Contrasting Narratives: Media vs. Local Perspectives on Icelandic Tourism

By

Viktoría Karlsdóttir & Kristýna Hujňáková

A Master's Thesis
Submitted to the Department of Culture and Learning
Aalborg University

In Fulfillment of the Requirements
For a Master´s Degree
May 2024

Number of characters: 222 371

Table of Contents

Abstract

Research on tourism in Iceland has extensively covered various aspects such as cruise tourism, astro tourism, sustainability, disaster tourism, and volcanic tourism. However, the dynamic nature of tourism necessitates ongoing examination. The ongoing situation in Iceland, including volcanic eruptions, peak in Northern lights activity and the media portrayal of Icelandic tourism and the recent events, have an impact on tourism and presents new challenges and opportunities. This thesis investigates the contrast between media representations of Icelandic tourism and the perspectives of tourism professionals, analyzing its implications for the industry. The research identifies three key themes: volcanic activity, Northern Lights tourism, and the portrayal of overtourism. Volcanic eruptions in the Reykjanes Peninsula have drawn global attention. Due to safety concerns for both residents and visitors, tourism facilities and accommodation in the affected area were closed down. Additionally, media coverage often sensationalizes the events, leading to misconceptions and fear among potential visitors. Despite these challenges, increased volcanic activity tends to draw volcano enthusiasts. Similarly, increased Northern Lights activity presents an opportunity to attract tourists during the winter season. However, managing expectations and diversifying attractions beyond this phenomenon is crucial due to the unpredictability of weather conditions. Furthermore, media depictions of overtourism in Iceland, often portraying the country as overcrowded and suffering from environmental degradation, contribute to negative perceptions. Interviews with Icelandic tourism professionals provide a nuanced perspective. While rejecting the oversimplification of "overtourism," they recognize the strain on infrastructure, housing and natural environment and advocate for sustainable tourism practices, such as diversifying tour routes and enforcing regulations. The analysis reveals a significant disparity between media narratives and the perspectives of tourism professionals. Sensationalized coverage of volcanic eruptions and overtourism undermines Iceland's tourism industry by creating misconceptions and discouraging visitors. However, proactive communication strategies and responsible journalism can help promote a balanced understanding of tourism-related issues and ensure sustainable growth.

1.0 Introduction

Iceland and its tourism have been heavily researched. Primarily focusing on topics such as cruise tourism (Fridriksson, Wise, and Scott 2020) (James, Olsen, and Karlsdóttir 2020), Astro tourism (Jóhannesson and Lund 2017), sustainability (Sæþórsdóttir, Hall, and Wendt 2020a); (Sæþórsdóttir, Hall, and Wendt 2020b); (G. Helgadóttir, et al. 2019); (Aumiller 2018), disaster tourism (Sharpley & Stone 2009); (Rucinska 2016), and volcanic tourism (Erfurt 2022) as well as other research regarding cinematography (Nanjangud and Reijnders 2022); (Loftsdóttir, Kjartansdóttir, and Lund 2017). However, this situation is currently unfolding, and new information is being continuously released therefore it is not being researched for now.

As described above, the current tourism situation in Iceland is as follows. Firstly, there are the volcanic eruptions that have been happening since December 2023 and there is a higher risk of more eruptions in the near future (Darren 2024); (Veðurstofa Íslands 2024). This results in safety issues for both visitors and residents of certain areas. Moreover, it also causes capacity issues as tourism facilities, such as accommodations, restaurants, and lagoons are forced to close during the eruptions (Puckett 2024). On the other hand, the higher activity in volcanoes can result in more visitors for volcanic tourism (Onmanorama 2024). Additionally, there is a possible opportunity for attracting people who enjoy dark tourism to the sites of the eruptions as was done in Iceland in the past (Eldheimar 2023). Secondly, due to the higher activity of Northern Lights predicted for 2024, higher demand might be a direct result. And thirdly, Iceland is a destination that is said to struggle with over-tourism and overcrowding. Therefore, a balance between the economic need for the tourism industry as it provides employment for residents and boosts economic growth, and the long-term negative impacts it has on the environment and society, is needed.

Furthermore, the tourism sector in Iceland has been struggling with media portrayal, particularly about two critical themes: the idea of overtourism and the recent eruptions in the Reykjanes Peninsula. For quite some time, the media has been portraying Iceland as suffering greatly from overtourism, comparing it to the likes of Barcelona and Venice.

This portrayal has been present in various media outlets and has painted a picture of Iceland as being overwhelmed by an unsustainable number of visitors.

Moreover, the recent volcanic eruptions in the Reykjanes Peninsula have created an increased focus on Iceland and have drawn the global spotlight to Iceland once again. However, the media representations have included a considerable amount of sensationalism and exaggeration. The coverage of these eruptions has at certain times been highly exaggerated and even outright false, with headlines underlining the dramatic lava flow, possibly at the expense of accuracy and understanding (Moses 2024); (Ravilious 2024).

These portrayals present significant challenges to the stakeholders within Icelandic tourism. The narrative of overtourism can undermine the country's efforts to promote tourism in a sustainable and responsible manner. Likewise, the sensationalist representations of the volcanic eruptions in the Reykjanes Peninsula can create misconceptions and fear among possible visitors, potentially discouraging them from visiting Iceland.

Iceland has various experiences that cater to different wants of visitors. As both Gössling (2006) and Tang (2009) stated, the main one is its nature. This island can offer Northern Lights, volcanos, geysers, hot springs, waterfalls, and glaciers. Therefore, in terms of activities tourists can explore caves, hike near volcanoes and waterfalls, ski, fish, watch whales or ride horses (Business Iceland 2023). Some less usual activities are bathing in craters and dog sledding on glaciers. Another attraction made possible by hot springs are thermal lagoons which offer relaxation, spa, and skin care treatments, or geothermal power station tours (Gössling 2006). Cruise tourism is very popular and significant in Iceland as well (Fridriksson, Wise, and Scott 2020) (James, Olsen, and Karlsdóttir 2020). Recently, Icelandic nature also was featured in Bollywood movie songs which brought Indian tourists to the island, who wanted to see the filming sites (Nanjangud and Reijnders 2022).

However, there are certain drawbacks to the high volume of visitors. Tourism has grown to be the largest export sector in Iceland (Statistics Iceland 2020). With the number of tourists reaching 2.3 million in 2018, Iceland had become the thirteenth country in the

world with the highest tourist-to-inhabitant ratio (The World Bank 2020). With Iceland being a high-latitude island, whose primary draw is its untamed landscape, this increase in visitors results in several issues. Firstly, there is the matter of accommodation both for tourists and for residents. The majority of residents live in the capital area, Reykjavík, where the majority of tourist accommodations are situated. The tourist increase resulted in a quality decline regarding the landscapes (Ólafsdóttir 2013), tourist experience (Sæþórsdóttir, Hall and Wendt 2019), and infrastructure. Additionally, due to platforms such as Airbnb, tourism housing pushed the local residents in and around the capital city to less affordable, smaller, and poorly kept apartments (Prakash 2024).

Moreover, according to several surveys, (Bjarnadóttir 2019a); (Bjarnadóttir 2019b) (Bjarnadóttir 2019c); (Bjarnadóttir, Jóhannesson, and Gunnarsdóttir 2016); (G. Helgadóttir, et al. 2016); (Bjarnadóttir 2019d); (Bjarnadóttir 2018) the residents in this area have the most negative attitude towards tourists and think that the number of tourists is way too high. On the other hand. other surveys (Social Science Research Institute 2014) (Bjarnadóttir, Arnalds, and Víkingsdóttir 2018, Market and Media Research 2020) found that residents of other respective areas in Iceland do not share this opinion and their attitude towards tourists is positive or neutral. (Sæþórsdóttir, Hall and Wendt 2020). Secondly, there is the matter of nature. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the media (Adams and Coffey 2019) were warning people from going to Iceland. Their reasoning was that some attractions were forced to close due to the visitor volume causing too much ecological disturbance, and it is better to avoid this destination. Moreover, Iceland was described as a destination destroyed by tourists, as a place where visitors are ruining the very thing, they came to Iceland for simply by visiting (Mack 2020). The high number of visitors creates concerns about how it will continue to impact the natural heritage as well as the life quality of locals (Sæþórsdóttir, Hall, and Wendt 2020).

1.1 Current Situation in Iceland

Northern Lights, or the Aurora Borealis, is a *"natural display of lights caused by charged solar particles entering the atmosphere, typically observable in the Polar regions in the High North"* (Jóhannesson and Lund 2017, p. 183).

Northern Lights, among other attractions Iceland has to offer, such as summer midnight sun, glaciers, volcanoes, and geothermal baths, is considered as a once in a lifetime experience (Guide to Iceland n.d.), especially for tourists coming from large cities and densely populated urban areas (Remer and Liu 2022). As the demand for Aurora Borealis tours increased, whale-watching companies in certain areas of Iceland, such as Reykjavík and Akureyri, provided Northern Lights tours in the winter season (Aumiller 2018).

Miranda Bryant (2023) interviewed a space physics researcher at Tromsø Geophysical Observatory, Njål Gulbrandsen, who predicts increased Aurora activity in 2024 compared to the previous 20 years. His prediction is based on two factors. Firstly, the sun has an 11-year activity cycle, and this year it will reach its peak, otherwise known as "solar maxima". And secondly, the last "solar maxima" was a weak one. As a result, the current peak in solar activity should be the strongest it has been in two decades. A space physics researcher from Svalbard's University Centre, Katie Herlingshaw, elaborates that the solar maximum will result in increased visibility of the Northern Lights both in intensity and time-frequency (Bryant 2023). Others corroborate Gulbrandsen's and Herlingshaw's predictions (Ward 2023) (Hughes 2024). The Northern Lights in Iceland have always been in high demand among tourists, moreover, it is one of the most important factors of Iceland's winter tourism (Monitor 2018). However, as there is no way to predict Northern Lights activity, (NOAA n.d.) (Aurora Zone n.d.) disappointment among visitors happens. The fact that the chance of experiencing this phenomenon this year is significantly higher results in an increased demand for these locations (Herrmann 2024). This can be documented in social media communities which both spread awareness of the predictions as well as declare their traveling plans (Appendix 10).

Predictions of the quicker, stronger peaks of Aurora Borealis activity for Northern locations made in 2023 are now substantiated by reported heightened activity (Waldek

2024). Although a precise forecast of the time and location of this natural light show is impossible, some people had already booked and even traveled to Iceland during the first few months of 2024 solely due to the increased likelihood of witnessing it (Appendix 7).

Iceland is located on the Mid-Atlantic Ridge, which is a crack in the floor of the ocean caused by the separation of two tectonic plates. This means that Iceland has several volcanic zones and belts, with about 30 active volcano systems, which cover approximately one-third of the country. A combination of factors leads to Iceland being one of the areas in the world with the most volcanic activity, they see an eruption approximately every four years (IcelandOnTheWeb, n.d.). Iceland sprang to international consciousness with the 2010 Eyjafjallajökull eruptions that lasted a combined 62 days and created an ash cloud that had significant consequences for a great deal of European airspace, which saw closures for 5 days (Larsen et al. 2013). This was the eruption that awoke public knowledge of Iceland as a volcanic destination (Langridge & Michaud 2023).

In 2021, the Reykjanes Peninsula in Iceland entered a new period of high seismic and volcanic activity that could possibly be the beginning of decades of occasional eruptions in the area (Andrews 2023). This area has seen six eruptions in under three years. The first three eruptions were relatively harmless, but the most recent ones have had severe consequences for the inhabitants of the town Grindavík, which is located close to the volcanic activity. The entire town was evacuated in November 2023 and the most recent eruption has meant that lava has flowed into the town and destroyed people's homes and infrastructure in the town (Magnúsdóttir 2023), (Bryant 2024).

As of February 16, 2024, the town is still under evacuation orders, and inhabitants are only allowed to collect personal belongings at certain times decided by the Department of Civil Protection and Emergency Management (almannavarnir.is 2024). Following the evacuation and volcanic eruption, the future of the town has been uncertain, and inhabitants are unsure of whether they will ever be able to return, as many businesses are relocating to other parts of the country (Hilmarsson 2024; Egilsdóttir 2024).

While the international tourist numbers of 2023 in Iceland were positive, experiencing only a one percent decrease in comparison to 2019, the post-pandemic recovery was

hindered by various volcano occurrences (Maudlin 2024). The tourism industry in Iceland is reporting fewer numbers of both incoming visitors and bookings for the last months of 2023 and 2024 (Sigurðardóttir 2024) (Maudlin 2024). The managing director of the Icelandic Travel Industry Association, Jóhannes Þór Skúlason commented on this situation in an interview with journalist Ragnhildur Sigurðardóttir (2024) stating the following "*We saw already in November that new bookings went down. They have since slowly started recovering but the effect from the seismic activity and the media coverage around that can still be felt.*". According to the statistics provided to Sigurðardóttir (2024) by the Icelandic Tourism Board, there has been a noticeable decline in bookings compared to their estimations, both for winter 2023 and the first months of 2024. These fewer bookings can be attributed to various factors, including high costs and concerns arising from frequent volcanic eruptions (Sigurðardóttir 2024). Especially impactful was the eruption near the small Icelandic town, of Grindavík, in November 2023. It contributed significantly to the deterrence of potential visitors both due to how it negatively impacted residents of Grindavík and the reaction of the media covering this event. Additionally, Icelandic national airline, Icelandair, reported that in the last months of 2023, they experienced "*a significant negative impact on bookings*" (Bubola 2024). The low-cost Icelandic Airline, Play, commented on the news of the eruption which "*cooled demand for Iceland as a destination.*" (Bubola 2024). During interviews and in national news coverage, both the tourism board director and airline officials vehemently stated that the media reaction was unwarranted since the recent eruptions posed no direct threat to neither visitors nor flights. They criticized the news media for sensationalizing the situation and blowing it out of proportion, labeling it as "Alarmism" (Bubola 2024). Moreover, the CEO of Play, Birgir Jónsson, says in an interview with Viðskiptablaðið (Gunnlaugsson 2023) that he and the airline's staff are actively addressing misinformation and fake news concerning the volcanic eruptions on the Reykjanes Peninsula. He expresses concern that both the airline and the tourism sector are struggling to manage the narrative, as some major international news media outlets have reported on an alleged toxic volcanic activity affecting Reykjavík and its surroundings (Bettiza, Slow, and Moloney 2023); (Hutchinson 2023); (Bongato 2023) (Malley 2023). *"We are trying to use our network to answer this and get our message across because it looks*

like that in the media abroad as if Iceland is just useless as a destination." (Gunnlaugsson 2023).

1.2 Problem Formulation

Based on the above-mentioned issues, the problem formulation that the authors will analyze is as follows:

How do media representations of tourism in Iceland contrast with the perspectives of Icelandic tourism professionals and what are the implications of these differences on the tourism industry?

2.0 Literature Review

The following chapter will serve as a critical introduction to the extensive literature used in order to understand the various aspects of this thesis, providing essential background knowledge in order to contextualize the thesis' exploration.

The literature review aims to provide a comprehensive overview of relevant literature that shapes and informs this field of study. By examining a diverse range of theoretical perspectives, this review aims to highlight the current state of knowledge and identify gaps in the research. The literature review will include sections about the various forms of tourism in Iceland, several aspects of the media and its influence on tourism, natural disasters in tourism locations, and lastly, crisis management, focused on tourism. By combining information about these key aspects, the literature review will provide a foundation for the subsequent analysis.

2.1 Media

The following section will provide relevant information about the relationship between media and the focal topic of this thesis. Firstly, the role of media in shaping tourism experiences will be introduced. Secondly, a detailed exploration of how the media influences a destination's image will be included. As the thesis is focused on the volcanic eruptions in the Reykjanes Peninsula, this section will include a subsection outlining the role of the media in crises. Finally, relevant terms such as sensationalism and click-baiting will be introduced. Through this thorough exploration, this section aims to provide an understanding of the connection between the media and the topic of this thesis.

2.1.1 The Role of Media in Tourism

The tourism industry has undergone a significant transformation due to the advancement of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) over the past twenty-five years. ICTs have contributed to the restructuring of both the relationships between tourism organizations and their stakeholders and the travel and tourism value chain, at the strategic level. At the tactical level, information and communication technologies have made e-commerce possible and assisted tourism organizations in optimizing efficiency and effectiveness. The two characteristics of modern-day travelers

are impatience and need for information and dependency on said information during the whole duration of traveling (Rao 2017); (Buhalis and Law 2008).

The social environment was further enhanced by the debut of smartphones, mobile computing systems that combine a number of different technologies including communication, GPS, photography, and the Internet. This enhancement allowed users to exercise considerable control over their travel experiences at any time and from any location. Tourism marketing and communication were completely changed by the invention of the Internet, especially when combined with location-based browsing and social media's interactive communication features (Gretzel, Fesenmaier, and O'Leary 2006).

It is commonly known that companies in the travel and tourism industry mainly depend on the Internet to improve the online travelers' experience. Corresponding to this, companies in the hospitality industry invest considerable effort in optimizing their hotel websites so they can function as the center point of digital marketing and communication strategies, promoting the removal of intermediaries (Rao 2017). Nowadays, tourism companies engage users and guests through richer content, increased levels of interactivity, and various socially constructed media spaces - a fundamental shift brought about by twenty-five years of ICT development. Information and communication technologies will continue developing and advancing marketing and communication for travel (Buhalis and Law 2008).

Every day, the importance of media in various aspects of life, including culture, social interaction, and education, is significantly increasing. Similarly to historical sites that communicate the culture, traditions, and heritage of the past, the media outlets illustrate modern values, ideals, and different societies. The goal for the role of the media is to correct any misinformation that may be in circulation. While both media and historical sites convey messages and missions with multiple dimensions, media has an essential part in the activation of touristic attractions (Rao 2017).

The media can take the role of a mediator between the community and tourism, for example in connection with tourism policies regarding particular areas. The aim in such a case would be to support and encourage the transfer of tourism products from

suppliers to consumers. Additionally, media communication technologies are crucial for initial investments in sustainable development of the tourism industry, worldwide. The media can influence and change the behaviors and attitudes of key players in local, national, and even international tourism. This can result in the advancement of sustainable development, peace, and security. Significant changes in a country can be caused by tourism's cultural, economic, social, environmental, and political benefits. Therefore, there is a social responsibility of the media to improve society, politics, and the economy by combining local, national, and international cultural values. This is accomplished through public communication strategies that rely on access to high-quality knowledge and information (Rao 2017).

Concerning the promotion of emerging destinations, the media has a vital function. As most travelers make their plans without having visited the destination, media coverage is essential to the tourism industry. Unfavorable press or crises can have a disastrous impact on tourism, turning away travelers, which can further result in endangering the livelihoods of communities that depend on tourism. This can be seen during natural disasters and terrorist incidents which drastically lowers the number of visitors. This impact can be further exacerbated by the media coverage of such events, making the recovery process longer and more difficult for the affected region (Rao 2017). More about the media's function during crises and emergencies and in relation to destination image can be found in the below sections 2.1.2 *Media and Destination Image* and *2.1.3 Media in Crisis*.

2.1.2 Media and Destination Image

Scholars have long recognized the significant impact of unfavorable product information on the decision-making processes of consumers, in comparison to favorable information (Weinberger, Allen, and Dillon 1981). To provide a few examples, Mizerski (1982) presents a thorough review of studies conducted in the domains of psychology, consumer behavior, and marketing, emphasizing the disproportionate cognitive assessment of negative and positive information. Furthermore, it was observed that negative information often prevents new products from being adopted (Menzel and Katz 1955) (Rogers 1962).

13

Various studies have proposed different definitions of destination image. According to Gallarza et al. (2002) and Zhang et al. (2014), who conducted an extensive literature review on the subject, destination image can be understood as the collective sum of impressions, perceptions, feelings, and beliefs that individuals hold about a particular destination. Additionally, numerous studies (Baloglu and McCleary 1999); (Beerli and Martin 2004); (Chew and Jahari 2014) have emphasized the importance of taking into consideration both cognitive aspects (such as knowledge and ideas) and affective aspects (such as emotions) in defining destination image. In other words, the overall image is created through the interaction between cognitive and affective images, highlighting the intricate interplay between cognitive understanding and emotional responses in shaping destination perceptions (Tseng, et al. 2015).

The formation of a tourist destination's image is a complex process influenced by various factors. Official promotional campaigns, word-of-mouth recommendations, guidebooks, representations in popular culture, and media coverage all play pivotal roles in shaping perceptions. A vital element for creating an appealing destination image is the effective communication of information about a destination through diverse channels, including formal promotions, organic testimonials, and autonomous narratives (Smith 2005); (De Jager 2010). These sources of information are constantly helping travelers' decision-making processes reimagine possible travel destinations. Tourism images are subjectively constructed through various representations that commodify and frame individuals and locations in particular ways. These representations have an impact on tourists' perceptions of destinations as well as how the places are consumed by them. Therefore, destination management and marketing strategies require an understanding of the processes involved in image creation and manipulation (Edensor 1998); (Avraham 2003).

