor tourism, the fishing fleet may not seem as important to the guests and it will arguably not be saved by the increase in visitors. However, as the tourists increase in numbers, many other economic and social benefits may come from the development and the future of the fishing fleet could also ultimately benefit from this. The real question may instead be of who should be held responsible for these changes. The local DMO, Løkken Turistbureau, faces a few misunderstandings related to their role, and perhaps even how much power they have to create change in Løkken. Their representative comments on some of these in the quote below:

'There are some who have had a connection with Løkken for a long time... Unfortunately, a lot of people think we are part of the municipality and they don't really understand our role. It's much work, so we have to explain to them how we are not part of the municipality. We are here because we want to be' (Løkken Turistbureau, appendix 1)

This quote is highly interesting, as I derive from it that there is some irritation among the residents of Løkken directed at the municipality of Hjørring. As they are not sure what the role of Løkken Turistbureau is, they go to them for frustrations regarding changes in town. Also, there may be a bit of malice left from some of the residents who find it wrong that the young people, who went to

parties in the town 20 years ago are no longer there and the handling of the situation may not be favourable in the eyes of all residents. I argue this on a basis of my respondents and informants who seem to share some reservations on how the municipality of Løkken-Vrå reacted to the unwanted party tourists. Once again, I draw on Halkier's (2013) arguments regarding localism, because this quote also shows how this form of municipality management may not even be ideal in the eyes of locals making it even more problematic.

Different forms of tourism

The foci of the tourism in Løkken has been subject to change in the later years, as can be seen throughout this analysis. The attractiveness of the destination in the eyes of visitors, and even newcomers moving to town, has also changed as sustainability and outdoor tourism has become preferred instead of clubs and alcotourism (VisitDenmark 2020). Nature is, according to several respondents and informants, the main selling point of Løkken and even if the weather is harsh, this may still make Løkken attractive for tourists and visitors. The representative from North Shore Surf describes the phenomenon in the present quote:

'So therefore, we're experiencing one of the days where there are no people and everybody in town are shaking their heads that we are open, we still choose to be open on the beach. Because people still show up to experience the elements. We also see that during storms and such. At no other time are there as many cars driving to the pier as in a storm' (North Shore Surf, appendix 2)

From this quote, I derive that what Varley & Semple (2015) found in their study is highly applicable to the case of Løkken. However, though their study, as presented in my literature review, argues that nature and any type of weather may make a destination attractive to newcomers and people, who already live in the area, it may also be translated to visitors (Varley & Semple 2015). The attractiveness of living in Løkken is further highlighted in the following quote:

'And there are more and more of the elderly, who want to live in Løkken in their older days. So, there has been a crazy demand in housing, because people want to live by the coast and be there all year round' (Hotel Løkken Strand, appendix 5)

This quote adds to Varley & Semple's (2015) arguments because it shows how the wish to be close to nature every day and work close to the elements because of a strongly felt connection to the surrounding nature of a certain area. As was written in their paper, Varley & Semple (2015) having nature close to your workspace may allow for a perfect mix of business and pleasure. Nature becomes home and as will be examined later, some informants have chosen to put more focus on

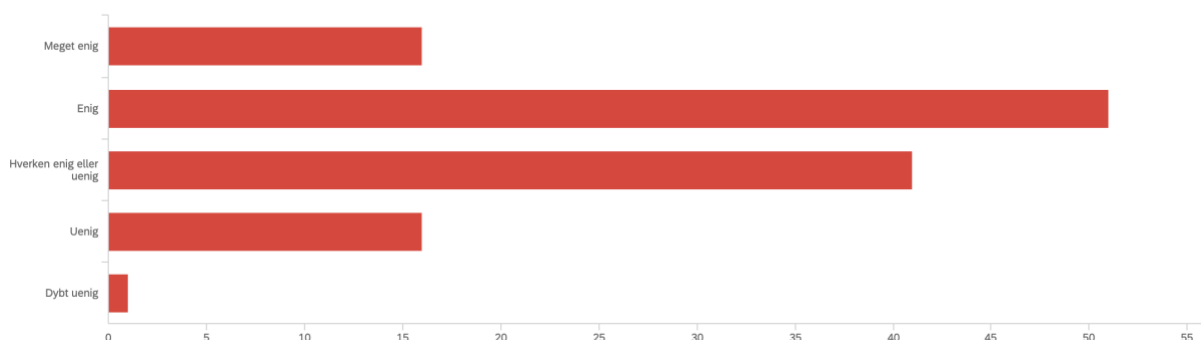
attracting business tourism as a way of stretching out the high season and inspire more people to visit Løkken in other seasons than summer. The nature could help the resident to relax in a way that is increasingly attractive (Varley & Semple 2015) and this may also be one of the reasons behind the increase in residents in Løkken in the past few years. However, it is also important to note that increase in residents and tourists have the potential of affecting the natural areas of Løkken as well. The informant from Løkken.dk commented on the matter in the following way:

'What we focus on is erosion. Because there are many tourists here. We try to avoid that by showing the way. Our dunes are actually protected, but people walk in them and children play in them. And there should be room for that but also calls for a bit of maintenance work. Otherwise they'll be ruined' (Løkken.dk, appendix 4)