Tourists' decisions regarding their destinations are shaped by a process known as place-scripting, which results from various interactions with stimuli. These stimuli consist of personal experiences, recommendations from friends, representations in popular culture, information from travel guides, and being subjected to both traditional and social media platforms (Nelson 2005). The diversification of these many information sources supports the continuous reimagining of destinations, which tends to be focused on

particular attractions or issues (Jenkins 2003). However, it is necessary to remember that these re-imaginings are shaped by political engagements and subjective viewpoints. These have the potential to result in sociocultural constructions of a place that reinforces the heterosexual, white, male gaze (Pritchard and Morgan 2000). Moreover, editorial subjectivity, independent operation, and ideological approaches regarding covering people and places may disrupt the polished image of a destination that is portrayed in travel promotional materials. Then the emerged place-scripting is influenced by wider ideological practices and the propagation of worldviews, and they are therefore politicized, biased, and subjective (Hammett 2014). The narratives presented through place scripting frequently receive reinforcement across multiple media channels, leading to representations that are self-sustaining. The swift growth of social media platforms has contributed to the global distribution of these narratives (Schmallegger and Carson 2008); (Xiang and Gretzel 2010). Regardless of the aforementioned, traditional media continues to have an important influence on popular perceptions of people and places (Govers, Go, and Kumar 2007).

2.1.3 Media in Crisis

Nielsen (2001) defines a negative media event as the release of unfavorable news, threats, annoyances, or other issues that the audience perceives negatively. Here it is important to emphasize that the information presented by media may or may not be accurate and derived from factual evidence (Lexow 2004). Nevertheless, whether or not the incident is true, the overall effect is still substantial (C. M. Hall 2002). People are shocked or afraid by events like these, which increases their skepticism and affects how they make decisions (Nielsen 2001). Both specific Tourism Destination Regions and the tourism sector worldwide can be majorly impacted by unexpected shifts in society. Events like this, whether caused by humans or nature, have the power to change the marketability, reputation, and image of even the most well-liked tourist destinations (Echtner and Ritchie 1991) drastically and rapidly. Examples of events that generated global fear and panic and negatively impacted the tourism industry are terrorist attacks on Washington DC and New York City on the 11th of September in 2001 (Beirman 2003). The international media plays a crucial role in reporting on catastrophes like September 11, covering both the disaster itself and recovery and rebuilding efforts. Nevertheless,

according to Rosengren (1994), there is a drawback, due to 'bad' news tending to sell more than 'positive' stories. Beirman (2003) identified five media events or circumstances that can negatively impact a destination's image and lead to a decrease in tourism numbers and should be covered by the media. Firstly, there are events such as war and conflicts. Secondly, the media should keep the public updated on any specific act of terrorism that impacts tourists. Thirdly, major criminal acts or crime waves should be reported by the media, particularly when tourists are targeted (Silverstone 1999). The fourth type of event that should be covered in the media is natural disasters, including storms, volcanoes, and earthquakes, which are damaging urban areas, and the environment, and affecting tourism facilities and infrastructure. The fifth and last event type is epidemics, diseases, and other health concerns that directly impact humans or animals (Beirman 2003).

2.1.4 Sensationalism and Click Baiting

Exaggerating events to create fear and excitement in viewers is known as media sensationalism, and it is very common during catastrophic events (Paracha, Shahzad, Ali, & Nazir, 2013). Sensationalist media coverage of catastrophic events is commonly cited as one of the main factors contributing to the negative destination image following the occurrence of a disaster (Armstrong and Ritchie 2008); (Beirman 2006); (Lehto, Douglas, and Park 2008); (Pearlman and Melnik 2008); (Rittichainuwat 2008). Generally speaking, research suggests that media coverage can impact risk perception (Wahlberg & Sjoberg, 2000), which is a key factor in decision-making in regard to travel destinations (Lepp and Gibson 2003); (Roehl and Fesenmaier 1992); (Sharifpour, Walters and Ritchie 2014).

Following the framing theory in media (4.2 Framing Theory), the media can adopt different frames. The chosen type of frame influences how information related to disastrous events is presented to the public. A balanced frame provides the audience with context and essential facts, furthermore, it is conveyed in a moderate tone. In contrast, a sensationalized frame exaggerates and highlights the event for the sole purpose of increasing readership and the level of ratings (Walters, Mair, and Lim 2016). Several frames, such as human interest, conflict terms, disaster education, racial disparities, ethical concerns, economic consequences, attitudinal framing, and severity, were

16

highlighted in previous research as frames used during disasters by media (Campbell 2014); (Dutta 2013); (Kuttschreuter, Gutteling, and de Hond 2011); (Liu 2009); (Tierney, Bevc and Kuligowski 2006); (Voorhees, Vick, and Perkins 2007). Sensational frames, however, have been connected to detrimental effects on the perception of the destination and frequently misrepresent reports across a variety of media channels (Dutta 2013); (Kuppuswamy 2013).

Subjective news reporting frequently diverges from the standards of professional journalism by employing sensationalist language to attract attention, such as metaphors, hyperboles, and expressions colored with emotions (Davis and McLeod 2003); (Tierney, Bevc, and Kuligowski 2006). Research has indicated that sensationalistic media portrayals of emergencies may result in detrimental effects on society, such as post-traumatic stress disorder, health issues, widespread psychogenic illnesses, and in some cases suicide (Ahern, et al. 2002); (Stack 2003); (Wessely 1987). In relation to tourism, sensational reporting, and exaggeration, which frequently occur during disasters, can have long-term negative impacts on tourism destinations (Marra 1998); (Volo 2008); (Young and Montgomery 1997). Such reporting frequently includes visuals that have the objective of shocking and captivating viewers (Ryu, Bordelon, and Pearlman 2013). Sensationalized news reports have the potential to misrepresent the true nature of events, resulting in incorrect impressions and the encouragement of unrealistic decisions (Slattery, Doremus, and Marcus 2001). In connection with disasters, sensationalized headlines and exaggerations can lead to misunderstandings about the magnitude of the incident and how it will affect the impacted destinations. As a result of this sensationalized coverage, destination managers have to react and take steps to restore the destination's image (Walters, Mair, and Lim 2016).

In today's news landscape, being the first to break stories holds paramount importance. Easily understandable content is necessary as it is crucial that the readers comprehend the message quickly. This pursuit of audience engagement often leads to the phenomenon known as clickbait: enticing yet misleading headlines designed to lure readers into clicking on articles. The more sensational the headline, the higher the likelihood of attracting readers, even if the content fails to align with the exciting headline. Despite this, individuals are lured in, succumbing to the allure of the "click" (Aldred

2021). Many journalists have found themselves writing headlines that deviate from the actual content of their articles in an effort to attract an ever-expanding readership. With the competitive landscape, maximizing audience share often appears harmless due to the prospect of higher advertising revenue or greater influence. Nevertheless, the cumulative impact of frequent click-baiting, regardless of intention, adds to the decline in public confidence in news media. It is increasingly challenging for people to distinguish between reality and propaganda as a result of this decline (Aldred 2021). Social media's widespread use has expedited the dissemination of news, especially during significant or dangerous events. This has resulted in an information overload where factual updates coexist with sensationalized or misleading content. Images and videos that might not be related to the current event are frequently included in this flood of information (Sennert, Klemetti, and Bird 2018). In such circumstances, reliable and diverse sources of information play a crucial role in guiding individuals through the media frenzy that frequently surrounds volcanic eruptions and volcanic activity (Sennert, Klemetti, and Bird 2018).

2.2 Tourism Background

Nature-based tourism is defined as *"any type of tourism that relies on attractions directly related to the natural environment"* (Weaver 2001, p.10). Following this definition nature-based tourism has no direct nor specific goal for sustainability or education (Jones, Apollo, and Bui 2021). Tourism and tourists are consumers of tourist destinations through the use of tangible and intangible public assets, such as culture and landscape. Some of these assets are specifically planned and developed for the visitors, for example, visitor centers. However, assets (e.g. viewpoints) that were not intended for tourists often end up being used by them anyway (Hall and Lew 2009). Therefore, as tourism grows the destination's appearance changes. During these changes, nature destinations are less natural and both townscapes and rural areas become commodified, by the development and integration of tourism facilities into the region (Briassoulis 2002). This development can either change, improve, or hinder the destination's appeal. As such, tourism has a significant impact on the consumption of natural environments and landscapes (Hall and Lew 2009) (Sæþórsdóttir, Hall, and Wendt 2020). Iceland has marketed its distinct identity as an environmentally friendly destination with a focus on its unique, pristine,

and untainted nature combined with rich culture and heritage (Tang 2009). In a survey published by the Icelandic Tourism Office (Óladóttir 2022), when asked about why visitors chose to travel to Iceland, over 95 percent of tourists chose nature and Iceland's natural phenomena. Additionally, more than 84 percent of those questioned said that they came to the island for nature-related recreation. When asked to specify what they found appealing about the country's nature, almost half stated the unspoiled and pure land (Óladóttir 2022). However, the rapid increase of tourism arrivals in Iceland resulted in deteriorating roads, hiking paths in poor condition, and overuse of facilities which sometimes leads to vandalism and pollution (G. Helgadóttir, et al. 2019); (Chapman 2017); (Sheivachman 2016).

2.2.1 Islands and Tourism

There is a certain captivating appeal of islands, which originates from the combination of their climatic, cultural, and physical characteristics with the intangible aspects, for example, traditions, seclusion, sense of distance, and "otherness" or "island-ness" (Butler 1993) (King 1993) (Lockhart 1997) (Conkling 2007). This combination has guaranteed their sustained and growing attractiveness as travel destinations (Jóhannesson, Huijbens, and Sharpley 2010). Historically, islands were considered remote transitory places, often associated with pilgrimage or spiritual travel. More recently, islands have become increasingly popular destinations due to their perceived remoteness and authenticity, which is often seen as lacking on the mainland (Gillis 2007). As the popularity of islands as tourist attractions increases, tourism has become a key component of development policy to the extent that dependence on tourism is in an island context nearly universal (Lockhart 1997).

There are challenges connected to island tourism, such as accessibility, limited resources for tourism development, and economic dependence (Baldacchino 2006). Additionally, there are challenges specific to cold-water islands that arise when developing tourism in small, isolated, and self-reliant communities. These include balancing demand with the limited supply given the delicate and extreme natural environments, as well as addressing particular seasonality patterns (Jóhannesson, Huijbens, and Sharpley 2010).

2.2.2 Iceland

Iceland is an island country that can be found in the North Atlantic Ocean. It is a land of stark cultural, geographical, and climatic contrasts. Iceland's capital city, Reykjavík, is the northernmost capital (Karlsson, Kristinsson, and Matthíasson 2024) and more than half of Iceland's population lives in the capital area (Nordic Council n.d.). The people of Iceland are careful to preserve their language, traditions, and culture. Some continue to believe in mythical creatures of Norse and Celtic origin such as elves and trolls (National Geographic Partners 2015-2024).

Situated on the always-active geological border between Europe and North America, Iceland experiences severe volcanic activity. One of the most notable ones happened in 2010 when the Eyjafjallajökull volcano erupted, and its ash disrupted European air traffic for several days. Secondly, the recent eruption at the end of 2023 and the beginning of 2024, has caused an evacuation of the entire town of Grindavík and the closure of one of the most popular attractions – the Blue Lagoon. Because Iceland is a volcanic island and contains two hundred volcanoes and one-third of the world's lava, the vast majority of its heating and electricity comes from geothermal water reserves and hydroelectric power (National Geographic Partners 2015-2024).

As the country is surrounded by water and the glacial ice covers eleven percent of the surface, the continuation of global warming, the rise of sea levels, and ice melting could have devastating consequences for Iceland (National Geographic Partners 2015-2024).

Besides fishing and fishing-related products, aluminum and ferrosilicon exports are the country's main sources of income. Following that are tourism, biotechnology, and software (Nordic Council n.d.).

Iceland's tourism industry has grown steadily following World War II. However, over the past ten years, this development has accelerated dramatically, mostly due to near-exponential increases in inbound tourism from North America and Europe. According to Gil-Alana and Huijbens (2018), a number of well-established factors, most of which were confirmed by the Icelandic Tourist Board's outbound tourism surveys, are responsible for the 2010 development take-off.

The first is the increasing public knowledge of Iceland. Two events in Iceland made it to the world's headlines – the financial crisis and volcanic eruptions. Iceland was the first of many to befall victim to the global credit crunch, which resulted in a worldwide decrease in tourism. The second event was the volcanic eruption of Eyjafjallajökull in the spring of 2010. This eruption had worldwide repercussions as it sent clouds of ash across Western Europe, effectively stopping air travel for up to a week (Gil-Alana and Huijbens 2018). When covering this event, the global media showed an image of Iceland as a remote island on the edge of the habitable world with a harsh climate and its people as Vikings, who bravely face the elements (Ísleifsson and Chartier 2017). Iceland has become a much more popular travel destination in the minds of people seeking close contact with Mother Nature. Additionally, due to worries that the Eyjafjallajökull eruption would stop all incoming tourism, the Icelandic tourism industry professionals and government collaborated on the largest-ever marketing campaign: Inspired by Iceland. Initially, the strategy centered on promoting the idea that, Iceland, despite the eruption, was a safe destination. This quickly shifted into a broader marketing initiative that made use of freshly developed social media techniques to support C2C (Customer-to-customer) marketing and communication (Promote Iceland 2017).

Secondly, access to the location is even more important than customer awareness. Since the 1990s global open-air policies and Iceland's deregulations have resulted in global aviation growth and as competition increased, the airfare cost has lowered. To provide an example, the low-cost trans-Atlantic airline, Icelandair, has been connecting North America and Europe with flights since 1953 (Icelandair 2024). This network provided that when customers became aware of Iceland as a tourist destination the infrastructure had already been established (Gil-Alana and Huijbens 2018).

Finally, a third factor is the devaluation of Icelandic currency during the financial collapse in 2008. This, combined with lower airfares in a competitive global aviation market, has made it more affordable for people to visit and stay in Iceland (Gil-Alana and Huijbens 2018).

More recently, the Icelandic króna and its value increased, and in March 2017, it re-floated on international currency markets. The increase in inbound tourism has undoubtedly had a positive impact, as reserves grow larger, and the currency continues

to strengthen (Gil-Alana and Huijbens 2018). However, this along with the new taxes for travel services, caused Iceland to become less and less affordable and nowadays it is regarded as an expensive location (Owen 2023).

2.2.3 Astro Tourism

Iceland is also known as the Land of Light and Darkness, where short winter days with only a few hours of daylight provide the ideal conditions for viewing the Northern Lights. This winter period is balanced with long days with almost twenty-four hours of sunshine in the summer period (Visit Iceland 2023). The Northern Lights, while fascinating natural occurrences for visitors, have a deeper meaning for the locals as they are an important part of history and culture. There is an abundance of beliefs, myths, and legends related to the Aurora Borealis, or "norðurljós", in their folklore. Some believe that the lights are the restless spirits of the deceased, dancing elves, or the arctic fox's sweeping tail. Others regard the lights as warning omens or signs of good luck. These and many other stories have been passed down through generations in an attempt to explain the existence of the Northern Lights (Perlan n.d.).

Fayos-Sola et al (2014, p. 664) define astro tourism as *"...tourism using the natural resource of unpolluted night skies, and appropriate scientific knowledge for astronomical, cultural, and environmental activities".*

According to Fayos-Sola et al (2014), Astro tourists can be divided into two categories – Special Interest Tourists and Nature-based Tourists, determined by their main motivation and interest in astronomical attractions. Special interest tourism, or SIT, as defined by Hall and Weiler (1992, 5), occurs when *"traveler's motivation and decision-making are primarily determined by a particular special interest with a focus either on activity/ies and/or destinations and settings."*. Special interest tourism is primarily framed as a demand construct as such there are many special forms of tourism. For example, film tourism, motors-cycle tourism, surf tourism, and others. There is a wide range of special interest tourism in astro tourism from amateur astronomers to astrophotographers. Thus, travelers with specialized knowledge and skills who are drawn to the destinations' uniqueness and to the celestial portion of nature pursue astro-tourism, one of the specialized segments of nature-based tourism. Nature-based tourists are primarily

interested in the environment and natural settings. Astronomy can be regarded as a nature hobby (MacRobert 2012) and natural phenomena such as solar eclipse or Aurora can attract millions of nature-based tourists (Soleimani, et al. 2019). Nature-based tourists enjoy and seek out contact with nature, which makes them pursue rural tourism (Burns and Novelli 2008).

Astro tourism can also be regarded as part of sustainable tourism with the night sky being its main resource (Collison and Poe 2013). The sky as a resource can be used as a tool for both sustainable development in rural areas (Rodrigues, Rodrigues, and Peroff 2015) and as a motivation for tourists to visit these locations (Collison and Poe 2013). Another advantage of having the sky as a main resource is the fact that there is no maintenance or development (Jacobs, Preez, and Fairer-Wessels 2020). Furthermore, it is always available.

Northern Lights, stargazing, and other dark sky activities gave an opportunity for a tourism trend – glamping. Glamourous camping or in short glamping, is a new kind of camping combining the comfort, luxury, and convenience of a hotel with the feeling of being close to nature (Tómas n.d., Milohnić, Bonifačić, and Licul 2019). This kind of accommodation is usually in the form of a modern globe, cabin, yurt, or tent and it is equipped with a lot of luxurious amenities ensuring visitors' comfort while experiencing nature. In Iceland's case, glamping sites often offer accommodation with glass ceilings for example aurora domes for viewing the Northern Lights (Glamping Holiday n.d.).

2.2.4 Overtourism
Milano, Cheer, and Novelli (2019, p. 2) defined overtourism as *"the excessive growth of visitors leading to overcrowding in areas where residents suffer the consequences of temporary and seasonal tourism peaks, which have caused permanent changes to their lifestyles, denied access to amenities and damaged their general well-being."*. If the balance between optimal excessive development is disrupted, overtourism may have unintentional negative impacts on all destinations and local communities (Milano, Cheer, and Novelli 2019). Scholars (Doxey 1975) (Butler 1980) (Boissevain 1996) and multilateral organizations (UNWTO 1983) have examined the impacts, such as strain and dependence, of tourism on local communities since the 1970s, raising concerns about

the limits of tourism growth and destination capacity. The emergence and increasing concerns of urban social movements, organizations, and neighborhood associations in European tourist destinations, such as ABTS in Barcelona, City for People in Majorca, and No Big Ships Committee in Venice, are evidence of the impact of overtourism. This phenomenon has led to discontent between host communities and tourists (Milano 2018).

The media's portrayal of overtourism reflects outrage, sensationalism, and hysteria, emphasizing the clash between booming tourism and local concerns for wellbeing. Social movements have emerged, rejecting the traditional paradigm for tourism development, and introducing anti-tourism narratives. This has sparked intensified activism, defining overtourism through resistance against cities becoming mere tourist playgrounds at the expense of local communities (Milano, Cheer, and Novelli 2019). Consequently, in 2017 the terms "overtourism" and "tourism phobia" became popular. Since then, they have evolved into a sensationalist and oversimplified media narrative criticizing the effects of tourism (Koens, Postma, and Papp 2018) but not always addressing issues objectively and with dispassionate detail regarding the real drivers at work. Overtourism is mostly caused by uncontrolled and excessive growth in the tourism industry as well as a growing demand for leisure and unusual experiences (Milano, Cheer, and Novelli 2019).

"Overtourism should not only be associated with the volume of tourists, but also with the exploitation of local resources." (Milano, Cheer, and Novelli 2019, p. 8)

There are many negative effects an excessive number of tourists can have on a destination (Séraphin, Gladkikh, and Thanh 2020), Azizul Hassan and Anukrati Sharma (2021), introduce five categories of adverse impacts that overtourism may have on a destination. Firstly, there is a Reduction in Economic Welfare, which includes overcrowding and overuse of resources. Moreover, increased taxes in specific locations can negatively impact the well-being of the local community. Secondly, the Deterioration of Sociocultural Values. Long-term tourist stays can degrade the socio-cultural values of a destination, leading to, if left unchecked, an increase in illegal services such as prostitution, betting, and gambling, which can harm traditional values. Thirdly, the Environmental and Ecological Degradation. Excessive use and access to resources can

24

create an imbalance in the ecosystem, making it difficult to restore if not addressed promptly. Then there is the Loss of Destination attractiveness. As sociocultural values and environmental conditions deteriorate, and peace and harmony decrease, the destination's attributes gradually lose their value and appeal. And lastly, Excessive Tourism Carrying Capacity. Crowding causes an excessive number of visitors to arrive, as well as the subsequent increase in access to the destination's resources and assets, which pushes the destination beyond its carrying capacity.

2.2.4.1 Overcrowding in Iceland

Like many other locations, Iceland has been used in media as one of the examples of overtourism. In fact, Iceland was the country for which the term "overtourism" was created. In the article by Andrew Sheivachman (2016), he first coined the term in order to discuss the issues faced in Iceland by the sudden surge of visitors. Additionally, in the article, written by Katie Birties (2020), Iceland is stated as one of nine destinations *"struggling with overtourism"*. Furthermore, Andrew Sheivachman (2019) describes Iceland as the *"poster child for the positive and negative effects of the overtourism phenomenon. "*. The positive effects are referencing tourism's crucial role in helping the country to recover from the 2008 financial crisis (Sheivachman 2019).

There are many articles on the internet about overtourism mentioning Iceland with places such as Barcelona, Amsterdam, and Venice (Mack 2020) (Birties 2020) (Groundwater 2018), which is highly inaccurate not only because of the geographical difference of comparing a whole island to a city but also due to other factors mentioned in the following section. Sæþórsdóttir, Hall, and Wendt (2020b) asked and researched the question of whether Iceland is actually facing overtourism problems. They stated that Iceland differs from other destinations often mentioned in those articles because there was no organized social movement against tourism or opposition. In their results, Sæþórsdóttir, Hall, and Wendt (2020b) emphasize that it was the media that claimed that there is an overtourism problem in Iceland and took a few examples to represent the whole island. The picture of overtourism that the media painted neglected to account for the time-related and geographical aspects of visitor concentration and thus it only presented a part of the reality. In fact, many parts of Iceland were facing under-tourism and were actively working to promote tourism.

The media debate regarding the negative impacts of tourism in Iceland mirrors the enormous rise in international tourist arrivals since the global financial crisis. Around 460,000 international visitors traveled to Iceland in 2010, by 2018, that number had increased to 2.3 million (Icelandic Tourist Board Numbers of Foreign Visitors to Iceland n.d.). This is one of the fastest growth rates worldwide. To put it into perspective, the average annual growth rate for the world is 6 percent in tourist arrivals from 2010 to 2019. While Iceland's growth rate for the same period is 17 percent (UNWTO n.d.). The largest increase was in 2016, almost 40 percent higher than the year before (Icelandic Tourist Board Numbers of Foreign Visitors to Iceland n.d.). It was around this time that the phrase "overtourism" appeared in relation to Iceland's growing tourism industry in the media discourse. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Iceland began appearing on lists of destinations to avoid due to overcrowding at natural attractions, leading to closures and concerns over environmental impact and local quality of life (Ali 2018).

Many ecologically delicate ecosystems in Iceland are found in places that draw large numbers of tourists (Ólafsdóttir and Runnström 2013). The ecosystem is susceptible to physical impacts from the outside world, such as the frequency of volcanic eruptions, volcanic soils, and a short growing season. However, managing these areas sustainably proves challenging due to Iceland's reliance on its natural environment as the primary tourist attraction. For instance, one of Iceland's most popular attractions, the Fjaðrárgljúfur Canyon, has periodically ceased operations, enabling park authorities to undertake essential restoration work on damaged pathways while safeguarding tourists from the perils of inclement wintry conditions (Dickinson 2024) (Hassan and Sharma 2021). These temporary closures only started happening after the foot traffic on this site increased from 50 percent to 80 percent between the years 2016 and 2018. This increase was due to the fact that the canyon was featured in a music video for global celebrity Justin Bieber's song *I'll Show You* in 2015 (Dickinson 2024). The island's natural beauty described as "unique" and "unspoiled" (O. Óladóttir 2019) was stated as Iceland's main attraction and the primary motivation to visit by 92 percent of international tourists. Nevertheless, welcoming two million visitors has proved to be a challenge for Iceland, a country that is the most sparsely populated country in Europe and has only about 350,000 inhabitants (Statistics Iceland n.d.). On an annual basis, tourists outnumber

locals in Iceland by a ratio as high as 6.5:1, thus putting Iceland in 13th place on a ranking of countries with the highest ratio of tourists per inhabitant (The World Bank n.d., a) (The World Bank. n.d., b). As a result, Iceland is used as a cautionary tale. There are benefits to tourism, a few that were mentioned by locals are enhanced life quality, job opportunities, greater diversity, increased revenue, and improved standards of services (Sæþórsdóttir, Hall, and Wendt 2020a). However, there are negative impacts of tourism that locals identified as well. As an example of economic impact, the residents mentioned low salary levels, limited career choices, and inflation. Furthermore, concerns regarding an increase in traffic and the marginalization of locals were raised. Of particular worry was the impact of tourists on the housing market as numerous apartments were being leased to tourists, thereby decreasing the housing options for local residents (Sæþórsdóttir, Hall, and Wendt 2020a).

Moreover, according to de Grosbois (2015), the cruise industry is the segment of mass tourism that is experiencing growth the fastest, and Peeters et al. (2018) noted that the European Union considers cruise tourism to be a major cause of overtourism. The number of cruise ships arriving particularly in Iceland has increased dramatically, especially in the small town of Akureyri in the north and the ports that surround it. Between 2015 and 2019, there was an astounding 91 percent increase in the number of cruise ships arriving in Iceland (Isavia 2019). According to the statistics by the Icelandic Tourism Board (see Figure 1), the number of ship arrivals connected to cruise tourism in 2023 has been the highest ever (Ferdamalástofa n.d.).

Figure 1: Cruise Tourism Statistic from the Icelandic Tourist Board (Ferðamálastofa n.d.)
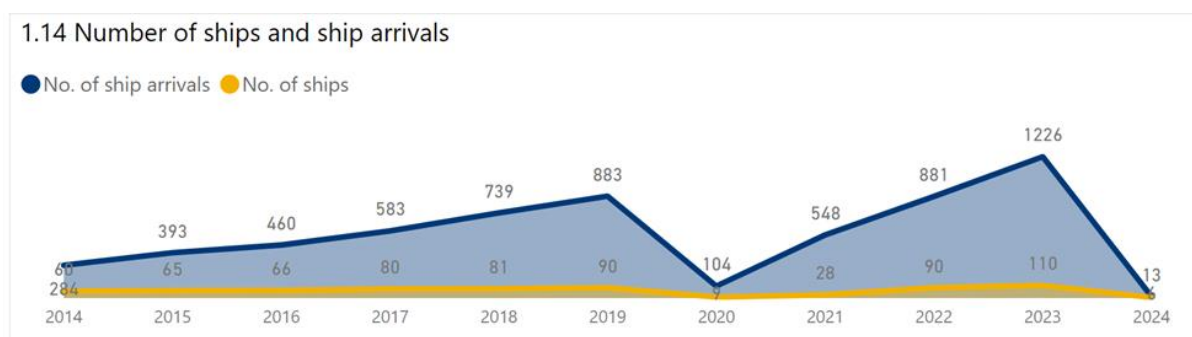
A survey by Cruise Iceland, who are in charge of marketing and providing services for cruises in Iceland, indicates that the nation brought in about 72.6 million euros in revenue

and produced about 900 jobs in 2018 (Cruise Iceland 2019). Scholars, however, stress the significance of balancing economic benefits against social disruptions to communities and environmental costs (Jones, Hillier, and Comfort 2016); (Jordan and Vogt 2017); (Vaya, et al. 2018). To elaborate, the actual economic benefits derived from the cruise industry are somewhat limited (Torbianelli 2012). Passengers arriving on cruise ships usually have an all-inclusive package, thus spending only a fraction of what tourists arriving by planes spend on land, as they have to cover expenses involving accommodation, meals, and local transportation (Fridriksson, Wise, and Scott 2020). Nevertheless, some small towns in Iceland rely heavily on cruise ship tourism as they are remote and difficult to reach, particularly outside of the summer season. Tourist arrivals in these towns are primarily from cruise ships, highlighting the importance of the tourism industry to their economies (Fridriksson, Wise, and Scott 2020). The social effects on local communities, especially in isolated places like north-central Iceland's Akureyri, prompt concerns about how to control mass tourist influxes. Furthermore, pollution from elevated CO2 levels, SOx, and Nitrogen Oxide (NOx) raise health concerns (Fridriksson, Wise, and Scott 2020).

A study regarding sustainability and cruise tourism was performed in a principal town called Ísafjörður located on the Westfjords Peninsula in Northwest Iceland (James, Olsen, and Karlsdóttir 2020). Traditionally, the fishing industry has been the primary source of income for all towns and villages in the Westfjords region. However, the significance of tourism has recently grown, particularly with the rapid expansion of cruise tourism (Vinnumálastofnun, 2015). Given the Westfjords' remote and difficult accessibility by car, cruise tourism is increasingly regarded as an important component of the local tourism industry. The authors, James, Olsen, and Karlsdóttir (2020), found that both land-based and cruise tourism are causing supply problems. Particularly, on cruise days all tours are fully booked by the cruise tourists. Moreover, the local business owners stated that from their point of view, the cruise tourists are a nuisance to the other tourists, who genuinely want to experience the location, not just visit for a few hours. Additionally, high dependency on cruise ships and their tour pricing monopoly were stated as concerns of local tour operators (James, Olsen, and Karlsdóttir 2020). In relation to socio-cultural sustainability, local stakeholders in Ísafjörður expressed

concern about the disruption caused by large numbers of cruise passengers arriving on a single day and filling the town center. The crowding when large numbers of cruise passengers arrive was mentioned as an issue. On the other hand, there were also some who were of the opinion that the liveliness of the town that the visitors bring during the summer months is nice. One socio-cultural benefit that was found is relation to local traditions and culture as the tourists visit local museums and provide a market for local food, drinks, and souvenirs (James, Olsen, and Karlsdóttir 2020). Environmental concerns focused on impacts on the local natural reserve and overcrowding during the summer season. Some stakeholders advocated for a requirement of a local guide aboard cruise ships, someone who is familiar with the region's wildlife and surroundings to address possible degradation and disruption of both the environment and the experience of tourists and local residents. Furthermore, sustainable development, environmental sustainability, and fixed capacity were all found as crucial due to the overwhelming pressure on local resources due to the rapid increase in cruise ship visits to the port (James, Olsen, and Karlsdóttir 2020).

In summary, while occasional cruise ship visits may benefit the economy, the social inconveniences caused by sudden tourism surges in towns such as Reykjavík, Akureyri, and Ísafjörður along with the negative impacts on sustainability, such as pollution, overcrowding, and the strain on resources may outweigh the relatively modest economic gains (Fridriksson, Wise, and Scott 2020); (James, Olsen, and Karlsdóttir 2020).

2.2.5 Natural Disasters

The below section will introduce how natural disasters and tourism interplay. Seeing as this thesis is focused on the volcanic eruptions in the Reykjanes Peninsula, which is a natural disaster, it is relevant to examine how natural disasters affect tourism. This section will explore how tourism destinations are affected by natural disasters and how they prepare for and combat the effects of them. Additionally, dark and volcano tourism will be introduced, as they will give an insight into how natural disasters such as volcanic eruptions can be beneficial to tourism. By outlining these topics, the section aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the connection between natural disasters and the tourism industry.

Natural disasters have always occurred, however, climate change and the increasingly intricate socio-ecological systems in a world that is interconnected and globalized have substantially increased the frequency of these events (Becken, et al. 2014). Disasters such as tsunamis, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, droughts, floods, forest fires, and hurricanes pose significant threats to both human societies and their economies (Leoni and Boto-García 2022). The significant impact that natural disasters have on economic growth for the impacted area, both short-term and long-term, has been demonstrated in numerous studies (Cavallo, Powell, and Becerra 2010); (Strobl 2011). This is especially true for countries with low-income economies (McDermott, Barry, and Tol 2014). Among the found results of natural disasters are migration, destruction of capital, and the following decrease in production (Boustan, Kahn, and Rhode 2012); (Boustan, Kahn, et al. 2020). This hinders recovery efforts, therefore nations with stronger financial systems, higher levels of income, and education tend to recover faster and display higher levels of resilience (Kahn 2005); (Toya and Skidmore 2007).

Tourism is influenced by a variety of internal and external factors, some of which are unrelated to the tourism industry. Natural disasters and unforeseen events are examples of such influential factors because they can have a profound impact on individuals and society, resulting in significant changes to tourism flows (Rossello, Becken, and Santana-Gallego 2020). Disastrous events represent sudden disruptions that shake the system within which tourism operates (Shondell Miller 2008). Depending on the type of disaster and the resilience of the affected system, the impacts can vary in size and kind (Rossello, Becken, and Santana-Gallego 2020). The majority of disasters have severe effects on individuals, organizations, and communities, which then affect tourism-related activities. There can be both direct and indirect impacts on the destination country and the travel to and from the affected region (Jin, Qu, and Bao 2019); (Ruan, Li, and Liu 2017). Therefore, effectively understanding, managing, and responding to these risks is essential for sustainable tourism management (Shakeela and Becken 2015). Risk management and disaster mitigation have received increased attention in tourism research. A growing body of literature provides both theoretical insights and empirical evidence on various aspects of disasters and their impacts on tourism (Rossello, Becken, and Santana-Gallego 2020). More specifically, crisis management and risk reduction

(Becken and Hughey 2013); (Faulkner 2001); (B. Ritchie 2008) sustainable development and marketing strategies as tools for preparation, protection, and rebuilding of affected destinations (Aljerf and Choukaife 2016); (Okuyama 2018) and the perception of safety in making a decision about traveling (Sharifpour, et al. 2014); (Trumbo, et al. 2016); (Williams and Baláž 2015) are among focused research topics.

Tourism is inherently vulnerable to a variety of risks (Becken, Zammit, and Hendrikx 2015), and disasters have the potential to discourage visitors from visiting affected areas (Bhati, Upadhayaya, and Sharma 2016). Natural disasters and other kinds of crises, such as conflicts, epidemics, and pollution, can result in reductions in the number of tourists visiting the affected region (Bhati, Upadhayaya, and Sharma 2016). There is empirical evidence in the literature for several instances of declines in tourist arrivals after significant events. To provide examples of such events, the volcanic eruption of the Icelandic volcano Eyjafjallajökull in March 2010 (Jónsdóttir 2011), the earthquake in Taiwan in September 1999 (Huang and Min 2002), the earthquake in central Italy in September 1997 (Mazzocchi and Montini 2001). Moreover, there is research analyzing the effect of infectious diseases on visitation of Asia (Kuo, et al. 2008); (Mao, Ding, and Lee 2010). Additionally, man-made disasters were also reported as a cause for declines in touristic demand, for instance, the Mexican Gulf BP oil spill in 2010 (Ritchie, Crotts, et al. 2013). The performance of the country's tourism industry and, by extension, the government is greatly impacted by the flow of inbound tourists. This is especially true in countries where tourism is a major source of income for the government (Massidda and Mattana 2013). Consequently, it is imperative that policymakers broaden their understanding of the ways in which disaster events have an impact on tourism demand (Rossello, Becken, and Santana-Gallego 2020).

2.2.5.1 Preparedness for natural disasters

As previously mentioned, tourist destinations are oftentimes highly vulnerable to disruptions by natural events, as the sought-after destinations are in areas susceptible to natural disasters such as tsunamis, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions. In this paper, a disaster is defined as *"A serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society at any scale due to hazardous events interacting with conditions of exposure,*

vulnerability, and capacity, leading to one or more of the following: human, material, economic and environmental losses and impacts." (undrr.org 2007).

This means that these destinations must plan for how to react to these events taking place, both in terms of being prepared, responding, and recovering (Fountain and Cradock-Henry 2020). Natural disasters have several damaging effects on the tourism industry. In the case of many different types of natural disasters, infrastructure will be damaged, which in turn makes it impossible for the destination to receive tourists. Furthermore, disasters can impact the perception of the destination with the consumers perceiving it as being unsafe (Filmonau and De Coteau 2020). Research finds that infrastructure can be restored, but the destination image can be heavily affected for a longer period (Fountain and Cradock-Henry 2020).

In tourist locations, tourists are more vulnerable to natural disasters and hazards than locals because they do not necessarily have the knowledge of how to respond to the hazards or enough information about which resources are available to protect them in times of disaster (Bird, Gisladóttir, and Dominey-Howes 2010; Fountain and Cradock-Henry 2020). Not only are tourists ill-prepared for natural hazards, but research shows that tourism businesses are also not adequately equipped to handle natural disasters (Becken and Hughey 2013).

Disasters both natural and man-made cause disruption in people's lives, displacing them. Moreover, they bring destruction of livelihoods, and property, and result in injuries and fatalities (Rossello, Becken, and Santana-Gallego 2020). However, some disaster sites can be turned into tourist attractions and bring some benefit to the community as well as education and knowledge (Fonseca, Seabra, and Silva 2015). For instance, in relation to man-made catastrophes, concentration camps such as Auschwitz-Birkenau in Poland (Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum 2024), haunted sites such as haunted hotels, ships or tours (Morton 2023), war monuments and battlefields, cemeteries, old prisons such as Kilmainham Gaol in Dublin, Ireland (Kilmainham Gaol Museum n.d.); (Fonseca, Seabra and Silva 2015). Regarding the sites of natural disasters, one of the most famous and oldest ones is the volcanic eruption in Pompeii (Archaeological Park of Pompeii n.d.). More recently, the eruption of the Eyjafjallajökull volcano in Iceland. The particular kind of tourist which is attracted to disaster sites forms a segment of Dark

32

tourism (Fonseca, Seabra, and Silva 2015). This will be elaborated on further in the below section.

2.2.6 Volcano Tourism

Historically, humans have been drawn to sites or attractions that are somehow linked to death, suffering, disaster, or violence. Accounts show evidence of this dating back to the 1800s and possibly earlier, with sites of disasters such as shipwrecks becoming popular locations for people to visit. Some other examples of this include gladiatorial games and medieval public executions, these showcase the beginning of this form of tourism (Sharpley & Stone 2009). This phenomenon is to this day still happening and has become known as 'dark tourism'. According to Sharpley and Stone (2009), the definition of dark tourism is *"the act of travel to sites associated with death, suffering, and the seemingly macabre"* (Sharpley & Stone 2009, p. 10).

A subcategory of dark tourism is disaster tourism where people are drawn to sites struck by natural disasters such as earthquakes, tsunamis, and volcanic eruptions. The urge to visit sites of natural hazards and disasters is motivated by wanting to feel the emotions and risks associated with that location, which differs from other forms of tourism where comfort and safety are deemed very important. It is also important to note that sites that are affected by natural hazards create new tourist attractions, as they will become more popular following the event of the natural disaster (Rucinska 2016).

Volcano tourism, a type of disaster tourism, has seen an uptick in popularity in recent years with active volcanoes and the related features such as geysers, boiling mud pools, and hot springs being seen as fascinating tourist attractions and have become very popular with accessibility improving. Volcano tourism is defined as the exploration, observation, and study of both active and dormant volcanoes (Erfurt 2022). Moreover, exploration and research of geothermal and active volcanic landforms are part of volcano tourism (Erfurt-Cooper and Cooper 2010). Volcanic tourism further attracts tourists interested in geology (Lopes 2005, 2011, 2014) to visit extinct, dormant, and particularly highly active volcanic environments including Iceland (Dowling 2010), Reunion Island (Dowling and Margueritte 2014), Galapagos, Ecuador (Dowling 2014), New Zealand (Dowling 2018), Japan (Erfurt 2018), or Hawaii, USA (Erfurt 2018).

Volcanic destinations have been offering various services for tourists to experience the different sights associated with volcanic activity, these have been grouped into three main categories by Patricia Erfurt (Erfurt 2018). They are as follows, day tours and short trips for volcano tourists of all ages, excursions, and field trips for people with a special interest, such as scientists and students, and expeditions and explorations for experienced participants who are equipped to handle extreme situations (Erfurt 2022) (Erfurt 2018). Furthermore, Erfurt (2018) reports that visitors to volcanoes visit for sightseeing, curiosity, scientific interest, or to capture photographs. Visitors to volcanic regions often engage in outdoor activities like climbing, hiking, trekking, skiing, and camping.

The interest in volcano tourism is linked to people's wants for adventurous experiences combined with the opportunity to learn more about unusual landforms. The cultural aspect of volcanoes is also a part of the fascination, with volcanoes being featured heavily in local legends and mythology around the world. Aquino et al. (2017) researched the motivations behind visiting volcanoes and participating in volcano tours. The results revealed two pull motives, volcanic and geological attributes and disaster and cultural heritage. The four push motives, such as volcano-knowledge-seeking, novelty-seeking, escape and relaxation, and socialization (Aquino, Schänzel, and Hyde 2017).

Oftentimes, a museum or visitor center will be erected following a volcanic eruption to give tourists an option to learn more about several aspects of the volcanic eruption (Erfurt 2022). An example of this is the Lava Show in Iceland, which recreates a volcanic eruption by heating real lava and pouring it into a showroom where visitors can see it (Icelandic Lava Show n.d.).

Within the broader concept of "geo-tourism," there are various neo-tribes, or groups of geotourists who share common feelings, rituals, and symbols. One important aspect is their shared concern for and responsibility to the Earth, which represents symbolic unity. This is reinforced by their collective actions of observing and experiencing the world together (Hardy, Gretzel, and Hanson 2013), which is especially evident among geological tourists who share their enthusiasm and knowledge during geological tours. Shared emotions and empowerment create a strong sense of community within the group.

34

Tourists are increasingly drawn to adventurous experiences, seeking out unique landscapes and natural phenomena. Active volcanic and hydrothermal landscapes, including geysers, fumaroles, and boiling mud ponds, captivate visitors to National Parks, Geoparks, and World Heritage sites around the world. (P. Erfurt-Cooper 2018) These locations, which are frequently designated as protected sites such as National Parks or World Heritage Areas, not only attract tourists but also play an important role in sustainable and nature-based tourism. They do, however, pose inherent risks because they are unpredictable and potentially hazardous. Despite these risks, many hydrothermal areas are promoted as family-friendly destinations, offering unique opportunities to witness the power of nature firsthand. (P. Erfurt-Cooper 2018). Furthermore, hydrothermal features serve as a focal point in destination marketing, offering several advantages. Firstly, they serve as selling points for destination development, and through the use of renewable energy sources, such as geothermal energy, they support sustainable development. Moreover, when combined with other attractions, they enhance the value of recreational facilities. By utilizing geothermal spring water, they are part of health and wellness tourism. They promote geo-tourism by providing opportunities to learn about geological heritage. Finally, they provide economic benefits by leveraging geothermal energy for local infrastructure development (P. Erfurt-Cooper 2018).