As previously mentioned, the impact of tourism in Løkken's natural areas is part of the focus for several of the respondents and informants of my data collection. Newland et al (2021) had a similar finding when it came to how the locals of a natural area in California, which hosted many events for different visitors to enjoy. Interestingly, the study showed how residents of the area were less likely to be support the commercial tourism in the area if it the tourists were perceived to be apathetic and indifferent when it came to preserving the natural resources (Newland et al 2021). This finding could be applicable to the case of Løkken, since the following result grew from my survey of residents and frequent visitors of Løkken:

Udsagn 9 - Turismen påvirker Løkkens naturområder

Sideindstillinger ▾



Here, the findings show that over 50 respondents agree to the statement *The tourism affects the natural areas of Løkken*, while just over 15 strongly agree. Interestingly, just over 15 disagree to the statement, which means that they do not think of the tourism as something with a large effect on the nature of Løkken. This mix of views could ultimately result in some disagreements if the nature of

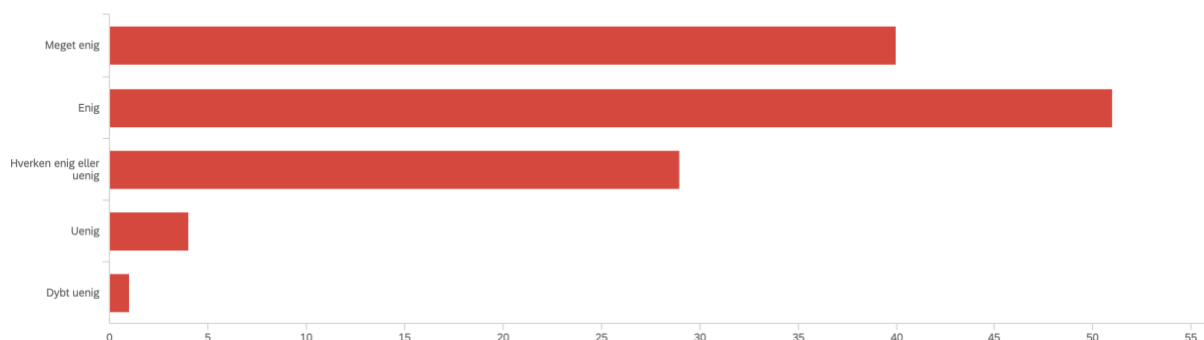
Løkken were to be altered in order to accommodate more tourists. As Newland et al (2021) pointed out through their studies, the advocacy of residents for the tourism may turn negative if they feel the nature is being harmed from the tourism in their area. However, my findings also point towards how it may not be agreed on by all local stakeholders in the area when the limit has been reached and the impact on the nature is too much to ignore. The representatives from Hotel Løkken Strand do still point out that sustainability is important to entrepreneurs in the area:

'It has improved. We also now have someone named Signe, who's in charge of Race for Oceans. She has an office... She is present all over the world, but her main office is in Løkken now. So, there is a big focus on it' (Hotel Løkken Strand, appendix 5)

The mentioned initiative by an entrepreneur in Løkken is an example of newcomers doing work to improve its sustainability. A clean beach is arguably one of the most important foci of the destination since it is the main selling point of Løkken, where most of its attractions are centred around. As Newland et al (2021) argued, untouched and natural looking areas are found to be very attractive to tourists, and by keeping the beach and the rest of town is thereby very important as a way of maintenance. Though my survey pointed towards some differing views on whether tourism affects the natural areas in Løkken, another statement reads *Tourists should behave more sustainably with respect for nature when visiting Løkken* and this shows a mainly agreeing group of respondents:

Udsagn 8 - Turister bør opføre sig mere bæredygtigt med respekt for naturen, når de besøger Løkken

Sideindstillinger ▾



The responses for this statement showed how over 50 agreed in the statement while 40 out of the 126 respondents strongly agreed. From this I derive that some residents and other local stakeholders find the visitors find the way tourists behave when visiting to be somewhat harmful to Løkken, contrarily to what was understood from the above-mentioned survey statement. As mentioned

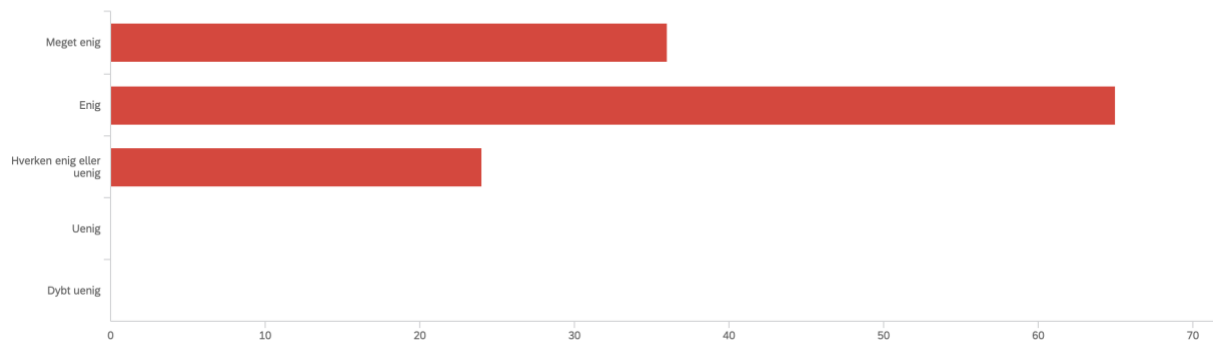
above, resilience among residents could appear if they find the visitors to behave unsustainably when visiting (Newland et al 2021).

Irritation among residents

Interestingly, there seems to be a difference in how important the opinions of local stakeholders are depending on whether they are connected to the tourism industry of Løkken or a resident. This aspect will be analysed and discussed below. Firstly, my survey showed the following opinions from local residents on the statement *I am affected positively by the tourism in Løkken*:

Udsagn 5 - Jeg påvirkes positivt af turismen i Løkken

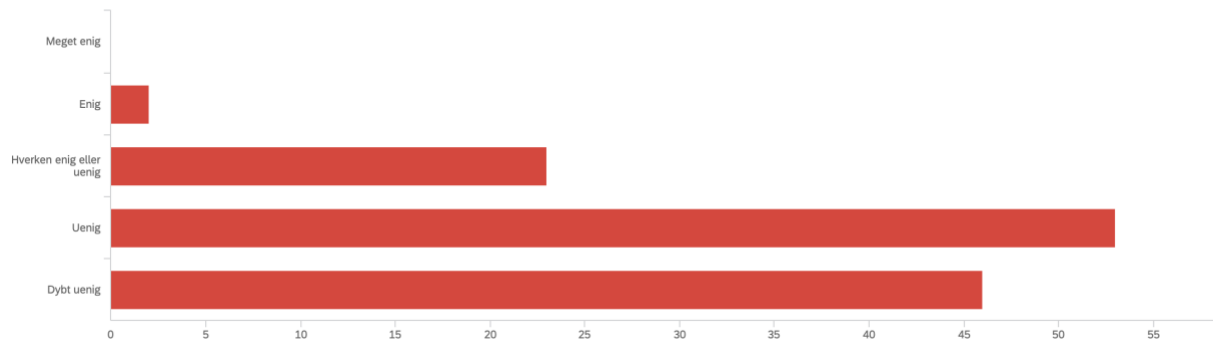
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As can be seen on the above survey result, none of the respondents disagreed with the statement, which mean that they feel positively influenced by the tourism in the area. Because the fact that a person is positively affected by something does not necessarily mean that they are never negatively affected by the same thing. Therefore, I also shared the statement *I am affected negatively by the tourism in Løkken*:

Udsagn 6 - Jeg påvirkes negativt af turismen i Løkken

Sideindstillinger ▾



Here, the result shows that the majority of respondents are not affected negatively by the tourism in Løkken. As was unpacked earlier and will also be discussed later in this chapter, this could be a sign of a mainly positive view of the outcome of tourism among respondents (Songyi et al 2021). The media coverage of Løkken has once again increased in the later years, with especially interest from the local TV-station TV2 Nord (TV2 Nord 2017; Henriksen 2019; Fjordbak & Guldbrandt 2021). However, the surf culture in Løkken has also made larger national media outlets such as Danmarks Radio to cover the area and its story (DR.dk/TV 2021). As opposed to the destination of Iceland discussed by Sæþórsdóttir et al (2020) the media coverage is not portraying Løkken in a negative and unsustainable way, but still has much to say in the rebranding of the town. Instead of attempting to warn people to stay away from the area, as has been the case in Løkken earlier (Verdens Gang 2002) and Iceland recently (Sæþórsdóttir et al 2020), the recent media coverage has put Løkken in a positive light, which arguably has as much to say when it comes to the public's view on the destination as negative press. Positive press may, however, not reach as far in the international media outlets as it is not as scandalous (Hammarlin 2019). The media coverage is also a symptom that the tourism in Løkken is on the rise, which could very well still mean that peak season will be overcrowded in the eyes of local residents:

'Some people probably think so. That enough is enough. I don't really think so. Right now, the holiday homes are fully booked in summer. And more holiday homes are being built so more and more people will come. And hotels have opened and such. So, more and more people will probably come, but I don't think it's too many. I know we have much room here. I do realise that in the peak of peak season it may be difficult to drive around here' (Løkken.dk, appendix 4)

As was discussed from the above results from my survey of residents and other stakeholders in Løkken, there was little to no resilience against the tourism in Løkken. The high season is seemingly the most irritating time to live in Løkken as the returning point is the matter of driving around in town, which is difficult in summer. This is, however, not something that creates more resilience among residents. Rather, the fact that it is primarily in summer that the town is busy is making the town more attractive to live in as it is quieter the rest of year. The informants from Hotel Løkken Strand comments on the matter in the following:

'So, if you want to live in a town and want an active school, sports, and other stuff, then we need people to move here and create new businesses. Tourism business is obvious because we live where we do. So, no, I don't feel that... I think they find it cool. And they think it's great that people come here and start things that attract tourists. Different tourists' (Hotel Løkken Strand, appendix 5)