However, with volcano tourism growing (Sigurdsson and Lopes-Gautier 1999); (P. Erfurt-Cooper 2011) the number of people exposed to ballistic hazards in nearby areas is rising as well. In addition, more people are building homes near volcanoes as a result of population expansion in many volcanic regions (Small and Naumann 2001); (Ewart and Harpel 2004). This pattern emphasizes the necessity of comprehensive evaluations of ballistic hazards and risks as well as proficient communication strategies in order to successfully reduce ballistic risks related to volcanoes. Moreover, regular education, training, or updates on volcanic hazards and emergency procedures are required to ensure that tourism staff can effectively communicate this information to visitors (Leonard, et al. 2008); (Bird, Gisladottir, and Dominey-Howes 2010); (Williams and Keys 2013). This is important due to the fact that tourists typically spend relatively short durations in areas, ranging from hours to weeks, often lacking in-depth knowledge about

hazards and available safety measures (Murphy and Bayley 1989); (Drabek 1995); (Burby and Wagner 1996); (Bird, Gisladottir and Dominey-Howes 2010). As a result, visitors commonly rely on tourism operators, employees, or guides for information regarding volcanic hazards and appropriate actions during an eruption (Leonard, et al. 2008); (Bird, Gisladottir, and Dominey-Howes 2010). The above-mentioned is supported by the research done on the case of Iceland's 2010 Eyjafjallajökull eruption. Tourism in Iceland has boomed since this event, becoming a significant economic sector (O. Þ. Óladóttir 2015). However, as a result of this growth, a higher number of tourists are exposed to volcanic risks. While local residents are familiar with eruption risks and response procedures, tourists are not (Bird, Gísladóttir and Dominey-Howes, Resident perception of volcanic hazards and evacuation procedures. 2009), (Bird, Gísladóttir and Dominey-Howes 2011); (Jóhannesdóttir 2005); (Jóhannesdóttir and Gísladóttir 2010). Initiatives like the Catalogue of Icelandic Volcanoes and real-time alerts aim to raise awareness among international visitors (Heiðarsson, Loughlin, et al. 2015).

As the Eyjafjallajökull eruption demonstrated, strong crisis communication and preparation plans are essential, not only for locals but also for the increasing number of tourists. Given Iceland's active volcanic landscape, strengthening community resilience is imperative. Prior to the 2010 events, there was criticism and concerns about the lack of response plans for volcanic hazards beyond jökulhlaup (glacial outburst floods) (Bird and Gísladóttir 2012). During the eruption, residents sought more information on ash impacts and mitigation strategies for human and animal health. Since the 2014-15 Bárðarbunga-Holuhraun eruption, two government bodies (National Commissioner of Police; Department of Civil Protection and Emergency Management) have engaged local communities in developing all-hazards crisis management plans. This collaborative approach emphasizes unified crisis communication, which is fostered through pre-existing relationships (Donovan and Oppenheimer 2012). Heiðarsson et al. (2014) emphasize the need for consistent and clear messaging from the science sector, that is endorsed by both government and non-government stakeholders.

Recognizing the impact of the volcanic eruptions on the travel and tourism sector, a dedicated response team was established. Members of the group included public relations staffers from ministries and municipalities, as well as representatives from the

Department of Civil Protection and Emergency Management, the Icelandic Meteorological Office, the Institution of Earth Sciences, travel agencies, and airlines, with the Ministry of Industry and Tourism serving as its chair. This alliance took an active role in crisis communication, providing stranded tourists with information and ideas for things to do while they waited for their departure. The team's role continued even after the eruption stopped, shifting from crisis management to Iceland promotion. The 'Inspired by Iceland' advertising campaign is one of the initiatives that was used to try and revive tourism after the Eyjafjallajökull eruption (Bird, et al. 2018). This response team has remained active during subsequent volcanic crises, including the Grímsvötn eruption in 2011 and the Bárðarbunga-Holuhraun eruptions from 2014 to 2015 (Bird, et al. 2018) and has been active through the most recent eruptions (Government of Iceland 2023).

2.3 Crisis Management

In the following section, several important aspects of crisis management will be introduced. Firstly, the term crisis management will be introduced to provide necessary background info, this will include the definition and the various forms crisis management can be divided into. Furthermore, a classification of the term "crisis" will be included. Finally, crisis management will be put in connection with tourism. Through this exploration, the section will give essential insight into the theoretical and practical aspects of crisis management, particularly in a tourism context.

Martens et al (2016, 91) described crisis management as measures of all types which allow a business to cope with a suddenly occurring danger or risk situation in order to return as quickly as possible to normal business routine. It includes policy implementation, defending of procedures, mitigation, and crisis prevention and response (Barney 2023).

Crisis Management can be divided based on its temporal aspects and function. Firstly, crisis management can be perceived as a function or as an institution (Glaesser 2003). The actual execution of an action plan and the modification of ongoing tasks and business procedures in the event of a severe crisis are both crisis management functions. Organizations or action groups within organizations that are in charge of

creating plans for potential crisis management are known as crisis management institutions. Secondly, crisis management can occur either actively or reactively (Waller, Lei, and Pratten 2014). Active crisis management involves anticipating and implementing disaster prevention measures, as well as creating an action plan for crisis response. Therefore, active crisis management focuses on potential crises. Reactive crisis management addresses ongoing crises, latent and acute ones. It is characterized by using the proper crisis management tools to deal with the negative impacts that a crisis has already had and that have already been identified.

2.3.1 Crisis Classification

The term crisis can be categorized based on its duration and nature. Firstly, Sausmarez (2007) identified three different categories of crises based on the time period – Potential, Latent, and Acute. A potential crisis is a future possible threat. They cannot be determined, nor do they exist, however identifying and considering these potential crises can help prepare for the possibility of a hypothetical crisis becoming a reality. A latent crisis is already taking place. Although there is a critical situation, its negative effects are not yet quantifiable. Once that changes and the crisis' negative impacts can be clearly measured and seen, the situation becomes an acute crisis. Moreover, Ritchie (2003) distinguishes between immediate crises that cannot be prepared for and more predictable emerging crises that have a slower development which allows organizations to act. Therefore, the speed at which crises emerge is significant. Additionally, a classification based on the nature of crises divides these situations into natural crises and human-induced crises. Natural crises such as natural disasters and other natural events, are unpredictable. In contrast to natural crises, human-induced crises are disasters brought on by humans and cannot be blamed on inevitable circumstances, which leads to a significantly higher loss of image and faith (Glaesser 2003) (Sausmarez 2007). Finally, Laws and Prideaux (2005) suggest a local division. Regionally, the region itself and potentially also the nation is affected. Nationally, it significantly affects the tourism industry. Globally, it affects tourism flows. Local crises can impact the global tourism industry as tourists seek alternative destinations due to perceived safety concerns.

2.3.2 Crisis Management in Tourism

As the products of the tourism industry cannot be touched or seen before purchasing, the sector relies on creating favorable images (Salazar and Graburn 2014). These images are crucial for marketing and selling tourism products given that potential clients are only able to base their judgment of the quality of a tourism product on them. This tourism destination image may be harmed by situations of crisis (Sausmarez 2007).

Tourism plays a significant role in the economies of many nations, and it is essential to the development and survival of many destinations. (Ritchie 2003) In the words of Lee and Harrald (1999, p. 184), *"Natural disasters can disrupt the supply and distribution chains for even the best-prepared businesses...service businesses are increasingly vulnerable to electrical, communication, and other critical infrastructure failures."* The tourism industry is extremely vulnerable to outside influences and changes in the larger operating environment (Ritchie 2003) (De Sausmarez 2004), (Pforr and Hosie 2008). Most recently, this vulnerability could have been seen in the COVID-19 pandemic and its global impact (Casal-Ribeiro, et al. 2023).

3.0 Methodological Considerations

In the following chapter, the methodological considerations for this study will be presented. Firstly, the philosophy of science applied is introduced, followed by the methodological approach of the thesis and a description of data collection, which will include an introduction of the people interviewed for this thesis. Conclusively, the final section will reflect on the limitations of the research.

3.1 Philosophy of Science

As highlighted previously, this study seeks to explore how the tourism industry in Iceland is affected by the media's portrayal of factors such as volcanic activity and overtourism. This will involve conducting interviews with key stakeholders from various companies and DMOs operating in Iceland and collecting survey answers from tourists wanting to visit Iceland.

To achieve this, a constructivist approach is utilized. The constructivist paradigm is based on the idea that reality is created through language and human interactions. According to social constructivism, people construct their world through the language used and are therefore not bound by one form of understanding. Furthermore, people's various views and opinions of the world are created through the connections made with others (Gergen 1999).

In this thesis, the objective is to gain an understanding of how various stakeholders view the tourism situation in Iceland regarding both the ongoing natural disasters and the discussion of overtourism in Iceland versus how the media communicates these aspects. The constructivist paradigm will be beneficial in conducting this research, as there are different views on the current and upcoming situation in Icelandic tourism, as they are from different backgrounds and work in different parts of the tourism sector.

Ontology is the philosophical understanding of existence (Holm 2011, p. 123). Given the fact that we understand that the concept of reality is not fixed, our ontological approach is relativistic. Furthermore, we recognize that truth varies between different communities, meaning that it is dependent on factors that are shaped by each individual community. In this thesis, relativistic ontology will be applied in order to analyze the

difference between how the media communicates, and thereby frames, Iceland versus how tourism professionals communicate about tourism situations in Iceland.

Epistemology is concerned with the study of knowledge, belief, and justification (Holm 2011, p. 124). As social constructionists, we believe that knowledge cannot exist without individuals constructing it. Meaning that we view knowledge as being subjective and that each individual will construct their world in their own way dependent on their background. Furthermore, we believe that there are multiple interpretations of every situation and there is not one single truth.

3.2 The Hermeneutic Circle

The following section will introduce this thesis' methodological approach. To gain a better understanding of the topic at hand we have applied the hermeneutic circle. The use of the hermeneutic circle will ensure that we gain a deeper comprehension of the topic.

Martin Heidegger propounded the idea of the hermeneutic circle in 1927 (Cunff 2020). The idea behind the hermeneutic circle is to use the individual parts and how they interact with each other in order to understand the whole. In this thesis, the hermeneutic circle will be used as a framework for comprehending and analyzing the collected data. The hermeneutic circle underlines that a process of learning is not linear, rather it is influenced by the entirety of the text as well as the individual parts of it. This approach will enable a complete understanding of the data where insights gained from examining elements will contribute to the broader context of the entire data set.

Figure 2: The Hermeneutic Circle (Cunff 2020)
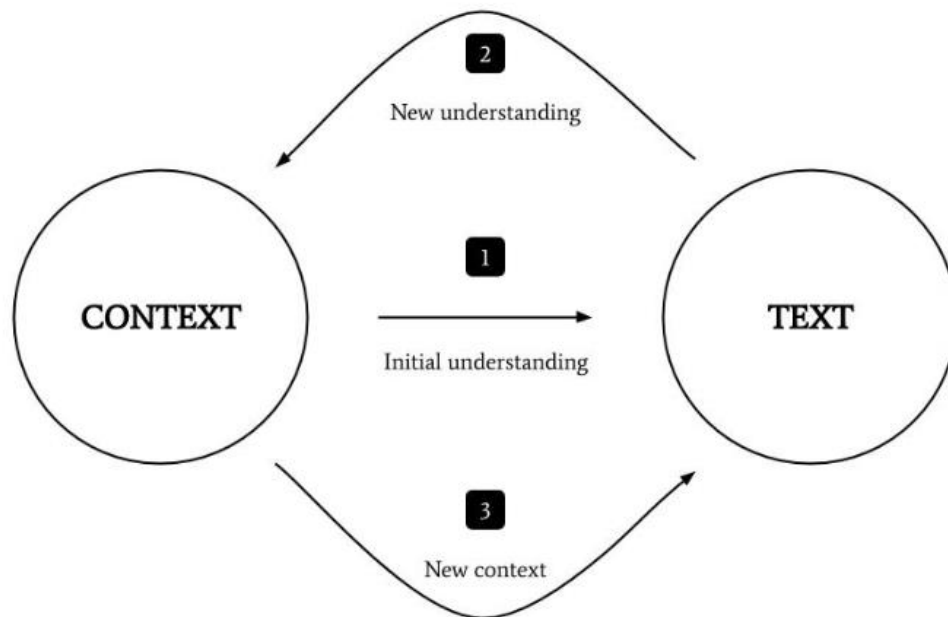
Furthermore, the model of the hermeneutic circle is a representation of the idea that all understanding is circular and based on the context (Holm 2011, p. 86).

Prior to starting the research for this thesis, we had an understanding of the situation in Iceland regarding the volcanic eruptions and an idea of the impact the media's communication could have on tourism in the country and then we furthered our knowledge on the subject through collection of data, such as publications and news articles, and conducting interviews leading us to gain a better understanding of the situation. During the analysis of the previously gathered data for the thesis, our newfound understanding of the situation was then challenged again, and we gained further knowledge and perspective. To provide an example, from the first round of gathering publications and news articles regarding Iceland and the current situation there, the researchers developed the understanding that Iceland is facing an overtourism issue. However, during the interviews, this was challenged by all participants. They explained that while there are crowds at certain sites at certain times, especially during high season, Iceland is a big island and as a whole should not be generalized as a destination that faces overtourism. Moreover, it was brought to the researchers' attention that the misconception is mostly brought on by media articles and this same issue is happening

now with sensationalizing and exaggerating of the volcanic eruptions. This in turn then led us to a discussion of all that had been learned throughout this process, which then led us to contemplate the theme in a different light and gain more new perspectives.

Throughout this thesis, we will make use of this methodological approach when analyzing the conducted interviews to be able to gain a better understanding of the different viewpoints on tourism in Iceland in connection with the volcanic eruptions in the Reykjanes Peninsula. This will create a more comprehensive knowledge from different perspectives and will enable us to use the previous information gathered as well in order to form a broader comprehension than we had in the initial phase of this thesis.

3.3 Data Collection

In this section, the methodological approach to data collection will be introduced. This includes an overview of the interviews conducted for the thesis, as well as an introduction to the people interviewed.

3.3.1 Semi-structured Interviews

To study the contrast between how tourism professionals communicate about the current tourism landscape of Iceland and how the media portrays tourism in Iceland, five semi-structured interviews were conducted. To gain a deep understanding of the current situation, stakeholders within different branches of Icelandic tourism were interviewed. All people interviewed were working within the Icelandic tourism business in some way and were contacted through either email or their LinkedIn profiles.

Prior to conducting the interviews, the researchers created an interview guide adapted to the objectives of the thesis (Appendix 6). Due to the diverse perspectives of the interview subjects, the researchers refined the questions between each interview. By reviewing the interview guide continuously, the researchers were able to ensure the relevance of the data collected. The questions were formulated after reviewing the professional background of the interview subjects and with the tourism situation in mind.

The interview questions were centered around three general topics: overtourism, volcanic eruptions, and Northern Lights. All interviews were initiated with a general introduction of the scope of the thesis and then the interviewees were asked to briefly

introduce themselves and their professional background. Following the introductory part of the interview, it was moved on to the questions about overtourism. These questions revolved around gaining knowledge about the different perspectives stakeholders might have in relation to the topic of overtourism and whether it is a current issue in Icelandic tourism. Secondly, the following topic of questions revolved around the current volcanic eruptions in the Reykjanes Peninsula. The questions were centered around topics such as how the tourism sector is dealing with the effects of the volcanic eruptions, whether they are foreseeing an increase or decrease in the number of tourists as a result of them, and if there are any policies being introduced because of the volcanic eruptions. Finally, the last questions revolved around whether the predictions of the increased possibility of seeing Northern Lights were expected to create a higher tourism demand in Iceland.

Given that all interviewees were located in Iceland, the interviews were conducted online, with each interview lasting between 30 to 60 minutes. To ensure clarity and to minimize confusion, one researcher took the role of interviewer, while the other researcher was observing, took notes, and asking any follow-up questions towards the conclusion of each interview.

Due to logistical challenges and scheduling conflicts, it was not possible for the researchers to conduct interviews with all participants. As an alternative, participants who were unable to schedule interviews were provided with the interview questions via email or LinkedIn. These will be referred to as "online interviews" from this point forward. They were requested to respond to the questions in writing and return their responses within a specified timeframe.

This method of data collection allowed for flexibility in accommodating the availability of participants while ensuring that their insights and perspectives were still collected for analysis. However, it is acknowledged that this approach may have influenced the depth and spontaneity of responses compared to real-time interactions in interviews. To mitigate potential limitations, efforts were made to maintain consistency in the interview protocol and ensure clarity in the questions provided to participants.

3.3.2 Tourism Structure in Iceland

This section will introduce how tourism is politically structured in Iceland, highlighting the involvement of various governmental branches in the management and regulation of the tourism sector. Additionally, the Icelandic destination management companies will be introduced, including both governmental and private corporations. Finally, this section will underline how the people interviewed for this thesis fit into this context.

The Department of Tourism at the Ministry of Culture and Business Affairs is the highest authority within tourism in Iceland. They are responsible for developing and executing official tourism policies and advising on new legislation in the tourism field, among other tasks. Under the Ministry, there are several tourism bodies such as The Icelandic Tourist Board, The Tourism Task Force, the Tourist Site Protection Fund, and The Route Development (Government of Iceland, n.d.). These aforementioned departments and boards constitute the governmental branch of tourism management in Iceland. These also have several agreements with Business Iceland about the promotion and marketing of Iceland as a destination for tourism. A part of Business Iceland is Visit Iceland, which oversees the branding and marketing of the country in order to draw tourism to the island.

Visit Iceland has segmented the country into seven distinct regions each equipped with its own destination marketing office. The regions are as follows, North Iceland, South Iceland, East Iceland, West Iceland, Westfjords, Reykjanes, and Reykjavík (Destination Management Organisations of Iceland n.d.). These are specifically dedicated to the marketing efforts of their respective region (Visit Iceland, n.d.) and together they worked for 900 tourism companies and 55 municipalities (Destination Management Organisations of Iceland n.d.). The below table showcases the structure of tourism companies in Iceland.

Table 1: Tourism Structure in Iceland (Table by Authors)

The Department of Tourism at the Ministry of Culture and Business Affairs			
The Icelandic Tourist Board	The Tourism Task Force	The Tourist Site Protection Fund	The Route Development

Business Iceland

Visit Iceland

North Iceland	South Iceland	East Iceland	West Iceland	Westfjords	Reykjanes	Reykjavík

900 tourism companies and 55 municipalities
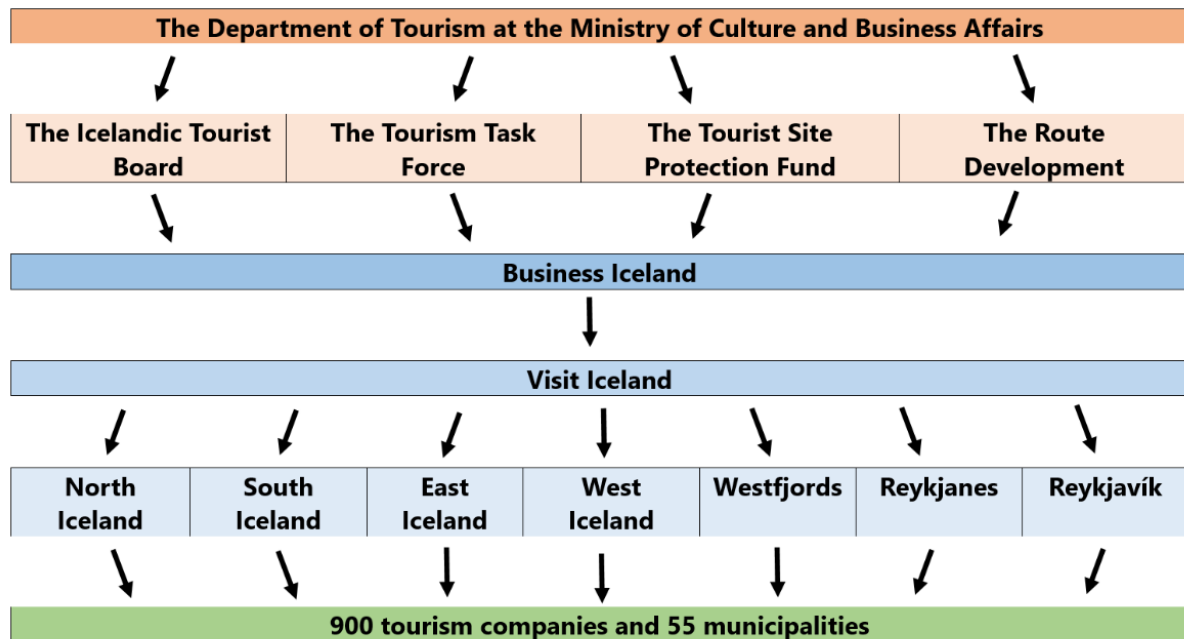
Sources: (Visit Iceland, n.d.); (Destination Management Organisations of Iceland n.d.); (Government of Iceland, n.d.)

Apart from these governmental offices overseeing tourism in Iceland, there are several privately owned destination management companies and tour operators throughout the country, that also work to draw in visitors to the country.

For this thesis, a total of twelve people were interviewed. Seeing as the objective of the research was to investigate the contrast between how tourism professionals communicate about topics such as overtourism and volcanic eruptions versus how the media communicates about it, the primary interviews were conducted with representatives from governmental branches of tourism in Iceland. Interviews were conducted with representatives from The Icelandic Tourist Board, Visit Reykjanes, Visit South Iceland, and the Icelandic Travel Industry Association. To further the researchers' knowledge about the subject, additional interviews were conducted through e-mail with people from various privately owned destination management companies and tour operators. By including people from both the governmental and private branches of tourism in Iceland, a more comprehensive study can be done.