If holding this quote together with the findings of Serra-Cantallos & Ramon-Cardona (2016), it is possible to derive that the resilience is viewed to be low among residents in the eyes of the respondents from Hotel Løkken Strand, which may be important for the destination's future development. A slight gap in the findings of Serra-Cantallos & Ramon-Cardona (2016) could be that they do not consider the possibility of resilience among residents if they themselves are part of the tourism industry. This point of view creates a dilemma for some of the local stakeholders in Løkken:

'When we get to October and are about to close down, we're ready for it. Then the last bit of service in our bodies has been used up. Then we feel like there has been a lot of guests and we've been through a lot. Then you need a break. So, if it was stretched out and was so intense all the time, I think people would find that to be too much' (Hotel Løkken Strand, appendix 5)

This quote was specifically chosen because it showcases the ambivalence connected to living in Løkken while also having a business in the town. The informants from Hotel Løkken Strand wish for the season to be stretched out so the peak season in summer is not the only attractive time a year for tourists to visit town. This wish is arguably motivated by a heightened focus on benefitting from tourism all year. However, the informants still state that they enjoy when the visitor numbers fall in intensity in the autumn. This claim may also be based on a more personal view of wanting the peace and quiet of a rural town, if you live in such a place. This also allows me to argue that the opinions of residents have more impact if the resident in question is also a local business owner and thereby has more of a say, since they are connected to the tourism industry in the area (Serra-Cantallos &

Ramon-Cardona 2016). The problem areas of high and low season are also commented on by the informant from North Shore Surf:

'There are always some, who can't see all the good stuff happening and only focus on the limitations and view it negatively. But the main part of locals sees the boom in town positively. Because, since there are now tourists here all year and also in low season, there are jobs for residents in town all year and not just in high season. So, that means there are more people, who have an opportunity to work close to their home' (North Shore Surf, appendix 2)

Once again, an informant argues that there are positive and negative elements in having an intense high season. It is found that most informants and respondents find the tourism in Løkken to be a positive and very little irritating part of the town today. This allows me to argue that the rebranding of Løkken is mainly positively viewed among my informants, which is also arguable from my discussions throughout this chapter.

Development by tourism actors

The development of Løkken as a sustainable tourist destination is visible in several of my respondents and informants replies and statements. As sustainability becomes more and more imbedded into the mindsets of consumers, the business owners in tourist destinations are also expected to hold certain standards within sustainability and a collaborative way of development may prove highly useful for the businesses of Løkken. There is, however, also a difference among corporations in Løkken, when it comes to sustainable initiatives:

'But our cups are reusable paper cups and the same goes for glasses etc. We don't have straws. We have sugar straws, which are edible for extra purchase. So, we're trying to down scale the one-time use products. The same goes for our cutlery' (North Shore Surf, appendix 2)

As was found by Savage et al (2011), collaboration is one highly useful way of solving the “messy problems” of the area. This could be taken literally in the case of Løkken, where local stakeholders work together in creating a more sustainable destination for visitors and locals (Vores Løkken 2020). As the different unions in Løkken started working together towards the same goal, the “messy problems” are similar to most of the respondents and informants of my study. If focusing on sustainability, the informants of my interviews seemingly work towards a more sustainable future, though some local businesses are viewed to have less of a focus on the matter:

'But I don't think all of those outlets think of sustainability at all. I don't know. But the town has many differences. I really think the people on the beach consider it. Maybe not with the surf thing itself, but there are some people doing those ocean things with beach clean-ups. But the town always did that' (Bolcheriet, appendix 3)

Another “messy problem” could be the risk of overtourism in the future. As discussed earlier, the residents of Løkken may feel some resilience towards the tourism in high season. This could similarly call for collaborative strategies, but as Songyi et al (2021) argue from their study, if the main view on tourism is positive as the outcome of the tourism in the area seems positive to the residents, the resilience of the residents should be lowered. However, my findings do point towards some irritation among residents, which could potentially evolve in the future:

'We also have friends, who drive to Pandrup or Vrå to shop groceries, because they get sick of the crowding in Brugsen' (Hotel Løkken Strand, appendix 5)

This quote shows how there still exists a bit of irritation among residents during high season. Tércio et al (2022) examined how residents in a Brazilian coastal destination at certain times of the year shared the same desire to evade their hometown because of the tourism taking place in high season. Though the study by Tércio et al (2022) does not find a clear reason behind this evasion, the conclusion of the study is that it is happening as a result of impending overtourism, which arguably also is the case for some residents in Løkken. The above quote shows how there from time to time are so many customers in the local supermarket that it is more attractive for residents to drive to other towns in the area to shop groceries in peak season. This allows me to derive that there is a risk for Løkken to become subject to real overtourism in the future, though the residents are not experiencing the crowding of town to be huge and annoying problem in peak season yet. Therefore, the goal of stretching out the season in order to make high season less intense and crowded has been introduced among residents in different formats of collaboration.

Future

For this final part of my analysis, focus will be put on whether Løkken as a destination may continue its growth and reach increasingly high visitor numbers in the future. As was presented earlier, this stage of the TALC model is my own suggestion to what can be added to the existing model. Naturally, it builds on hypothetical assumptions and predictions, however, the goals for the local stakeholders, which are presented in this segment, are a good inclination of which actions they wish to make in the future.

Tourism in Denmark

When asked of the coming years, the informants in my interviews presented differing views on what is important for Løkken's tourism to continue its growth and attractiveness for tourists.

Interestingly, the innovation of newcomers is not necessarily the main focal point when it comes to the future desires for the destination. The representative from Løkken.dk explains it as such:

'There is some old stuff, which is being organized. Things, which are worn down. We have a lot of focus on creating change. Actually, down by the surfer boys. Because it's the house of fishermen, which we need to do something about in order to make it more attractive to be a fisherman. And maybe we can attract some' (Løkken.dk, appendix 4)

This quote backs up the findings of Ounanian (2018), which I discussed in my literature review. Her findings regarding the fishing fleet in Løkken was that even though it is small and has reduced rapidly in the later years, it is still an important part of the tourist experience in the town (Ounanian 2018). Though the city also has a small museum telling the story of the fishing culture in Løkken, the desire for the local stakeholders, which I have interviewed for this thesis seem to agree that keeping the active commercial fishermen is very important, because it adds to the authenticity of the experience. It also exemplifies how even though the main focus of Løkken in terms of tourism in the later years have been placed on outdoor tourism, the fishing culture is another aspect, which can make Løkken an attractive and interesting tourist destination. The same view was shared by a couple of respondents of my survey as well as the representative from Løkken Turistbureau:

'We also have a slight challenge in that we only have one commercial fisherman. Only one full time fisherman, who is pulled into the sea, pulled back onto the shore and sells fresh fish and is a registered commercial fisher in town. That is a huge problem, because what are we going to do when he isn't around anymore and there are no one else? It's about culture and history. It ties the town together in a way' (Løkken Turistbureau, appendix 1)

This quote further adds on top of the findings by Ounanian (2018), which also focuses heavily on keeping the North Jutlandic fishing villages alive instead of becoming only museum towns. It is arguable that the fishing fleet in Løkken is important to the town in more ways than only because it is a tourist attraction, however. The fleet has much nostalgic value for the current residents, but newcomers and future locals may not agree and instead focus on the potential for creating an amazing outdoor destination. The focus on outdoor tourism seemingly arise from the many newcomers, who move to town and develop tourism related businesses:

'And that means that there are always coming new people with new ideas. And I think that is really important in order for the town to develop' (Løkken.dk, appendix 4)

The informant from Løkken.dk agrees that the new people in town help develop the tourism opportunities in Løkken. The newcomers seemingly have not helped Løkken develop its fishing fleet, but instead focused on the other natural resources in the area such as the beach for different activities and sports. This shows that not all local business owners find it equally important to support the fishing industry in Løkken. Arguably, focusing on keeping the fishing fleet active is not very important to the other businesses in Løkken and mainly has a nostalgic value for some residents and other local stakeholders. As Halkier (2013) points out, the North Jutlandic destinations may benefit more from innovations than traditional pull factors like the one presented by the fishing fleet. From my survey, I cannot conclude whether the fishing industry in Løkken is a reason for tourists to visit the town. However, as not many of my respondents and informants mentions the dying fishing culture in Løkken, I argue that a new focus on active holidays and a new vision in the future, which doesn't necessarily include fresh fish on the beach, is not viewed as an important problem for Løkken. Still, the fishing industry offers authenticity and helps local restaurants serve local produce, which could also add to the experience of tourists.

Different forms of tourism

In the future, outdoor tourism seems to be the main focal point of nearly all my respondents and informants. The representatives from Hotel Løkken Strand shares how they believe Løkken has many possibilities of becoming a great place for outdoor activities:

'We have amazing opportunities and resources to make Løkken a crazy outdoor mekka, really. So, it's a question of being better at catching it and do more and more with it' (Hotel Løkken Strand, appendix 5)

The above quote by the representatives from Hotel Løkken Strand is an example of the future of Løkken if this stakeholder were to predict it. The aim to use the natural areas in Løkken and the surrounding villages is, from my collected data, shared by both residents, tourists and stakeholders. If this point of view is put into force in the coming years, this may call for some alterations in the area to make it more accommodating for tourists to do activities here. As was found by Newland et al (2021), altering nature in order to make tourists more comfortable is a subject of discussion in other tourist destinations internationally as well. If the economic and social impact is viewed as positive, these alterations can be made in order to improve the aspects on the destination further

(Newland et al 2021). In the case of Løkken, and specifically the informants and respondents of my data collection, altering nature slightly is an attractive way of improving the destination to future guests. However, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, the use of the natural areas in Løkken is done with as much care as possible because of the erosion in the area. Further, surfing activities are arguably less harmful than other activities on the beach. Lastly, the study made by Newland et al (2021) also found that tourists found untouched areas more attractive to visit than others, so maybe altering the destination in order to make it more accommodating ultimately can risk making it less accommodative. Since this active focus is important to local stakeholders, this finding could be focused on when stating the following:

'Our goal is to focus much more on getting companies out here to use Løkken in low season. It's hard to attract many tourists and hardly anyone has time off, but companies... We get more and more day meetings and courses and such. So, if we could start getting them accustomed to come out here and get a positive experience with their colleagues, which they can also have in their holidays...' (Hotel Løkken Strand, appendix 5)

In their interview, the informants from Hotel Løkken Strand stated that business tourism could be a way of creating more awareness of Løkken in other seasons than summertime. As I presented in the literature review of this thesis, Varley & Semple (2015) presented how the concept of *friluftsliv* is a way for business and pleasure to mix in Nordic destinations. Their study focuses on residents and how the concept is important to them, however, for this analysis, I would argue that this could also translate to other cases, such as the one presented in the above quote. Here, *friluftsliv* and the idea that allowing business and pleasure to take place in nature is understood as a way for the two to mix as what is experienced with your colleagues as a way to make you stronger as a team, may inspire you to visit the destination with your family and friends to relax at a later moment.

Irritation among residents

A big question for the future of Løkken as a tourism destination is of how irritating and potentially harmful the possibly increased town popularity may become for residents as well as the natural areas surrounding Løkken. It is difficult to determine exactly where the limit of “too many tourists” is, but there are still a few examples of resilience among residents pointed at the tourism in Løkken. Though it does not take up much space in the minds of local businesses, the questions of when there are too many tourists for the town's capacity can still be raised. An example of such is shared by the informant from Løkken.dk:

'And I don't know if at some point you reach the limit, right? As you said yourself; when is enough and when is too many? And of course, there are a lot of opinions on that' (Løkken.dk, appendix 4)

The many opinions of local residents in Løkken make for a possible application of the model introduced by Mihalic & Kuščer (2020). Here, it is argued that residents will be less irritated by tourism's impact on their hometown if the economic benefits are viewed as attractive enough. In other words, it is a question of weighing the pros and cons of the tourism in the area (Mihalic & Kuščer 2020). Therefore, I would argue that it would take a monumental rise in the number of visitors for real resilience against them to appear amongst residents, because the benefits to the town are seen as too great to be a nuisance. As Mihalic & Kuščer (2020) argued in their findings, overtourism can be managed by local stakeholders if need be. The representative of the local DMO of Løkken Turistbureau shares that there is little resilience as well as possibilities of accommodating tourist needs:

'There is no hinderance for people to park their car a bit outside of town and then utilise nature to get to the town. It is a possibility. There's also free parking on the beach. It's luckily wide and big. But no, not many people complain' (Løkken Turistbureau, appendix 1)

The suggestion of parking outside of Løkken's town centre shows how the local DMO wishes to focus on maintaining the surrounding nature rather than spend many resources on creating more parking spaces. The question of parking spaces has been raised often, and has even caused a few arguments in the Facebook Group *Løkken Hele Året!*, where there has been a few examples of irritation towards the relatively new and larger parking area close to the town centre (Facebook Group: *Løkken Hele Året!* 2020). Some residents argue that there should not be built more parking areas for tourists while others disagree (ibid). The main part of my data collection, however, point out that there is a problem with too many cars in the town centre in high season. When revisiting Mihalic & Kuščer (2020), it would seem that it is very important for residents to maintain the infrastructure and nature in Løkken and therefore, the argument of enough economic benefits will make residents like most aspects of tourism is not entirely applicable to this case. It also shows from my interview with Hotel Løkken Strand that overcrowding is tolerable in high season, but not all through the year:

'Yeah. It's also about whether the town will be over-crowded. If that many people show up that it almost makes us unable to... (...) I think it's nice to live here now, because it's only in high season. If it was like that all of the time, I don't think it would be attractive to live here' (Hotel Løkken Strand, appendix 5)

This quote exemplifies how some local business owners, who themselves live in Løkken, may worry that the potential overcrowding of the town in the coming years may make it less attractive to live in Løkken permanently. If that will be the case, the tourism industry in the town may need some management in order to make it more attractive to live in. However, as was examined earlier in this analysis chapter, the opinions of residents may not be taken into consideration at all times, and it may not matter in the long run whether the residents of Løkken are irritated by the tourism in high season. This ambivalence was similarly detected in Serra-Cantallops & Ramon-Cardona's (2016) study from Ibiza, where the resilience from locals was deemed less important than the tourism, because it is so important for the island's economy. However, as was found in both responses in my survey and statements in my interviews, there is also a heightened focus on attracting new permanent residents to town. Therefore, the need to consider residents' opinions on tourism in Løkken is still very important to consider in order to create an attractive living space for newcomers.