The following sections will outline how the interviews were conducted and introduce the interviewees thoroughly.

3.3.3 Participants in Interviews

3.3.3.1 Gunnar Þór Jóhannesson

The first interview the researchers conducted was with Gunnar Þór Jóhannesson who is a professor at the University of Reykjavík. Gunnar has a Ph.D. in human geography and tourism studies from Roskilde University and currently teaches various tourism classes for the Faculty of Life and Environmental Sciences at Reykjavík University such as Sustainable Tourism Development in Northern Environment, Theories in Tourism studies, and Tourism Planning and Policy. Furthermore, Gunnar has, since 2003, released numerous research papers centered on the topic of tourism. Notable research has included papers exploring tourism employment, urban tourism, aurora borealis, and overtourism.

Because of Gunnar's significant experience within tourism studies and specifically studies of tourism in Iceland, the researchers wanted to include his viewpoint on the tourism situation taking place in Iceland. It was acknowledged by the researchers that Gunnar would possibly bring a different perspective in his interview than other interviewees because of his background as a researcher. This difference in opinion from tourism actors working within the various branches of the tourism industry would be able to provide a broader view of the issues at hand.

3.3.3.2 Jóhannes Þór Skúlason

The second interview conducted for this thesis was with Jóhannes Þór Skúlason, who is the managing director of the Icelandic Travel Industry Association (SAF). The Icelandic Travel Industry Association includes all tourism companies in Iceland, which differs from these associations in other European countries, as they will be focused mainly on hospitality or service companies.

Jóhannes has been the managing director of SAF since 2018. His background includes roles such as senior political advisor to the Prime Minister of Iceland, board member of the Tourism Task Force, and owner of Orðspor, a public relations and strategic communications firm. Furthermore, Jóhannes' responsibilities at SAF include

appearances on both Icelandic and international media representing SAF and being an opinion leader on various tourism-related issues. These diverse experiences have equipped Jóhannes with a deep understanding of both the political landscape and the complexities of communication and management within the tourism industry.

3.3.3.3 Snorri Valsson

The third thesis interview was with Snorri Valsson who is responsible for PR and media for the Icelandic Tourist Board. The Icelandic Tourist Board operates under the Ministry of Culture and Business Affairs and serves as an authority in overseeing and promoting the sustainable growth of tourism in Iceland. Its primary obligation includes monitoring and fostering the development of tourism while ensuring the preservation of Icelandic nature and society's carrying capacity. As part of its regulatory role, the Tourist Board grants licenses and regulates operations for travel agencies, day tour providers, and information centers (Ferðamalastofa n.d.)

Snorri also has responsibilities for The Tourist Site Protection Fund which was established in 2011 and aims to promote the development, maintenance, and protection of tourist attractions in Iceland (Government of Iceland, n.d.).

With his experience from both the Icelandic Tourist Board and the Tourist Site Protection Fund, Snorri could bring valuable knowledge to the data collection of this thesis.

3.3.3.4 Vala Hauksdóttir & Davíð Ernir Kolbeinsson

The fourth interview for the thesis was conducted with representatives from Visit South Iceland, Vala Hauksdóttir, and Davið Ernir Kolbeinsson. Vala and Davið are both project managers for the destination management office. Davið is a project manager within the marketing part of Visit South Iceland. Visit South Iceland is a destination management office that is responsible for marketing the entirety of southern Iceland. This destination borders Visit Reykjanes, which is the destination affected by the recent volcanic eruptions. Seeing as they are close in proximity to the volcanic eruptions, it was highly beneficial to be able to get their point of view on the tourism situation regarding this. Furthermore, as their destination is large and covers a big part of the highly popular tourist attraction, the Golden Circle, their opinions on potential overtourism problems

were also beneficial for the thesis. The interviewees have a great deal of experience within both the tourism sector and public relations (Visit South Iceland, n.d.).

3.3.3.5 Þuríður Halldóra Aradóttir Braun

The fifth and final interview was with Þuríður Halldóra Aradóttir Braun, manager at Visit Reykjanes. Visit Reykjanes is the official destination marketing and management organization for the Reykjanes Peninsula and Reykjanes UNESCO Global Geopark. Þuríður has been working for Visit Reykjanes since 2013 and was previously employed by the Icelandic municipality Rangárþing Eystra to oversee marketing and PR material for the municipality. Furthermore, she has an MBA in business administration from the University of Reykjavík. Seeing as the Reykjanes Peninsula is the location of the volcanic eruptions that have been taking place over the previous years, it was incredibly important for the researchers to be able to include considerations from the tourism actors that are currently dealing with the eruptions and all the potential tourism consequences. Being able to discuss the effects of the current eruptions was very helpful in gaining an overall picture of the situation.

3.3.4 Participants in Online Interviews

3.3.4.1 María Ester Guðjónsdóttir

María is currently employed at Iceland Travel as a Sales and Sustainability representative for Cruise Services. Furthermore, she has previous experience in the Sales and Production department of the same company and as a campsite manager for Landamerki ehf in West Iceland. Additionally, she has a great deal of education in tourism studies from both Bifröst University and The Icelandic School of Tourism and is currently enrolled in a Tourism Master from Aalborg University. Ester brings a knowledge of the tourism landscape in Iceland with her experience from working directly with the tourists when they visit, which is highly beneficial in this thesis.

3.3.4.2 Óðinn Karlsson

Óðinn works as a Senior Project and Event Manager for Atlantik DMC. Atlantik DMC is a DMC that was established in 1978 and specializes in the MICE market (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, Events) and Cruise services. Before working for Atlantik DMC, Óðinn was a freelance tour guide in Iceland for eight years. Furthermore, he has a

bachelor's degree in Tourism Studies from the University of Iceland. With his combined knowledge of freelance tourism work and his current work within the cruise tourism industry, Óðinn can give great insight to this thesis.

3.3.4.3 Ryan Connolly

Ryan is the marketing director and co-owner of Hidden Iceland, a bespoke luxury travel company in Iceland that offers different tours around Iceland. Hidden Iceland offers tours surrounding volcanic experiences and the Northern Lights. Ryan founded Hidden Iceland six years ago and was previously a glacier guide in Iceland. With his experience in adventure tourism in Iceland, he was able to provide further insight into this subject.

3.3.4.4 Sæmundur Ámundason

Sæmundur has 25 years of experience with tourism, both in Iceland and internationally. For the past three years, he has been employed as a travel specialist for Activity Iceland and HL Adventure DMC. HL Adventure DMC specializes in producing itineraries for private adventure travel and the MICE sector (HL Adventure, n.d.). Sæmundur also has experience in the tourism industry in Germany. Furthermore, he has a bachelor's degree in economics and tourism from the University of Akureyri. With his many years of experience in tourism, Sæmundur can provide an extensive knowledge of Icelandic tourism to this thesis.

3.3.4.5 Semina Diakopoulou

Semina is an experienced consultant and manager in tourism. She is currently a Tourism and Sustainability Consultant for two tour operators in Iceland, Hyperborea Tour Company and Atlantik DMC. Hyperborea Tour Company offers private adventure tours of South Iceland and on glaciers (Hyperborea, n.d.). Additionally, Semina has extensive experience with sustainability roles in the tourism industry in Greece and the Netherlands as well as Iceland. Her extensive knowledge of sustainability within tourism is highly beneficial to this thesis as it will give a different perspective.

3.3.4.6 Yulia Zhatkina

Yulia is the owner and CEO of Iceland Challenge ehf, which is DMC that plans different types of tours all around Iceland (Iceland Challenge, n.d.). Previously, Yulia worked for Atlantik ehf as a project manager on the cruise tourism team.

3.3.5 Survey for Travelers

To gain information about how travelers perceive the current tourism landscape in Iceland, a questionnaire was created and shared across several different social media groups, centered around travel to Iceland. The purpose of the questionnaire was to gather additional data about how natural occurrences can influence the tourism landscape of a country.

The survey included fourteen questions revolving around opinions about traveling to Iceland. The initial questions were general questions to get an idea of the demographic of people replying. Following the introductory questions, the focus moved on to questions about whether the respondents had visited Iceland previously and follow-up questions, such as what the motivations for traveling to Iceland were. Finally, the last questions of the questionnaire were about whether the respondents were aware of the current situation of both the high volcanic activity and the prediction of more northern light activity. In connection with these questions, the respondents were asked whether these two situations could affect their future plans of visiting Iceland.

3.4 Data Validity and Reliability

Reliability and validity serve as key concepts in the assessment and testing of research projects. If we regard testing as a way to gather data, the quality of the testing is the most important analysis of any qualitative study. An adept qualitative study is a useful tool for making sense of circumstances that could otherwise be unclear or confusing (Eisner 1991); (Golafshani 2003).

To avoid participant bias all interviews were done individually. With the exception of interview 4, the scheduled interview was only with Vala Hauksdóttir, project manager for Visit South Iceland. When the online call started, she inquired whether she could invite a colleague who she believed would have valuable insights for the researchers. The researchers agreed to this and hence interview 4 has two interviewees the above-mentioned Vala and Davíð Ernir Kolbeinsson, project manager within marketing for Visit South Iceland. To avoid researcher bias both were present at each interview, one in the

role of an interviewer and one a note-taker. For the sake of consistency, all interviewees were presented with the same set of questions in the same online environment.

The utilization of a constructivist paradigm in research often presents a challenge due to the inherent subjectivity of the collected data, which limits the generalizability of the data and broader applications of conclusions. To address this issue the researchers employed interview coding. This was crucial for the data interpretation process. In addition, it is useful for data organization, themes recognition and the comprehension of the links and connections between responses.

3.5 Limitations of the Research

Although qualitative methods are valued for offering deep insights into real-life circumstances and behaviors in a wider context, they are criticized for overly relying on the subjective interpretations of researchers, having limited generalizability, and being difficult to replicate (Vaus, 2002). Likewise, the constructivist paradigm faces criticism for its challenges in drawing broader generalized conclusions (Thompson, 2019) and for emphasizing that the values of the researchers have an impact on the work they do, and the research cannot exist independently of the researcher's ideals (Mertens, 2010). Constructivists, in essence, acknowledge their own prejudices as well as how their beliefs and experiences affect their research. Furthermore, the thematic analysis mainly depends on the researchers' viewpoints. Due to this fact, when making decisions, interpreting data, and drawing conclusions, researchers must exercise caution and care. Additionally, it is critical to recognize that coding invariably reflects the researcher's philosophical stance and research values, making it difficult for researchers to separate themselves from ontological, epistemological, and paradigmatic assumptions.

The researchers conducted five interviews via the online platform Microsoft Teams and then six interviews via email and LinkedIn. The participants in the online interviews had time to think and formulate their answers. Furthermore, the data set gathered by the online interviews is much smaller than the ones done via Microsoft Teams. Furthermore, the interviews were all conducted in English and not Icelandic which is the first language of all people interviewed via Microsoft Teams. Research shows that people's actions and

responses vary depending on the language they think and speak (Grosjean 2011) (Kowalczyk-Harper 2019).

As the events continue to unfold, the situation remains dynamic, with new information emerging, fresh articles being written, and continuous volcanic eruptions occurring. In addition to these developments, the ongoing media response, and Iceland's actions, regarding the eruptions, the media, and the tourism sector have a significant impact on the evolving narrative. The fluidity of the situation emphasizes the importance of further monitoring and analysis in order to fully understand its impact.

3.6 Data Analysis

3.6.1 Interview Coding

The researchers carefully examined the qualitative data collected from the transcript of the interviews. This thorough review was done to reveal repeatedly emerging concepts, themes, and patterns of meaning. A method known as thematic analysis by Braun and Clarke (2006) was applied for the coding of the interviews. They introduced a process of thematic analysis which includes six steps that are summarized in the table below.

Table 2: Six Steps of Thematic Analysis (Table by Authors)

Step	Name	Brief Description
Step 1	Getting acquainted with the data	Familiarizing oneself with the data involves several steps, including transcribing the data, noting down initial codes, and meticulously reviewing the data on multiple occasions.
Step 2	Generating preliminary codes	The process of creating initial codes entails identifying intriguing aspects within the data and assigning codes accordingly, while also ensuring the collection of relevant data for each assigned code.
Step 3	Identifying potential themes	The search for possible themes encompasses grouping codes into possible thematic clusters and gathering additional data that corresponds to each identified theme.
Step 4	Reviewing the themes	The evaluation of the themes involves a thorough examination of their alignment with the coded data.

Step 5	Defining and naming themes	The theme definition and labeling require an in-depth analysis and refinement of each theme to ensure precision, along with the development of clear and descriptive names for them.
Step 6	Crafting the final report	The creation of a comprehensive report, which includes discussing the analysis, exploring its implications, and presenting its connections to the problem formulation or existing literature.

Source: (Braun and Clarke 2006)

Following these steps, the authors of this thesis first transcribed all of the five interviews. Then they spent time and read through each interview carefully and individually while taking notes when an interesting statement appeared. After the researchers carefully and meticulously went through all of the transcribed interviews again and started to note down initial codes and any interesting or contradicting data. Afterward, the researchers started grouping codes into subthemes. This was followed by combining codes from various teams, which resulted in creating a list of potential themes and subthemes. Inspired by thematic analysis, the researchers coded the survey and the online interviews. The survey's open-ended questions needed coding and structure. Similarly to the interview coding process the researchers first familiarized themselves with the whole sets of data – survey answers and online interviews. Afterward, they started to note down and highlight interesting quotes and data extracts that had a connection to the themes, subthemes, and codes from the interview coding. For the most part the findings were similar to the data collected during the five interviews. However new topics and different points of view emerged. To provide an example, the online interviewees emphasized cruise tourism in connection with overtourism and a significant portion of survey responders mentioned geological interest in Iceland. The final report is then a mixture of interviews, survey answers, and online interviews.

3.6.2 Framing Analysis

According to Chong and Druckman (2007), there is no uniform measurement standard for identifying frames in communication, however, they state that several researchers follow the below-mentioned steps. For the analysis in this thesis, these steps will be followed.

Firstly, an issue or event must be identified. A frame in communication can only be identified when related to a specific event or issue. To provide an example, the frames about tourism policy reform will be different from frames about sustainability in tourism. However, it is important to note that frames about the same issue can change over time.

Secondly, to understand how public opinion is affected by the frames in communication the researchers must identify and isolate the specific attitudes. This means focusing on a specific viewpoint or perspective individuals have about a given issue.

Thirdly, an initial set of frames must be identified in order to create a coding scheme. This can be done by examining previous research and literature on the topic. This helps to gather different perspectives and frames that have previously been used to talk about the topic. Furthermore, exploring opinions from experts, court cases, or statements from interest groups can aid in identifying themes or frames discussed by various stakeholders. Additionally, researchers can question the general public by gathering responses from individuals, who are not necessarily experts or elites in the field. This can be done through methods such as surveys, interviews, or focus groups. By incorporating viewpoints from a diverse range of individuals, the analysis can ensure that a broad spectrum of perspectives is considered.

Finally, when the initial set of frames has been identified, the following step is to select sources for content analysis. These can include mass media sources such as newspapers, magazines, websites, and television broadcasts. The type of news outlets is dependent on the researchers' objectives. Articles are found through keyword searches on electronic databases. The articles are then the unit of analysis from which the researchers will analyze a sample to identify either the presence or absence of the predefined frames (Chong and Druckman 2007).

In conclusion, the process of identifying and analyzing frames in communication includes several steps. These include focusing on an event or issue, isolating the attitudes, identifying the set of frames, and selecting sources for analysis. By following these steps, the researchers can investigate how frames are apparent within media and gain knowledge about the impact they have on public opinion.

4.0 Theory

The following chapter will introduce the theoretical framework of this thesis. It will provide a comprehensive exploration of key concepts and theories imperative to achieving the research objectives. Thematic analysis and framing theory will be central in offering valuable insights into the interpretation and understanding of the collected data. Through an examination of the aforementioned theoretical aspects, the chapter will establish a foundation for the following analysis.

4.1 Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis serves as a method for identifying, analyzing, and interpreting patterns of meaning (referred to as 'themes') within qualitative data (Clarke and Braun 2017). Clarke and Braun (2006) present this method that includes six steps, which are as follows:

Getting acquainted with the data.

During the first step, researchers immerse themselves in the data, reading it repeatedly to gain a thorough understanding of its contents. Despite its time-consuming nature, this phase serves as the foundation for the following analysis and should not be disregarded. Researchers may also begin taking notes or marking ideas for coding during this step, laying the groundwork for the formal coding process that follows. When working with verbal data (interviews, speeches, etc.) researchers first must transcribe it into written form. Although transcription might appear as a tedious task, it provides an excellent opportunity to become familiar with the data and improve one's interpretive skills. Furthermore, researchers must spend time getting acquainted with the data to ensure the accuracy and integrity of their analysis.

Generating preliminary codes

In this step, the initial codes are created. These codes serve as the foundation for creating more expansive themes in the following phase by highlighting interesting patterns or features in the data. The complete data set must be methodically gone through in order to find the interesting features, which can then be manually coded. Coding for multiple possible themes, coding extracts inclusively to preserve context, and acknowledging that

a single data extract may fit into more than one theme are some of the most important pieces of advice for this phase. Contradictions and tensions within the data must also be acknowledged and kept in place rather than being smoothed out.

Identifying potential themes

 First, the researcher groups the codes into possible themes and gathers information from extracts of data that are relevant to each theme. This phase entails analyzing how different codes might combine to form overarching themes. To arrange the codes into themes one can make use of visual aids such as tables, mind maps, and physical sorting. Certain codes might develop into primary themes, while others might become sub-themes. If they don't belong anywhere else, they might be categorized as "miscellaneous". At the end of this stage, the researcher should have a list of potential themes and sub-themes as well as the coded data extracts. Nothing should be eliminated at this stage because more analysis is required to determine the significance of each theme and whether it needs to be refined or combined in the following phase.

Reviewing the themes

 The potential themes found in Step 3 of the research process are refined in Step 4. There are two levels of review and refinement in this phase. The first level examines the coherence of coded data extracts from each theme. The analysis advances to the second level if the candidate themes exhibit a logical pattern. If not, data extracts might need to be redistributed and themes might need to be revised or eliminated. The second level entails determining the validity of the potential thematic map with regard to the entire dataset. This includes rereading every piece of the data set to ensure that themes accurately represent the data and identifying any data for coding that could have been missed. If the thematic map fits well with the data set, the analysis moves on to the next stage. However, if changes are required, additional review and refinement are performed until a satisfactory thematic map is created. It is critical to avoid overzealous recoding and refining, and stopping when refinements no longer add significant value. This phase is complete when researchers have a clear understanding of the various themes, how they interconnect, and the overall story they tell about the data.

Defining and naming themes

This step is where researchers have finalized the thematic map of the data. They define and refine the themes identified in previous phases by determining their essence and relevance to the data. This entails organizing collected data extracts into coherent accounts and conducting in-depth analyses for each theme. The themes must be distinct and not overly complex, avoiding any overlap between them. Within broader themes, sub-themes can be found to offer organization and a hierarchy of meaning. Your goal is to define each theme and its content precisely through this refinement process. It is crucial to give the themes clear and descriptive names that will allow the reader to understand the essence of the theme right away.

Crafting the final report

The goal is to present the data's story convincingly. The analysis must be concise, coherent, and engaging, providing clear evidence for the themes through vivid examples. Data extracts should be incorporated into an analytical narrative that advances an argument related to the research question.

Distinguished by its lack of strict theoretical constraints, this approach offers a practical tool or technique rather than a confined research methodology. As such, thematic analysis can be applied across various theoretical frameworks and research paradigms. It consists of versions designed primarily for (post)positivist frameworks, which concentrate on coding reliability, as well as versions developed for use within the qualitative paradigms, which promote an organic approach to coding and theme development with the researcher's active participation (Clarke and Braun 2017). The inherent flexibility in data interpretation of this method was the reason why the researchers chose thematic analysis. This flexibility allows for the data to be organized into general themes. Broadly speaking, thematic analysis offers adaptability concerning the research question, data collection methods, meaning construction techniques, and sample size (Braun and Clarke 2006) (Clarke and Braun 2017) Furthermore, since the data content guides the development of codes and themes, thematic analysis is closely related to qualitative research and the inductive approach (Clarke and Braun 2017), which is relevant to the research design of this paper. However, there is a possibility that some nuances in the data will be missed. Regarding themes, topics are more important

in relation to the main research question than they are in terms of quantifiable measures. In general, codes tend to be more specific compared to themes.

One limitation of the project lies in the inherent subjectivity of thematic analysis, which heavily relies on the researchers' judgments. Consequently, researchers must exercise careful consideration in their decisions, interpretations, and conclusions. Furthermore, it is imperative to acknowledge that coding inevitably mirrors the researchers' philosophical stance and research values, therefore making it challenging for researchers to dissociate themselves from ontological, epistemological, and paradigmatic assumptions (Braun and Clarke 2006); (Clarke and Braun 2013).