Development by tourism actors

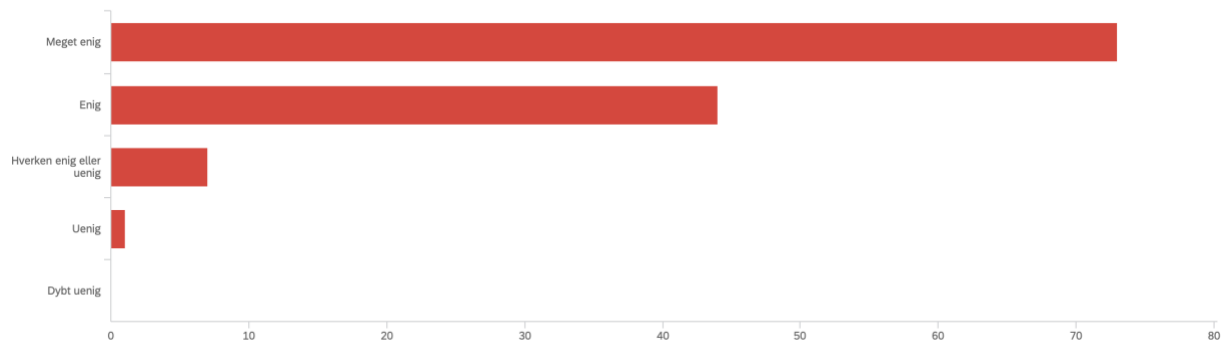
When it comes to the future of Løkken, it seems to be mainly agreed that the tourism should increase in the coming years. My findings point towards a positive outlook on the tourism development in the area, and as examined above, the irritation towards the guests seems low among my respondents and informants. However, there are still some points in which the development should happen with a certain care for the town:

'Because everyone agrees that this is an old town, which we need to protect, right? So, in that way I think there will be more tourists in the future than we have now. There will be a development in the area' (Løkken.dk, appendix 4)

Although this quote exemplifies one of the worries related to a rise in tourism numbers, most of the respondents and informants seem to wish for more visitors in Løkken. From my survey of people with a connection to Løkken, I found the following result:

Udsagn 4 - Jeg føler en stærk tilknytning til Løkken

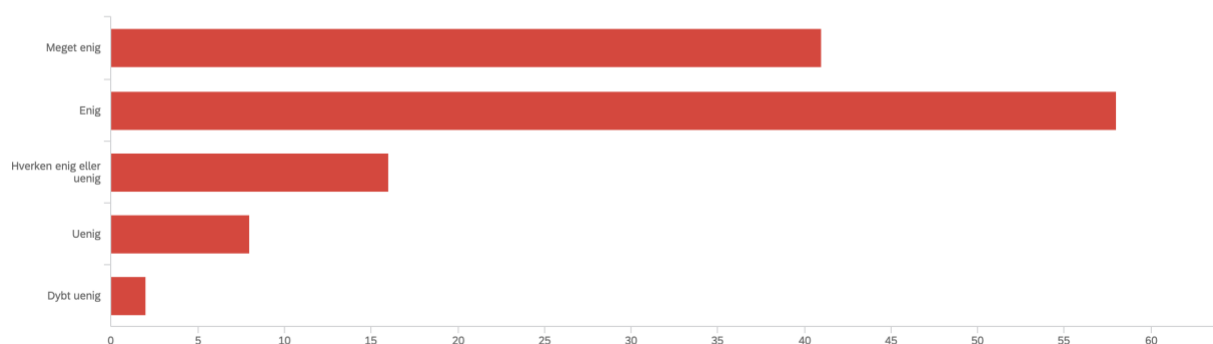
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These responses from my survey shows that over 70 of the 126 respondents state that they strongly agree to the statement *I feel a strong connection to Løkken*. Further, over 40 respondents stated that they agree. When applying that finding to Mao-Ying et al's (2022) finding on how important it can be for a tourism destination to have a supportive community through CCB and OCB, this could very well be a highly promising figure for the future of Løkken. This would mean that residents care about Løkken so much that they will have a desire to improve the destination and make it more accommodating of tourists and newcomers (Mihalic & Kuščer 2020). On top of this, my findings show that the respondents wish to welcome more visitors to Løkken in the future:

Udsagn 1 - Der skal komme mere turisme til Løkken

Sideindstillinger ▾



This part of my survey shows that almost 60 respondents agree to the statement *There should be more tourism in Løkken*. Further, over 40 respondents agree to the statement. This could, similarly to the previously analysed survey result shown in this analysis segment, mean a positive possible future for Løkken as a tourist destination. As mentioned in previous segments of this analysis, the findings of Songyi et al (2021) showed how a positive view on tourism among residents in a

destination can take place as a result of locals having an idea that the tourism benefits their hometown in some way. After collecting my data, I found that this argument is highly applicable to the case of Løkken. This is because the results of the rejuvenation of Løkken seem very tangible and visible in terms of a rise in newcomers and entrepreneurs, as mentioned earlier. Importantly, though, is the notion that some resident may want more visitors, but not at any cost. The representatives from Hotel Løkken Strand put it as such:

'We want more tourists, but it has to be spread out, so we create more activities in the early spring and late autumn. Because I don't think the town has the capacity in high season at all. There is traffic chaos and people and cars everywhere. So, I think the town is close to the limit of capacity now' (Hotel Løkken Strand, appendix 5)

The above quote shows another worry regarding capacity and traffic in the town in high season. It seems that these respondents think that there is a real chance that Løkken has reached its maximum capacity in high season and therefore this quote interestingly shows a new take on the goal of attracting many new tourists. Thereby, Songyi et al's (2021) findings of residents, who are welcoming towards tourists, is applicable in a new way. There seem to be an opposition towards more tourists in high season as it does not benefit the town or helps it to develop in the future. This makes sense through the lens of Songyi et al (2021) too, because the perceived negative effects of some aspects of more tourists result in some negativity towards tourists. However, it is important to note that this is merely one part of the perception of a larger number of tourists, which is negative while most of my other responses and statements are mainly positive with a positive outlook on possible growth in the future.