4.2 Framing Theory

In 1974, Erving Goffmann propounded the idea of "framing" in his book *Frame Analysis*. Goffman saw framing as a sociological concept and in his book, he underlines that people classify, organize, and interpret experiences in life in order to make sense of them (Zhongdang and Kosicki 1993). Since Erving Goffmann's time, several researchers have created their own definitions of framing, and the term has become very complex. Robert M. Entman defines framing as *"the process of culling a few elements of perceived reality and assembling a narrative that highlights connections among them to promote a particular interpretation."* (Entman 2007, p. 164). Entman (2007) outlines four primary functions of frames. Firstly, frames establish and articulate a problem or issue present within society. Secondly, they delve into the underlying factors or causes that contribute to the existence or persistence of the problem. Thirdly, they evaluate the issue from a moral or ethical standpoint and consider the implications of the problem. Finally, they introduce a remedy to solve the problem, which is known as remedy promotion.

Framing theory research is based on literature from several different research fields such as sociology, psychology, economics, political science, and more. Framing theory proposes that the media both creates saliency toward certain topics and issues and can potentially influence how people interpret them (Clark and Nyaupane 2020).

Framing is a technique used to manipulate how the audience perceives and prioritizes information. This technique operates on the principle of priming, where a specific idea or

aspect of an issue is emphasized, making it more visible and apparently more important. This activates the cognitive frameworks or schemas, which help the audience form opinions and make decisions that align with the framing of the issue (Entman 2007).

According to Shulman and Sweitzer (2018), there are two types of frames in communication, these are emphasis frames and equivalency frames. They define emphasis frames as *"a central organizing idea ... that provides meaning to an unfolding strip of events"* (Shulman and Sweitzer 2018, p. 156). When researching these types of frames, researchers will for example examine how political issues are portrayed. Equivalency frames, however *"present different, but logically equivalent words or phrases"* (Shulman and Sweitzer 2018, p. 156) and examine the method of communicating.

Through framing theory, researchers seek to understand how the presentation of topics and issues influences public opinion. Framing theory operates from the idea that people have several pieces of information available to them, stored in their memory, this information can include personal experiences, beliefs, values, knowledge, and more. When a person is asked for an opinion on a specific issue, they will retrieve the relevant information from their memory. The knowledge that comes to mind is called "accessible information", this will influence the opinions and preferences that a person will pass on. According to framing theory, a frame will have a greater influence on preferences if it makes a belief more accessible, readily available, and/or strongly available (Figure 3). When discussing framing it is also important to include the phenomenon of "framing effects" that occur when the changes in how an issue is presented lead to changes in opinion and move through the aforementioned processes (Shulman and Sweitzer 2018).

Figure 3 - Framing Process (Chong and Druckman 2007)
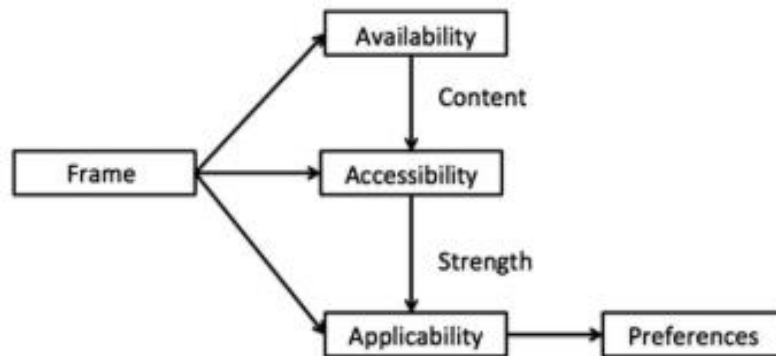
Within the research of framing theory, accessibility has been viewed as a critical component in framing effects. Chong and Druckman define accessibility as *"the ease with which instances or associations can be brought to mind"* (Chong and Druckman 2007, p. 208). Seeing as more accessible information has a stronger effect on judgments, accessibility is a big focus within framing research.

Several researchers have examined the use of frames within the media and according to Gamson and Modigliani (1987), media frames serve as central narratives utilized by the media to provide meaning to an evolving sequence of events. Researchers have found that varying presentations on the same topic can affect people's opinions (Clark and Nyaupane 2020).

Researchers Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) have identified five different news frames in previous research on the topic. The frames are as follows:

Conflict frame: These frames underline a conflict between individuals, groups, or institutions in order to capture the attention of the audience. Furthermore, the conflict frames were found to be the most prevalent frames within American news, an example being media portrayal of presidential campaigns, which are often heavily focused around a conflict frame.

Human interest frame: This frame uses an emotional angle or a human spokesperson to present an event, issue, or problem. This frame is seen as a result of the heavily competitive news market wherein the media is desperate to create a story that captures

the interest of the audience. The human-interest frame attempts to humanize and/or personalize the news in order to catch people's attention.

Economic consequence frame: These frames will underline an event, issue, or problem in the form of the economic consequences it will have on individuals, groups, regions, or countries. According to Semetko and Valkenburg, the broad impact will be deemed important news.

Morality frame: Semetko and Valkenburg argue that this frame puts issues, events, or problems in either a religious or moral context. The morality issue is oftentimes raised by someone other than the journalist, an example of this could be using an interest group to present their views on a topic in order to raise a morality question and attract an audience.

Responsibility frame: This last frame introduced by Semetko and Valkenburg, is said to present an issue or problem by assigning responsibility for its cause or solution to either the government or an individual or group.

The authors underline that the American media has been said to have shaped the public understanding of who is to blame for key social problems, an example of this could be poverty. Other researchers have argued that the media encourages people to draw conclusions episodically rather than thematically and this leads to people offering individual-level explanations for social problems such as poverty (Semetko and Valkenburg 2000).

5.0 Analysis

The following chapter will include the analysis of the data collected for this thesis through previously introduced analysis methods. Firstly, the analysis of coding the data from the transcribed interviews will be introduced. Following that, the four themes identified through coding will be explored and analyzed. Finally, an analysis of the data through framing theory will be included, providing a comprehensive understanding of the research findings within the theoretical framework established previously.

5.1 Thematic Analysis

The qualitative data from the interview transcripts was carefully examined by the researchers in search of recurring themes - ideas, topics, and patterns of meaning. As mentioned, and introduced in the methodology chapter, thematic analysis was a method of choice for coding the interview data. In this section, the findings from the interviews, online interviews, and surveys will be introduced as well as their connection to the data presented in the literature review.

Table 3 - Themes, Subthemes derived from interviews, including Codes (Table by Authors)

THEMES	SUBTHEMES	CODES
VOLCANIC ERUPTIONS	EFFECT ON TOURISM	Visitor numbers Volcano enthusiasts
	COMMUNICATION BETWEEN STAKEHOLDERS	Importance of communication during crisis Lack thereof
	ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	Marketing Tourist safety
HIGHER ACTIVITY OF NOTHERN LIGHTS	OPPORTUNITY	Attracting visitors for the winter season Dispersion of visitors
	MARKETING CHALLENGE	Weather Unpredictability Visitors Disappointment Other Locations
	DEMAND	Motivation
	AWARENESS	Lack thereof
SUSTAINABILITY	OVERTOURISM	Media Coverage Perception of Tourism Professionals in Iceland
	STRATEGIES	Regulations Cruise tourism Disperse number of tourists Tours
	COLLABORATION	Locals Authorities Tourism Industry
MEDIA	PORTRAYALS OF TOURISM IN ICELAND	Media Sensationalism Click Bait Incorrect information Unnecessary Panic Confusion among Tourists
	UNCHECKED INFLUENCE	Lack of accountability

Following the interview coding process, four overarching themes emerged – Sustainability, Media, Volcanic Eruptions, and Higher Activity of Northern Lights. Each of these themes encompasses subthemes, such as "Overtourism", "Strategies", and "Collaboration" which are all part of the theme SUSTAINABILITY. The theme MEDIA has two subthemes, "Portrayals of tourism in Iceland" and "Unchecked Influence".

Subthemes including "Effect on Tourism", "Communication between Stakeholders" and "Ethical Considerations" fall under the theme of VOLCANIC ERUPTIONS. Lastly, the theme HIGHER ACTIVITY OF NORTHERN LIGHTS comprises "Opportunity", "Marketing Challenge", "Demand", and "Awareness". Additionally, there are a number of codes for each subtheme. All these themes are a part of the current situation in Iceland and are linked together. For instance, media coverage is a topic that occurs in Overtourism, Northern Lights, and the Volcanic Eruptions. For overtourism and Volcanic Eruptions, the media coverage is sensationalist, providing incorrect information which possibly results in demand changes, and confusion and panic among tourists. Moreover, regarding these two topics, there is a contrast between what the media reports and how the tourism professionals in Iceland describe the situation. The higher activity of the Northern Lights is actually underreported by the news media which leads to a lack of awareness.

The respective subthemes were identified from groups of codes with a pattern, as Braun and Clarke (2006) describe in the third step of their thematic analysis (4.1 Thematic Analysis). To provide examples, the subtheme "Overtourism" which falls under the SUSTAINABILITY theme was identified through a pattern of codes referencing the interviewees' opinions on the media's misrepresentation of the Icelandic overtourism and volcanic eruption situations and the interviewees' perception of these topics. The HIGHER ACTIVITY OF NOTHER LIGHTS theme's subtheme "Marketing opportunity" was identified through a group of codes stating the unpredictability of the weather conditions, the possibility of disappointing visitors, and the availability of other locations with better conditions for viewing Northern Lights as possible reasons why the surge in Aurora Borealis activity is not being highly advertised and marketed by tourism companies in Iceland. These subthemes, as mentioned in step five of Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step guide, can be found within broader themes to provide structure and hierarchy of meaning (4.1 Thematic Analysis).

The subsequent section describes and defines the themes and subthemes. Moreover, it analyses and reports on the links and connections between the above-mentioned themes and subthemes. Below there are two tables (Table 4 and Table 5) summarizing

the characteristics of the five interviewees, who were interviewed via Teams, and the six online interviewees who responded to a set of questions sent via email and/or LinkedIn. The goal of this arrangement is to facilitate easier and more effective comprehension for the readers.

Table 4: Characteristics of the five interviewees (Table by Authors)

Interview/ Appendix	Name	Occupation
Interview 1 /Appendix 1	Gunnar Þór Jóhannesson	Professor of Geography and Tourism Studies at the University of Reykjavík
Interview 2 /Appendix 2	Jóhannes Þór Skúlason	Managing Director at the Icelandic Travel Industry Association
Interview 3 /Appendix 3	Snorri Valsson	PR and media representative at the Iceland Tourist Board
Interview 4 /Appendix 4	Vala Hauksdóttir Davíð Ernir Kolbeinsson	Project managers at Visit South Iceland
Interview 5 /Appendix 5	Þuríður Halldóra Aradóttir Braun	Manager of Visit Reykjanes

Table 5: Characteristics of the six online interviewees (Table by Authors)

Online Interview/ Appendix	Name	Occupation
Online Interview 1 (OI1) / Appendix 8	María Ester Guðjónsdóttir	Sales and Sustainability Representative for Cruise Services at Iceland Travel
Online Interview 2 (OI2) / Appendix 8	Óðinn Karlsson	Senior Project and Event Manager at Atlantik DMC
Online Interview 3 (OI3) / Appendix 8	Ryan Connelly	Marketing Director and Co-owner of Hidden Iceland
Online Interview 4 (OI4) / Appendix 8	Sæmundur Ámundason	Travel Specialist for Activity Iceland and HL Adventure DMC

Online Interview 5 (OI5) / Appendix 8	Semina Diakopoulou	Tourism and Sustainability Consultant for Hyperborea Tour Company and Atlantik DMC
Online Interview 6 (OI6) / Appendix 8	Yulia Zhatkina	Owner and CEO of Iceland Challenge

5.1.1 The Contrast of Portrayals of the Current Situation in Iceland

The coding of interviews uncovered how the five interviewed tourism professionals (Appendix 1-5) perceive the current situation in Iceland, as well as their opinions on how the media reports on this situation. To assess the theoretical findings from the literature review chapter, the research will use the following four themes:

- Volcanic Eruptions
- Higher Activity of Northern Lights
- Sustainability
- Media

As previously outlined, each theme consists of sub-themes, collectively contributing to the overall portrayal of the current situation in Iceland by tourism professionals. The selection of these four themes was based on their recurrence in the interviews, making them the predominant findings that surfaced during the analysis. This combined with the findings presented in the literature review and the following framing analysis, which examines the depiction of the current situation in Iceland by media, presents and analyses how the situation is presented and viewed by media and tourism professionals, as well as the contrast between those two perspectives.

5.1.2 Volcanic Eruptions

THEMES	SUBTHEMES	CODES
VOLCANIC ERUPTIONS	EFFECT ON TOURISM	Visitor numbers Volcano enthusiasts
	COMMUNICATION BETWEEN STAKEHOLDERS	Importance of communication during crisis Lack thereof
	ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	Marketing Tourist safety

When discussing the recent volcanic eruptions, a recurring topic was the matter of whether the eruptions would cause an increase or decrease in visitor numbers. Opinions on this topic varied throughout the interviews with the representative from Visit Reykjanes stating that they saw an increase in the years of 2021, 2022, and 2023 due to the eruptions (Appendix 5). Respondents from the survey also stated that they had visited in 2021 for the specific reason of seeing a volcanic eruption (Appendix 8). Research shows that people are drawn to sites of natural disasters in order to feel the emotions and suffering of the location (2.2.5 Natural Disasters) This research supports the idea that people will want to visit the site of the Reykjanes Peninsula eruptions and Iceland in general to experience the volcanic landscape (2.2.6 Volcano tourism) However, interviewee 2 stated that there had been a severe drop in new bookings due to the eruptions, clarifying that the accommodation numbers showcase that there are a lower number of bookings compared to 2023, it was mentioned that several different factors play into the numbers of tourists such as inflation, pricing, and competition from other similar destinations as Norway and Finland (Appendix 2). This was supported by interviewee 1 stating the following *"There are reports of slower bookings for the summer and many people sort of cancelled the bookings during the last month. The travel agencies they are experiencing decrease."* (Appendix 1). A change of plans was also evident in the survey answers, with respondents showing worry that the volcanic eruption could affect air traffic, as it did during the Eyjafjallajökull eruption in 2010. (2.2.2 Iceland). This is showcased in the following quote *"Don't want to get stuck if air travel is disrupted"*

(Appendix 8). On the topic of whether the volcanic eruptions will influence visitor numbers, interviewee 3 stated the *following:*

> *"So, if we have an eruption in the near future that, you know, lasts a little bit longer than the two days or so than the last few ones have been then certainly we can expect an increase in tourism in that sector people coming because it's a spectacle and it's in this region on the Reykjanes Peninsula it's very easily accessible for most people."* (Appendix 3).

This quote shows an opinion that people want to see the eruptions and that the more "tourist friendly" eruptions will draw visitors in, but if the eruptions continue being short-lived people will not travel to see them. This is supported by comments made by answers given in the survey, with one respondent stating, *"Planning to travel when another eruption is accessible to tourists."* (Appendix 8) Furthermore, this is supported by a statement from interviewee 2 who said: *"During the eruptions of the last three years, we have had considerable interest from tourists to go watch the eruptions to see them, to fly over them, to the extent of tour companies canceling other tours and moving their operations over to the lava areas."* (Appendix 2). This statement showcases the fact that tour operators and tourism companies have seen an increase in the interest in seeing and experiencing the volcanic eruptions firsthand so much so that the companies have felt a need to rearrange their tours accordingly. Respondents from the online interviews were also of a similar opinion, with several of them stating that the previous eruptions have created an increase in bookings and people wanting to travel to Iceland. Online interviewee, Semina, stated the following *"The initial volcanic eruptions occurred in uninhabited mountainous areas, turning into a tourist attraction that drew a considerable increase in visitors."* (Appendix 8) showing that she also experienced an increase in demand following the eruptions of the past years. Furthermore, she has seen that the current eruption does not have negative effects, as several hotels are fully booked for the coming season (Appendix 8).

The current situation with the eruption happening so close to the town of Grindavík and causing severe issues for the inhabitants and companies of the town is new to the tourism organizations. Interviewee 1 stated the following *"We have had a few small eruptions that have been kind of what we call tourist eruptions, so accessible and limited*

69

in that sense that they're small and they are, you know, at one particular place and that was really, really popular site and what was interesting." (Appendix 1) underlining that the previous eruptions were in more remote locations that tourists and people interested in volcanoes could approach safely while the current eruptions are more unpredictable. This point was also made by representatives from Visit South Iceland in the following quote *"We don't know how it's going to evolve in the next couple of months. But you know, if it moves again to the area that it was erupting a few years ago in the Fagradals area we have like more like tourist volcanoes."* (Appendix 4).

As with the discussions of media portrayal, the authorities' response was also a factor in the conversations about the volcanic eruptions. Several interviewees stated the importance of keeping the tourism stakeholders in mind when making decisions about the current eruptions, as it will also affect them in a big way. This point is underlined by the following quote *"We have tourism and that they and tourism is a stakeholder or stake maker in these situations And so they also have to negotiate and inform tourism businesses about the situation"* (Appendix 1). This quote also highlights the importance of clear communication between all stakeholders to ensure that everyone is informed and can inform people in the same way. This opinion is shared by Yulia, who participated in the online interviews, she states the following *"I believe it could affect the tourism demand in a bad way and that is why proactive communication with the stakeholders is extremely important. Communication should be provided both from the official institutions and from the market players."* (Appendix 8). This quote showcases a belief that if the situation is not communicated properly, it can affect tourism in a very negative manner. Additionally, interviewee 5 made a point about the authorities having to keep tourism in mind as well *"It is easier for the police to close this road here than further back into the Highlands. But that is not a good enough reason to close as it may have an effect on our locations like where people want to go. You know if there's no danger in that area you should not be closing it"* (Appendix 5). The previous quote showcases the need for tourism businesses and the authorities to work together and communicate clearly to both keep people safe and maintain tourism aspects that can remain open. As previously mentioned in section 2.3, crises can be divided based on duration and nature. In the case of the Reykjanes eruptions, the crisis can be identified as a latent natural crisis as the

crisis is not manmade but rather caused by natural forces. Furthermore, the volcanic eruptions are still taking place and evacuations are still in effect at the time of writing therefore the crisis can be classified as latent. Additionally, tourism has been found to be specifically vulnerable to various crises and therefore crisis management is highly important for tourism destinations in order to maintain their positive image and prospective visitors' interest. This is also supported by information disclosed in a previous section of this thesis (2.3.2 Crisis Management in Tourism).

Another consideration about the volcanic eruptions was how much it can be used for tourism and marketing purposes, seeing as it has been a life-changing experience for the inhabitants of Grindavík. Answers from the survey showcased that many respondents are more concerned about the inhabitants of Grindavík, rather than their own travel plans the following quote showcases an opinion voiced by several respondents *"It is unique and fascinating, but I worry about the locals and damage to their lives although I realize it is isolated"* (Appendix 8). Seeing as dark tourism and disaster tourism are very popular types of tourism, it begs the question of how much companies can ethically market the eruptions (2.2.5 Natural Disasters). The representatives from Visit South Iceland were adamant about not using the volcanic eruptions to draw in people interested in dark tourism. Their focus was rather on showcasing Iceland's history with volcanoes in an informative way, rather than using the negative aspect.

> *"A really important message in this is that we are not using disasters, or at least not danger or fear to boost tourism, you know, and we've divided this volcanic way into eight parts. And in each of these, there is a volcanic experience like an exhibition or a museum. Disaster tourism is I don't think it's a word that we would want to use."* (Appendix 4)

Rather than using the destructive aspect of volcanoes in their marketing, they have focused on the historical and natural aspects to show that *"volcanoes have shaped everything around us"* and *"look how we live in harmony with nature"* (Appendix 4). However, other interviewees were aware of the fact that people all around the world are very interested in experiencing places where disaster and dark events have taken place, so in the future, we might see *"companies leaning into the fact that there's a lot of people in the world who are interested in these kinds of events"* (Appendix 2).

71

To summarize, the interviewees discussed whether the recent volcanic eruptions have led to an increase or decrease in visitor numbers to Iceland. While some argued that the number of visitors has risen, others highlighted a drop in new bookings due to facts like inflation and competition from other similar destinations. Additionally, a need for clear communication between various stakeholders was underscored as highly necessary, with interviewees highlighting the importance of informing and invoking tourist businesses in the decision-making processes. Finally, reflections were discussed about the ethical considerations of marketing volcanic events for tourism purposes while inhabitants have been evacuated.

5.1.3 Higher Activity of Northern Lights

THEMES	SUBTHEMES	CODES
HIGHER ACTIVITY OF NOTHERN LIGHTS	OPPORTUNITY	Attracting visitors for the winter season Dispersion of visitors
	MARKETING CHALLENGE	Weather Unpredictability Visitors' Disappointment Other Locations
	DEMAND	Motivation
	AWARENESS	Lack thereof

The anticipation surrounding an increase in activity in the Northern Lights for 2024 has sparked varied responses among industry professionals and potential visitors in Iceland. While some remain unaware of these scientific predictions, others express cautious optimism or skepticism regarding the potential impact on tourism demand. This difference in viewpoints highlights how difficult it is to use natural phenomena like the Aurora Borealis to promote travel. Additionally, considerations regarding market competition, weather unpredictability, and managing visitor expectations emerge as significant factors shaping strategic decisions within the Icelandic tourism sector.