Conclusion

Throughout my data collection, the subsequent analysis and discussion, I have discovered several challenges and other aspects, which I will map out in the following conclusion chapter. The main focus of this chapter, however, is to bring clarity to my problem statement: *How has Løkken as a tourist destination evolved in the later years through the viewpoint of local stakeholders and residents?* The main findings from my analysis will be highlighted here, after which the limitations of my study as well as the possibilities for future studies will be presented.

One of the main findings of my thesis revolved around the localism and short termism of the municipality of Løkken-Vrå, which arguably has affected multiple stages of Løkken's life cycle. Further, I from my data derive that my respondents and informants do not find the reaction of the former municipality to be constructive or positive in general. The actions taken by the municipality at the time was also problematic, because Løkken lacked a plan for its rejuvenation, which resulted in the decline and so-called death of the town. The decline may, however, have been a necessary step for Løkken to be able to change its scope later. This change was also provoked by the change in municipality, where Løkken-Vrå was included into Hjørring. This helped the town to renew its pier as well as other parts of town. Further, it contributed as a way out of the short termism and localism experienced earlier. Many of my respondents and informants state the belief that the entrepreneurs and newcomers have helped Løkken to rejuvenate and grow. The destination has grown not only as a place for tourists to visit in the summer, but also as an increasingly attractive town to move to permanently. This development has also allowed me to conclude that though tourism could be considered more important to some municipalities, the opinions of residents should also be taken into consideration as it is difficult for the area covered by Hjørring municipality in general to attract newcomers and irritating tourism has a potential of scaring off potential residents.

Secondly, my findings pointed towards the fact that the residents of Løkken evidently did not find the benefits from the tourism in the early 2000s important enough and instead focused on their irritation. In other words, the irritation surrounding the bad reputation seemed more important than the possibility of economic gain from the alcotourist visitors. The reputation of Løkken created by the media outlets in both Denmark and Norway has created an image of the town, which has proved difficult to rid itself of, as I also found in my data collection. Further, the irritation evidently also is

grounded in a feeling of the rumours being exaggerated and some even untrue. This feeling of injustice could have further provoked the municipality to react in this particular way. As residents have an improved view of the new kind of tourism, they are more likely to wish to help develop it further. Through their connection to Løkken, residents wish to help promote it as a tourist destination in order for it to develop and be successful. This would also help to improve the damaged reputation of the town, which makes the development positive on several levels for residents. However, there is a dilemma of wishing to stretch out the high season in order to attract more tourists in all seasons, though the residents and stakeholders in my interviews still argue how the end of high season in autumn is nice, as the town becomes quieter with more room for the residents. Though there is a possibility of a rise in tourists in the future, this does not necessarily point towards the town reaching its capacity limit and being subject to overtourism. The benefits of today's tourism are seen as too great to become a nuisance in the coming years. It is, however, still on the minds of some of my informants. Interestingly, some informants state that they believe that Løkken already has reached its limit of capacity in high season. For this thesis I would argue that overtourism in high season could be impending, but Løkken's stakeholders could manage its challenges by use of collaboration.

Lastly, the fishing fleet in Løkken seems to be subject of much worry among some of the informants. This is seen as being an important part of Løkken's history and authenticity. Newcomers and future entrepreneurs may not have the same nostalgic feelings for the fishing fleet and may instead choose to focus solely on the outdoor activities of the area. Also, the area appears relatively untouched still, which is also attractive for visitors and residents. As the beach also has somewhat limited space, a choice of what the town should focus on could be necessary to make. Newcomers may choose to move to Løkken as it becomes increasingly available to utilise the outdoor appliances, while people, who have lived in the area for years, may have a different wish for tradition to remain.

Limitations & future research

If I, or another researcher, were to continue the studies of Løkken's life cycle, it could be highly interesting to dive into the history of municipality change in the area, and what the effect on Løkken has been after the very local municipality of Løkken-Vrå was included into the larger municipality of Hjørring. As it in fact is a big part of my discussion, it may have been relevant to include an

informant from the municipality for an interview. The insights from the inside of the municipality could be helpful in answering some wonderments surrounding the shutdown of night clubs and could help add another layer to the analysis. This was, however, something I found during my data collection and not necessarily a factor, I considered beforehand. As such, this study could work as a steppingstone for other, more specified studies on the importance of localism in municipalities and how this may affect a tourist destination.

Another interesting direction to take a study could be to focus more on the TALC model (Butler 1980). This kind of study would call for some form of comparison with other destinations. If I were to build on top of the TALC model (ibid.) and thereby suggest that this is a useful and applicable addition to Butler's (1980) findings, a study on other destinations would be necessary, but still highly interesting for a larger study with a wider time frame and perhaps more analytical tools and experience.

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