When asked about the scientific predictions made for the year 2024 regarding higher activity of Northern Lights, one out of five interviewees responded that they were not aware at all (Appendix 5). The representatives from destination management offices of

South Iceland, while they were aware, were however not planning on any action at that point in time (Appendix 4). Interviewee 3 admitted that he only heard about this very recently and he thinks that *"the news hasn't gotten out"* (Appendix 3). The remaining two interviewees (Appendix 1 and 2) stated that while they do expect a slight increase in demand due to the higher activity it will not be a significant increase. Interviewee 2 elaborates *"We're at least not seeing an increase now in the winter months. But Iceland is more of a summer destination, midnight sun, so it remains to be seen if it will cause a significant uptick in the fall."* (Appendix 2). The following section describes how the higher activity of Aurora Borealis could be seen as an opportunity, why the interviewees think that there has not been much marketing done, and their thoughts about tourism demand regarding the Northern Lights. The online interviewees (Appendix 8) were similarly divided in opinions regarding this issue as one had not heard of these scientific predictions prior to the interviews, one does not think that it will have any effect on visitor demand, one, while unsure about the impact on demand, stated that "*it will definitely cause increased interest.* " and one saying that his respected company has already received *"requests that refer to this "fact"*(Appendix 8).

Interviewee 1 stated that over the last decade, the Northern Lights tourism in Iceland developed significantly and that *"We have very different products available and that tells me there's an opportunity there"* (Appendix 1). This opportunity could be the further development of glamping sites and diverse tours for Northern Lights viewing. To elaborate on the glamping opportunity, it combines the closeness of nature with comfort and even luxury of the accommodation. This housing option could motivate tourists to stay longer in Iceland, especially in the more rural areas outside of cities. This could lead to a dispersion of queues and crowds from the most popular locations as well as provide accommodation meant primarily for tourists and as such decrease the housing problem. Additionally, glamping as the name already suggests is glamourous and, while there are more affordable glamping options, more often this accommodation is of the higher cost (Glamping Holiday n.d.); (Sigurðardóttir 2023); (Volcano trails n.d.). In essence, the visitors who would opt for this kind of lodging prioritize traveling and are happy to spend money on it (Excelite Domes 2022), often having disposable income (CRR Hospitality 2024). This could also result in the visitors spending money in the surrounding rural areas

and as such boost the local economy. The Northern Lights as part of the dark sky and Astro tourism need only one resource, the night sky, and favorable weather conditions. According to Rodrigues, Rodrigues, and Peroff (2015), rural areas can benefit greatly by utilizing the night sky as a resource and tool for sustainable development. It is safe to say that seeing the Aurora Borealis is one of the main reasons people come to Iceland. However, Davíð explains (Appendix 4) why his company and perhaps other tourism businesses in Iceland are not in a rush to market the higher frequency and chance of seeing this dark sky phenomenon: *"I think also that some people might be a bit of afraid to go into a heavy marketing of Iceland being the perfect location for clear skies as the weather can be really unpredictable."* and his colleague Vala elaborates *"we really don't want people to come here only for the Northern Lights, because then we're just setting people up for disappointment."* (Appendix 4). This sentiment is echoed by one of the online interviewees, Sæmundur when asked about whether the higher Northern Lights activity might result in higher demand he said:

"One thing that our company has put emphasis on is expectation management when it comes to the Northern Lights as it's hard to build a full tour around a natural phenomenon like the lights that needs so many factors to align to be even visible. It's maybe just a few nights per month that you have the correct conditions, clear skies, a small moon, high solar activity, and low light pollution. Out of these, only the light pollution part is adjustable, the others are totally out of our control, which makes it often a hard sell." (Appendix 8).

Furthermore, Davíð from Visit South Iceland states that the summer season with twenty-four-hour daylight is for three months and as such not suitable for seeing the aurora and that *"we only get the off seasons to use the dark clear sky but those are also the recent seasons with the most unpredictable weather."* (Appendix 4). He sums up with the quote *"So I think it's like a challenge that that we haven't started maybe to deal with exactly"* (Appendix 4).

Respondents from the survey (Appendix 7) agree with Davíð as 65,7 percent of people responded that the higher possibility of seeing the Northern Lights does not change their plans and eighteen responders elaborated that they are visiting in the summer months while fifteen responders mentioned the weather unpredictability. Therefore, the

74

professionals in Iceland are hesitant to market the Northern Lights in order not to create unrealistic expectations and then have many visitors returning home disappointed. As happened to some of the survey responders as well. One of them disclosed *"We chose February 2024 partly because of the Northern Lights' predictions. Unfortunately, there was no activity the one week we were there. The weeks around our trip were apparently great though."* (Appendix 7). This quote also shows that although a higher percentage of the survey's respondents do not give the scientific predictions made in 2023 regarding higher activity in the Northern Lights enough importance to change their travel plans, it has already influenced some visitors' decisions. This supports what Collison and Poe (2013) mentioned, that having the sky as a resource can motivate more visits. Some of the other survey participants (Appendix 7) mentioned that the higher activity is either fully or partially behind why they are coming to see Iceland this year or that the increased probability of experiencing this phenomenon influenced booking their trip during certain months or at the very least piqued their interest.

> *"That's why we made a quick trip in Feb 2024."* (Appendix 7)
>
> *"This is part of why I booked my 2024 trip."* (Appendix 7)
>
> *"We chose to go the first half of April to hopefully see the lights."* (Appendix 7)
>
> *"I have become more interested in coming because of these events."* (Appendix 7)

To continue why extra marketing of Iceland as a Northern Light location might be worth thinking through is the competition. There are several other destinations, for example, Finland, and Norway, that can offer Aurora viewings with better weather conditions and as such with higher frequency and higher chance to experience the Northern Lights (Appendix 7). In the survey, several respondents stated that they would go to locations like these to see the Northern Lights and prefer to go to Iceland for other reasons (Appendix 7). On the other hand, Interviewee 2 mentioned that the Asian market is very keen on seeing the Northern Lights *"The Northern Lights are very popular with the Asian market .... and the Asian market has been a very good market here for out of high season in in in February, March, October, November. So that could affect the market in the fall."* (Appendix 2). Furthermore**,** three out of the six online interviewees (Appendix 8) believe

that this is a great opportunity to attract more people to Iceland during the slower winter season.

> *"I think Iceland should take advantage of this argument. It can help to get more tourists during the winter months, which will perhaps reduce the pressure on the summer season and create a more balanced picture of the congestion. "OI*6 – Yulia (Appendix 8)

> *"Tourism tends to slow down during the winter months. Therefore, having more tourists throughout the year could be beneficial for those who rely on tourism for their livelihoods."* OI5 – Semina (Appendix 8)

> *"Given that Iceland tends to be quite fully booked during the summer, an increase in Northern Lights activity could attract more visitors during the off seasons, which would be beneficial. "OI*1 – Maria (Appendix 8)

To summarize, discussions about the anticipated surge of Northern Lights activity in Iceland in 2024 reveal a spectrum of viewpoints among stakeholders. While the Northern Lights are a very important and popular part of the winter season in Iceland, due to unpredictable and often unfavorable weather conditions it is not recommended by tour operators and other tourism professionals to only come to Iceland to see the Aurora Borealis as this may result in disappointment and a worse experience for the visitors. There are other locations with more stable weather conditions and as such more suitable for people only wanting to see the Northern Lights. This is also the reason why Icelandic professionals hesitate to excessively market Northern Lights and rather focus on other wonders that Iceland has to offer such as the ice caves, volcanoes, waterfalls, culture, and others. In other words, while some tourism industry professionals see opportunities for further tourism development, including the expansion of glamping facilities and tailored experiences, others adopt a more cautious approach, citing challenges such as weather unpredictability and managing visitor expectations.

5.1.4 Sustainability

THEMES	SUBTHEMES	CODES
SUSTAINABILITY	OVERTOURISM	Media Coverage Perception of Tourism Professionals in Iceland
	STRATEGIES	Regulations Cruise tourism Disperse number of tourists Tours
	COLLABORATION	Locals Authorities Tourism Industry

The sustainability of nature-based tourism in Iceland stands as a crucial concern given the nation's rapidly increasing tourist numbers, driven primarily by its breathtaking natural wonders. With iconic attractions like glaciers, volcanoes, and hot springs drawing increasing crowds, concerns and questions arise about the long-term viability of these sites and the capacity of Iceland's infrastructure to support sustainable tourism practices. As the tourism industry plays a pivotal role in Iceland's economy, the need to address issues such as overcrowding, strain on local resources, and housing shortages becomes imperative.

The interview participants were asked about the long-term sustainability of nature-based tourism in Iceland. To elaborate, as is already mentioned prior in this project, Iceland's main attraction and appeal is nature. Whether it is volcanoes, ice caves, waterfalls, or lagoons, all of these sites are naturally made. While Iceland is very conscious and successful in building pathways, viewpoints, and other infrastructure both for visitors' safety and for the site's preservation, the reality remains that the continued use, and in some cases, overuse of these sites leads to their gradual degradation, one visitor at a time. This situation is highlighted by the rapid and drastic growth of visitor numbers (Icelandic Tourist Board Numbers of Foreign Visitors to Iceland n.d.); (UNWTO n.d.). *"Indeed, the influx of tourists to Iceland's natural wonders such as glaciers, volcanoes, hot springs, geysers, and caves is steadily rising, posing significant challenges to their preservation. "*– OI 1 María (Appendix 8)

In connection to this issue is also the high number of visitors in Iceland each year, stretching the island's accommodation, restaurant, transportation, and other infrastructure resources thin. While the tourism industry is a significant contributor to Iceland's economy (Nordic Council n.d.), a lack of facilities, infrastructure, and policies is resulting in issues such as a housing shortage which is further adversely affecting local residents and shaping their opinions and perceptions of tourists (Sæþórsdóttir, Hall, and Wendt 2020b). It is imperative to address these matters now, particularly since the surge in tourism demand following the COVID-19 pandemic is still in effect.

Firstly, all the interviewees did not appreciate when we asked about overtourism in Iceland. They were adamant about not using this term and explained that it is very inaccurate (Appendix 1 – 5). *"We try to steer away from the word overtourism."* (Appendix 4); *"I actually would not call it overtourism"* (Appendix 5). Describing, Iceland as a destination struggling with overtourism is *"very far from being accurate because Iceland as a whole is, it's a big Island and we have very little tourism in many places"* (Appendix 1). As they see it as a question of "time and place" (Appendix 2), they say that yes there are queues or crowds at some attractions during some times of the day during certain days and months. *"There is an overcrowding issue at certain places, at certain times, and certain destinations. "(*Appendix 2). *"We have situations of overtourism at some point in time, especially during the summertime and some of the villages and towns around the country because of cruise ship tourism."* (Appendix 1). But seeing as Iceland is a whole island and to compare it to cities like Barcelona or Venice regarding overtourism is highly incorrect, as interviewee 2 explains: *"Iceland has been put in the same context as Barcelona, Venice, these large cities of millions that get millions of tourists at very small spots in within the cities we have a very different situation. So, the distribution of tourists around the country is, let's say, a lot wider than many of those cities that we've been compared with."* (Appendix 2). This misuse of the term overtourism while describing the situation in Iceland has been addressed by some authors (Sæþórsdóttir, Hall, and Wendt 2020b), and their findings echo the statements of our interviewees. In essence, Sæþórsdóttir, Hall, and Wendt (2020b) highlight in their findings that the media portrayed Iceland as experiencing an overtourism issue, drawing conclusions about the whole island based on select examples. Nevertheless, this picture of overtourism ignored the

geographical and temporal aspects of the queues and crowds, thereby presenting only a portion of the issue (Sæþórsdóttir, Hall, and Wendt 2020b). In other words, there are crowds and queues at certain locations during certain times and certain days, but this does not mean the whole island is overcrowded or facing overtourism. Even now there are articles claiming that there is overtourism in Iceland and group Iceland with Barcelona and Venice. This will be explained further in a later section of this chapter.

 The interviewees discussed the current issues with crowds, mass tourism, and queues (Appendix 1-5). Interviewees 3 and 4 elaborate, *"We don't have overtourism in the sense that the whole country is crowded but during the high season the most popular sites are definitely too crowded and show signs of strain, for example on days when we have cruise ships in port in Reykjavík"* (Appendix 3); *"We don't see overtourism in Iceland currently. There is however mass tourism, mainly coming from cruise ships in day tours towards through the Golden Circle area, creating spikes in visitor numbers."* (Appendix 4). The common example provided in the interviews for having crowds at certain attractions during certain times of the year is cruise tourism *"We have for example the ships in a harbor, cruise ships, you can have a huge spike in attendance in certain places, especially here in the southwest."* (Appendix 2). Interviewee 3 brings to our attention several more issues that arise due to the high numbers of visitors *"But the tourism is in the maximum recently in the year 2018, 2019 and again now when we've recovered from COVID, the tourism has shown to put certain strain on the locals and the local opinion and the infrastructure and the housing markets."* (Appendix 3).

For the high season when there are crowds or when there are a lot of cruise ship tourists coming in, they implemented several strategies. Firstly, the fact that locals, both civilians and tourism professionals, are more aware of the negative impacts of unsustainable tourism and high demand. Interviewee 1 describes the Icelandic tourism situation as such *"I think we are in a better situation because people are more conscious about the possible negative impacts of tourism." …" More stakeholders are more conscious about both the positive sides of tourism but also the negative sides and more conscious that it has to be managed."* (Appendix 1). Interviewee 2 adds *"I think there's also a better understanding in general in society, politics, and within the industry on what sustainable tourism means that we are looking at economic, environmental, and social factors that*

need to be in some kind of harmony." (Appendix 2). This awareness and knowledge base of the sustainability issues among local civilians, business owners, and authorities are seen by the interviewees as a significant benefit and as a stepping-stone to transferring Icelandic tourism into sustainable and regenerative tourism. Secondly, they manage the destinations by directing the crowds. For instance, new attractions have been introduced to disperse the number of visitors (Appendix 2) or *"in the example of the Golden Circle, driving half of the buses clockwise and half of the buses counterclockwise."* (Appendix 2). In the online interviews (Appendix 8) more strategies for crowd management were mentioned. María (Appendix 8) talked about the measures cruise tourism takes in Iceland at the moment to disperse visitors to alleviate the strain on popular sites as well as to distribute the tourist traffic more evenly across various attractions by doing so mitigates overcrowding.

> *"Various routes for tours are being established to distribute guests more evenly across different sites." "We're diversifying tour routes beyond the traditional Golden Circle."* (Appendix 8)

> *"With tighter control over guest movements and destinations visited, cruise tourism indeed offers a structured approach to managing visitor flow."* (Appendix 8)

Second online interviewee Óðinn shares his opinion regarding cruise tourism and states, *"I would argue that cruises in fact help in distributing tourists around the country by doing circumnavigations"* and goes on to elaborate *"cruises are singlehandedly responsible for keeping many towns in the coasts alive and employment up."* (Appendix 8). This aligns with the findings by Fridriksson, Wise, and Scott (2020) and James, Olsen, and Karlsdóttir (2020) regarding the economic reliance and dependency that some small Icelandic towns on cruise ships, due to their remote locations and lack of accessibility via car. Both Maria and Óðinn (Appendix 8) share that visitors coming by cruise are doing so with reputable DMCs that source local guides, coaches, and services as well as keep the tourists managed during their stay. On the other hand, there are the independent travelers that unlike guided tourism tend to lack direct guidance on sustainable practices and responsible site visitations. They frequently opt to rent a car, and while that offers

80

them more autonomy it also presents challenges in terms of increased emissions and traffic queues.

> *"Which is better for traffic, roads, and parking, 1 coach for 50 pax or 25 cars for 2 pax?"* - OI 2 Óðinn (Appendix 8)

The fourth online interviewee Sæmundur states that cruise tourism is especially crucial for small tourism businesses in the more rural areas of Iceland *"There is no part of tourism that better distributes people around Iceland to ports and places that are underused by tourists. Around 90 percent of cruise ship passengers visit all regions of Iceland while around 75 percent of plane passengers only visit the Southwest. This means that Cruise passengers are incredibly important for small and medium-sized tourism companies in the countryside and are the most important part of building up travel services in smaller places near ports."* (Appendix 8). Once more this is consistent with the results of the papers by Fridriksson, Wise, and Scott (2020) and James, Olsen, and Karlsdóttir (2020), presented in the literature review.

While María, Óðinn, and Sæmundur see benefits in cruise tourism, third and fifth interviewees Ryan and Semina have a different point of view. *"I am not a fan of cruise tourism as it is the definition of mass tourism. Or rather, it at least puts a huge strain on local resources on the days that they pull into port. This gives Iceland the perception that it is overcrowded, when in fact it is merely crowded at very specific times and locations."* says Ryan (Appendix 8). Semina shares this opinion with Ryan and thinks that *"when a cruise ship arrives, it often requires dozens of buses to transport passengers around. This huge number of visitors puts a strain on the places they visit, affecting local resources and nature."* (Appendix 8). These concerns echo the ones emphasized by scholars (Jones, Hillier, and Comfort 2016); (Jordan and Vogt 2017); (Vaya, et al. 2018) regarding the need for a balance between the economic benefits and the social and environmental costs. Furthermore, three out of six online interviewees view cruise tourism as a tool to fight overcrowding and to disperse the number of visitors while promoting remote areas and providing economic benefits, particularly to those remote and not easily accessible towns. This does not align with the scholars' consensus from the literature review, as their findings suggest that the economic benefits cruise tourism brings are quite limited (Torbianelli 2012). This is due to the all-inclusive packages that a majority of cruise

tourists have and as such there is no need for them to spend a substantial if any amount on local housing, meals, transportation, etc (Fridriksson, Wise, and Scott 2020). In other words, even though cruise tourism might provide economic advantages, the social disruptions caused by the abrupt influx of visitors as well as the pollution, overcrowding, resource depletion, and other harmful impacts on the environment, might outweigh the comparatively modest economic benefits.

Moreover, there is a consensus that for a successful sustainable tourism industry there needs to be a collaboration between visitors, tourism businesses, and the authorities (Appendix 1-5). Some suggest that sustainable issues should be solved by regulations, better management and preparedness, control, and research. *"Investment in infrastructure first of all and better management over tourism is definitely a problem, I would say."* ... *"We need to monitor the situation. We need to do research on carrying capacity. We need to do research, follow up on the social impacts of tourism."* interviewee 1 shares his opinion (Appendix 1). Interviewee 4 adds *"I'd say absolutely it's a necessity for the community and also for the tourism industry to have a good balance there and that does not happen without the help of state and regulations."* (Appendix 4). Interviewee 3 sums this matter up with *"the government needs to maybe then improve their handling of the matters as well because not only does tourism need to do a better job maybe but also the government in supplying the framework."* (Appendix 3). This lack of policies and government management has also echoed in the findings from the online interviews.

> "The biggest problem has been the government lagging behind the rapid changes in this sector and politics have been turbulent for the last decade with matters coming up that have taken precedent over tackling this issue." ... "Some locations definitely need better management of receiving tourists and that is largely due to lack of policy in Iceland of management of these sites. "– OI 2 Óðinn (Appendix 8)

This is especially highlighted due to the fact that the lack of infrastructure and preparedness between 2010 and 2015, when there was a significant increase in tourist arrivals, caused numerous problems between locals and tourists (Appendix 1). When talking about this time, Interviewee 1 mentions *"We had big troubles in many of the main sites of tourism…. We were not prepared, there was a lack of infrastructure at these sites.*

There were not very good regulations around what was possible and who should be responsible for what. ". He elaborates that this situation is not happening in such measure today due to investments in infrastructure and better management (Appendix 1). Additionally, online interviewee number 4 Sæmundur stated that even now *"Tourism in Iceland is growing really quickly, but the country hasn't had enough time to develop the necessary facilities to keep up. There aren't enough hotels, restaurants, roads, or even renewable energy options for transportation."* (Appendix 8). These issues are not surprising as research shows that island locations often face challenges such as balancing demand and supply, with limited resources (Baldicchino 2006), particularly in extreme and delicate natural environments of Iceland (Jóhannesson, Huijbens a Sharpley 2010).

However, during interview 4 an interesting point was brought up by Vala *"Our natural attractions, our waterfalls, our nature in general is the biggest attraction and we have to keep developing infrastructure around so that it can be sustainable, and that tourism won't destroy these pearls."*, she further elaborates *"because of tourism we've been able to justify creating nice paths and keeping these places clean and protected. So, in that way, tourism has been a good thing for the environment in the South."* (Appendix 4).

To summarize, in navigating the challenges posed by escalating visitor numbers, Icelandic tourism stakeholders reject the term "overtourism" as an oversimplification of the situation. Terms such as crowding, mass tourism, and demand fluctuations are more suitable as they describe and do not simplify this issue. Even though there is no overtourism, high numbers of visitors create issues with housing and public opinion and put strain on the natural attractions. While they acknowledge problems like overcrowding overall, interviewees highlight the complex nature of Iceland's tourism scene, attributing difficulties to particular periods, places, and events rather than general overcrowding. The implementation of regulations to ensure sustainable practices, diversification of tour routes, and cruise tourism are some strategies for controlling the flow of visitors. However, concerns persist regarding the government's role in policy development and infrastructure investment to support the sustainable growth of Iceland's tourism industry. Despite these challenges, stakeholders recognize the positive impact of tourism on environmental conservation efforts, highlighting the need for continued

investment in infrastructure to protect Iceland's natural heritage while fostering responsible tourism practices.

5.1.5 Media

THEMES	SUBTHEMES	CODES
MEDIA	PORTRAYALS OF TOURISM IN ICELAND	Media Sensationalism Click Bait Incorrect information Unnecessary Panic Confusion among Tourists
	UNCHECKED INFLUENCE	Lack of accountability

During the interviews, the topic of how the media portrays Iceland came up quite frequently, both in connection with the topic of overtourism and when discussing how the media has portrayed the recent volcanic eruptions in the Reykjanes Peninsula.

Firstly, regarding the idea that there is an issue of overtourism in Iceland all interview subjects agreed that Iceland does not suffer from overtourism, but rather overcrowding in certain places at certain times (Appendix 1-5). However, international media has portrayed Iceland as a destination that very much struggles with overtourism (2.2.4 Overtourism), and this was discussed in the interviews for this thesis, for example, Interviewee 1 stated the following *"For instance, in 2017 and 18, Iceland was often portrayed as a victim of overtourism"* (Appendix 1). When discussing the idea of overtourism, interviewee 5 said the following *"But that's also just interesting. You know, where does it come from? Who's talking about overtourism? I mean it's also how it's translated. Maybe like I talked about, about the cruise industry. Like someone says this and then another one just kind of grabs it and says you know this"* (Appendix 5) questioning where the idea of overtourism came from and how it is spread. This quote shows that the interviewee has the opinion that the discourse about overtourism in Iceland can potentially have been created by errors in translations and how the translations are then understood. Furthermore, interviewee 2 underlined the danger of the misinformation by stating *"When it comes to overtourism, I think everyone can be badly hit because that's a reputation issue for the whole country and the tourism sector as a whole."* (Appendix 2). Additionally, the interviewee underlined that a reputation of

overtourism and connected issues could be especially detrimental to Iceland as it is a nature destination often chosen for its serenity and quietness (Appendix 2).

The previous quote also underlines an issue brought up in other interviews, the power that media holds without much accountability. *"I mean people can say whatever they like and when we have influencers in social media there's no responsibility and its interest is mainly getting views and likes. That's where things can get out of hand. So, if we were able to get some sort of responsibility thought towards those individuals, that would be really useful, really helpful."* (Appendix 4). This quote underlines the point that media can take something and change it to fit their narrative and that it can be very detrimental to the image of a country. Furthermore, the interviewee expresses a desire for greater accountability among the media, particularly social media influencers, suggesting that if they were held to a higher standard for the content they share, it could help mitigate the spread of misinformation and protect the reputation of the destination. As introduced in the literature review, the media has a highly important role in promoting and communicating about tourism destinations, seeing as people rely heavily on media when making decisions about their travels (2.1.1 The role of media in Tourism). This is supported by the previous quote, as the media holds very much responsibility when it comes to tourist destinations.

In connection with the volcanic eruptions in the Reykjanes Peninsula, the media was also mentioned as having exaggerated the situation, both nationally and internationally *"The Icelandic media, they kind of wrote the news and then the foreign media tried to translate it or got some English news from them, and it was even dramatic from the Icelandic media. So, I think everyone that has the power to convey a message so easily, has also the responsibility to have to have it as truthful as can be."* (Appendix 4) This quote from the representatives from Visit South Iceland showcases the opinion that media depictions surrounding the volcanic eruptions have been very sensationalized and can be connected to the previous statement of media needing to be more responsible in their ways of discussing matters like this. As explored in the literature review, media sometimes employ sensationalist language in order to draw attention and readers to their articles (2.1.4 Sensationalism and Click Baiting). Furthermore, it was stated that the misinformation spread by the media has, in connection to tourism, been more

detrimental than the volcanic eruptions themselves *"But the headlines in November were just like Iceland in a state of emergency like we were just all going to die. So, the headlines were crazy and like click baits everywhere and the bookings and the requests, they just went down"* (Appendix 5), *"Yeah, when all this started in November, we had problems with the news outlets in international news coverage because it was only earthquakes, no one knew where the eruptions would be, so there was a lot of uncertainty."* (Appendix 2). This opinion was supported by an interviewee that participated in the online interviews, Ryan, who stated the following *"the media has portrayed it as a disaster which is scaring people off. This has had an effect on the physical number of people wanting to travel and the general interest in the country has dropped a lot, hence the reduced numbers this year."* (Appendix 8). This demonstrates that many tourism actors believe that the media mishandled the situation. Furthermore, the mention of click-bait is highly relevant in this context, as introduced in the literature review, click-baiting has become very apparent in various media. Due to the fact that the news landscape has evolved to be very competitive, and readers spend less time reading the news the media has to ensure that the content is easily understandable (2.1.4 Sensationalism and Click Baiting).

Following the topic of this misinformation, it was stated in the interviews that one of the most important jobs currently was to counteract the idea spread by media that Iceland is unsafe to visit:

> *"I think the most important thing for Icelandic tourism companies for the past couple of weeks and months has been trying to educate people on like what is really happening because we got this like wave of media that kind of was maybe a bit overdramatic."* (Appendix 4)

> *"So, the main thing that has been to try to get the message across, especially to foreign countries, that it is safe to visit Iceland and it is safe to travel in Iceland as well."* (Appendix 4).

> *"It might not be very visible, but we are just kind of putting messages out there that we want you to use, and we want everybody to like be humming the same lyrics in a way so that's our main focus of it."* (Appendix 5).

86

Representatives from the destination management offices of South Iceland and Reykjanes underlined that their primary focus in recent months has been to educate people about the real situation in Iceland to counteract the exaggerated or overdramatic media portrayals to provide reassurance that Iceland is safe to visit and travel within. This includes creating consistency in the communication by having everyone *"humming the same lyrics"* as the unified approach will help to strengthen the credibility of their communication.

When discussing how best to communicate about this, it was mentioned that creating messages in the right way has been difficult and that has taken a lot of effort *"But a lot of effort has been going into kind of translating messages from the government or the civil department or the police commissioner into a manner that the tourists might understand. It's we're also just, it's almost like we're translating Icelandic into Icelandic because it's just a different way of explaining things"* (Appendix 5) This quote showcases that what is taking place currently is a new situation for everyone and that the management is using much energy to learn how to communicate about this in a way that will inform without frightening and deterring people from visiting. Especially the fact that the eruptions have been very localized to one area of Iceland and that most of the country is still completely safe to visit (Appendix 4 & 5).

Finally, a need for better communication planning for when these things happen was underlined in the interviews. The representatives from Visit South Iceland stated the following *"I think we or authorities or visit Iceland could have, it would have been nice if they had had a plan, you know a media plan in case of such an event to enlighten people earlier because that that's what we're dealing with it the information came too late so."* (Appendix 4) expressing a desire for a pre-established media plan that could have been set in effect promptly when the eruptions started. The quote highlights the viewpoint that if there had been a coherent media plan from the beginning it could have helped manage expectations and mitigate the negative impacts caused by the eruption. This can be supported by the theme of crisis management, which was explored previously in the thesis (2.3.2 Crisis Management in Tourism). In the section about crisis management, the authors were introduced as having stated that crisis management is highly important in tourism destinations as bad management can lead to a decrease in tourist arrivals. The

representative from Visit Reykjanes said this *"lack of communication between government and regional parties and so on. It's something that is hopefully getting better now when we have this ongoing communication through our regional offices where we are like talking out loud about these issues we have."* (Appendix 5) This quote shows a need for better communication between different stakeholders within Icelandic tourism, including the government and regional parties.

In conclusion, the interviewees discussed the high contrast between the perspectives of tourism professionals in Iceland and the media portrayal of Icelandic tourism. The interviewees unanimously agreed that Iceland does not suffer from overtourism, while the media oftentimes will exaggerate the issues which can impact visitor numbers. Especially sensationalism and lack of accountability in various media were discussed as well as underscoring the fact that unchecked sensationalism can lead to fear and uncertainty. Finally, the importance of crisis communication and collaborative messaging strategies were emphasized as important when combatting the media's representation of events such as volcanic eruptions.

5.1.6 Sub-conclusion

The interviews with tourism professionals in Iceland unveiled nuanced perspectives and various viewpoints. The stakeholders unanimously rejected the term "overtourism", as they see it as an oversimplification, they did acknowledge various challenges the tourist arrivals bring, such as strain on infrastructure and natural attractions. In connection with this, they discussed strategies such as implementing regulations, diversifying tour routes, and investing in sustainable tourism practices in order to combat some of these issues.

Moreover, the discussions regarding the projected surge of Northern Lights activity revealed different opinions, with some emphasizing the importance of proper management of visitors' expectations in connection with Northern Lights and also promoting diverse attractions beyond them. Some interviewees prioritized cautious approaches to marketing the Northern Lights due to weather unpredictability and heavy competition from similar destinations also offering Northern Lights experiences.

Furthermore, when discussing the recent volcanic eruptions, the opinions on the impact on visitor numbers were diverse, with some noting increases while others cited decreases in tour and accommodations bookings. It became apparent in the interviews that clear communication between various tourism stakeholders is seen as crucial. Additionally, the interviewees discussed the ethical concerns with marketing the site of the volcanic eruptions, as the residents have been evacuated and some have lost their homes.

5.2 Framing Analysis

The following section will outline the analysis using framing theory. The analysis will be divided into two subsections, "overtourism" and "volcanic eruptions". The subsections will then each follow the method for framing analysis outlined by Chong and Druckman (2007). Through this approach, this section aims to offer a comprehensive analysis of the framing dynamics within the study of tourism in Iceland.

5.2.1 Overtourism

During the work for this thesis, the researchers came across several articles and mentions of the concept of overtourism being a concern in Iceland. Following this, it was decided to look into the specific frames connected with this issue. According to Chong and Druckman (2007), the first step of a framing analysis is to identify an event or issue in order to relate the frames to it. In this instance, one part of the analysis will be focused on the frames surrounding the topic of overtourism in Iceland.

Following the initial step of identifying the issue, the specific attitudes about overtourism in Iceland were isolated. By looking into various books (Frey 2021; Hassan and Sharma 2021; Séraphin, Gladkikh, and Thanh 2020) and articles (Hutchinson 2016; Williams 2019; Pétursdóttir 2016), on the subject, the researchers found overtourism in Iceland as being framed highly negatively and extensively. Many articles were found to paint Iceland in a negative light due to the country being framed as suffering from overtourism in various ways.

The third step in Chong and Druckman's framing analysis is to identify the initial set of frames. In the case of this thesis, the frames to be investigated were the ones that somehow were concerned with overtourism in Iceland.

Firstly, when examining the framing of Iceland as suffering from overtourism, scientific articles and books were researched. It became clear that this framing is also present in this form of media. In the book by Azizul Hassan and Anukrati Sharma (2021), the following is stated *"Due to the unwanted consequences of overtourism, Iceland is now displaying a greater unwillingness to develop and taking new measures such as increasing prices and restricting visitors' numbers to protect their natural sites regardless of the sector's boosting the island's economy at different points in the past"* (Hassan and Sharma 2021, p. 126). The previous quote showcases the frame of overtourism in Iceland by highlighting that measures are being taken to combat the number of tourists arriving in the country. Likewise, in the book by Séraphin, Gladkikh, and Thanh (2020), Iceland is showcased as having counteracted the overtourism by marketing under-visited locations rather than the *"crowded capital Reykjavík"* (Séraphin, Gladkikh, and Thanh 2020, p. 60). Once again framing Iceland and Reykjavík as locations that are affected by overtourism. In the book by Bruno S. Frey (2021), Reykjavík is once again mentioned along with other destinations such as Amsterdam, Prague, Granada, and Alsace as examples of places affected by "cultural mass tourism" (Frey 2021, p. 16).

When looking into how the media portrays Icelandic tourism, the word "overtourism" quickly becomes very apparent. Several articles use Iceland as an example of a destination that suffers greatly from overtourism. As mentioned previously in this thesis, the website, skift.com, wrote an article in 2016 about tourism in Iceland, where they coined the term overtourism (Sheivachman 2016). This article showcases three growing pains they encountered while interviewing stakeholders in Icelandic tourism, shaky transportation infrastructure, social and economic impacts on native Icelanders, and worries about environmental preservation. This article underlines the many issues encountered by the sudden burst in tourist arrivals in Iceland.

Many articles, that frame Iceland as being affected by overtourism, were published when Iceland was first experiencing the surge in tourist arrivals. These underline the issues first encountered when people began choosing Iceland as their destination, including the article written by John Hutchinson (2016), wherein an example of people erecting signs urging tourists not to defecate in nature was used to underline the overtourism frame. This article showed the viewpoint that locals were growing irritated with the higher

number of tourists and were becoming more and more negative about welcoming people to the country (Hutchinson 2016). The issue of tourists in Iceland being inconsiderate is widespread through the media. This is also showcased in the article by Sophie Williams (2019) wherein the author discusses examples of tourists behaving poorly in Icelandic nature by driving off the roads, walking on moss, and sitting on glaciers. This example is underlined further by an example of Icelanders creating Facebook and Instagram pages where bad behavior by tourists is posted and discussed (Williams 2019). This underlines the overtourism frame by underlining the negative aspects brought by tourist arrivals. In 2016, Business Insider published a list of countries where the locals do not want more tourists traveling to the country. This article is discussed in an article by the Icelandic magazine, The Reykjavík Grapevine, as well as a statement from The Icelandic Tourist Board stating that Iceland must *"limit visitors and adjust the infrastructure in order to handle them all." (*Pétursdóttir 2016). The article by Business Insider is one of many that groups Iceland together with other destinations struggling with overtourism, such as Cinque Terre, Venice, Santorini, and more. In the article, Iceland is said to have an "enormous" tourist count, and a study by The Icelandic Tourist Board is also underlined because it concludes that Iceland should limit the number of visitors until the infrastructure is better equipped to handle it (Rossi and McMahon 2016). The highly popular journal, Condé Nast Traveler, published an article outlining the "beloved places struggling with overtourism". This article includes a list of 15 destinations that have been deemed to have issues with overtourism and Iceland is one of those destinations (Condé Nast Traveler, 2018).

As previously stated, there are several articles that group Iceland with destinations severely affected by overtourism. Articles with headlines such as *"22 destinations that were ruined by tourists over the past decade"* (Mack 2020) and an article from the Sydney Morning Herald, which ranks Iceland at number two in a list for overtourism with countries such as Croatia, Hungary, and Denmark (McLaughlin 2018) are only a few examples of this.

Aside from being compared with other countries, Iceland is also framed as an overtourism destination in articles outlining advice on how to avoid being bothered by the issue when traveling. In the article "Overtourism: Too Much of a Good Thing" by Jonathan

Tourtellot, the opening line is *"Reykjavík is not what it used to be"* (Tourtellot 2018) referencing that overtourism has changed the city in a significant way. At a later point in the article, it is outlined how travelers can avoid adding to the pressures of overtourism. Additionally, articles about the topic of overtourism will sometimes list all the destinations affected by the overtourism issue and then provide examples of alternative destinations. In an article, published in The Telegraph, various beautiful destinations are listed as having been *"ruined by tourists"* (Dickinson 2024). In this article, the example of Fjaðrárgljúfur Canyon is used to showcase the negative possible outcomes of many tourists visiting one destination at once. The article uses Fjaðrárgljúfur because it saw a significant increase in visitors following a music video made by Justin Bieber and officials saw themselves forced to close it to the public for most of the year in order to protect the site (Dickinson 2024).

Many articles make use of exaggerated headlines in order to draw readers to their articles about overtourism. An article from 2018, with the headline *"Iceland: the tourism epidemic"* highlights the issues brought on by overtourism in Iceland. The following quote displays the opinion of overtourism in Iceland presented in the article *"The road infrastructure cannot cope, hotels are saturated, the explosion of Airbnb has raised the price of housing in the capital to the detriment of city dwellers who now struggle to find affordable housing."* (Meyer 2018). Additionally, the article published in The Sydney Morning Herald uses the headline *"Iceland Tourism: How the Country Became Overrun with Tourists."* (Soo 2017) to underline the idea that Iceland struggles with overtourism.

Oftentimes, authors will use quotes from stakeholders in order to underline the overtourism frame in their articles. An example of this is present in an article from 2016 that quotes a local politician saying, *"It's like the city is not my city anymore, it's like Disneyland downtown."* (Hugh 2016). This quote supports the idea that overtourism is changing both Reykjavík and the entire country of Iceland in a negative manner.

Conclusively, the examination of academic work and media representations of overtourism in Iceland has highlighted that the idea of overtourism is a topic that is discussed in various media and in several different ways. The framing of Iceland as a destination struggling with overtourism is characterized by a mostly negative portrayal, underlining issues such as infrastructure being strained, environmental degradation, and

tension between locals and tourists. Furthermore, Iceland is oftentimes mentioned with other destinations that face challenges of overtourism, further underscoring Iceland's association with overtourism on a global scale.

5.2.2 Volcanic Eruptions

During the preparation for the work on this thesis, the researchers came across several mentions of the volcanic eruptions in the Reykjanes Peninsula in Iceland. Through examining this topic extensively, it was found that a framing analysis of this event could be informative about how the media portrays Iceland and its tourism.

Following the initial decision to focus on frames related to the volcanic eruptions, the researchers identified the specific attitudes and viewpoints about the situation in order to see how the frames in communication can possibly affect public opinion. Through a survey, which was sent out to members of social media groups focused on traveling in Iceland, the researchers gained insight into the viewpoints of the three hundred respondents. In connection with the volcanic eruptions, respondents were questioned whether they were aware of the situation and if it could affect their travel plans (Appendix 7). Many respondents displayed concern for the inhabitants of Grindavík and their future and did not wish to discuss the effect on tourism. Other respondents stated that they were highly interested in traveling to see the eruptions, however underlining that it would need to be done in a safe way. Additionally, some respondents stated that the volcanic eruptions have discouraged them from visiting Iceland, citing safety and concerns about the eruptions affecting the airspace and potentially closing the airport (Appendix 7). These findings showcase a broad spectrum of viewpoints and attitudes surrounding the volcanic eruptions, mostly focused on the safety of the locals of Grindavík.

After having identified the various viewpoints through the survey, the researchers went on to analyze how the media frames the current volcanic eruptions in the Reykjanes Peninsula. The recent volcanic eruptions have sparked significant media attention from all around the world. Through examining the various articles, the researchers identified an overly exaggerated framing of the volcanic eruptions and the subsequent consequences. The information in the articles tends to be overly sensationalized and sometimes outright incorrect. An example of a dramatic representation of the volcanic

eruption can be found in an article by The Guardian with the headline *"Iceland's Reykjanes fires may burn for decades, history suggests"* (Ravilious 2024). Ravilious continues the article by using statements such as the following *"In recent months fiery volcanic fissures have been bursting open, spilling straight lines of lava across the landscape"* and *"The fires have dampened down for now, but the rock record suggests there are more to come"* (Ravilious 2024). These quotes are meant to invoke imagery and convey a sense of worry about the situation. By using words such as "fiery" and "bursting" the tone of the article becomes dramatic and evocative. Likewise, an article from The New York Times with the headline *"Empty Roads and Spewing Lava: 4 Months into Iceland's Eruptions"* outlines the effect of the eruptions four months after they began. With statements such as *"The scene is as spectacular as it is dangerous: flowing rivers of shimmering lava and a dramatic plume of toxic gas."* (Moses 2024) the article highlights the situation in Reykjanes by also using very emotive language painting a vivid picture of the volcanic eruptions. Words like "dramatic plume", "toxic gas", and "flowing lava" are used to invoke a sense of peril and awe, with the "toxic gas" especially underlining the danger of the situation. As explored in the literature review, click-baits and sensationalized media have become more and more present in several aspects of today's media landscape with authors using headlines with dramatic and even incorrect statements in order to draw in readers (2.1.4 Sensationalism and Click Baiting).

Another example of these types of articles could be one from BBC with the headline *"Iceland violent volcanic flare-up triggers state of emergency"* (Armstrong 2024). This article uses the fact that a state of emergency was declared in order to underline the severity of the situation. Furthermore, the article highlights the possible catastrophic outcomes of the lava reaching the seawater. The article cites the Head of a department at the Norwegian Meteorological Agency, who addressed the risks posed by the lava's potential contact with the sea. These included chlorine fumes and minor explosions if the lava interacted with seawater (Armstrong 2024). It is important to note that the lava from the Reykjanes eruptions was never predicted to reach the sea and the danger was therefore unlikely and possibly exaggerated. The previous article was not the only example of articles citing the "state of emergency" in Iceland in connection with the volcanic eruptions. An article by The Guardian with the headline *"Iceland declares state*

of emergency over volcanic eruption threat" (AFP Reykjavík 2024) once again uses dramatic language to underline the possible severity of the situation.

Another aspect present in the media's framing of the volcanic eruptions was the evacuation of the Grindavík inhabitants. For example, there are several articles by The Guardian wherein that is the focal point. The article *"'This is the end': people who fled Icelandic volcano fear their town will not survive"* outlines an uncertain fate for the people of Grindavík after having to evacuate the town. By using a statement from a Grindavík local who states *"This did it. I think we lost this battle. After 29 years of having my bakery, I think this is the end. I think we are not coming back to Grindavík"* (Skopeliti 2024) the author of this article invokes a highly personal framing of this event that is meant to appeal to the readers' compassion and further the framing of the volcanic eruptions as catastrophic. Additionally, articles with headlines such as *"Houses set alight as lava from volcanic eruption reaches Icelandic town"* (Bryant 2024) and *"'This town might be over': Grindavík residents face uncertain future after volcano erupts again"* (Willsher 2024) are just two examples of articles using the evacuation and partial destruction in order to underline the framing of the volcanic eruptions as highly dangerous.

As mentioned previously, coverage of the volcanic eruptions ranged from exaggerated to completely false. An example of a mention of the volcanic eruptions that includes false information comes from a highly popular creator on the internet media YouTube, @itsryantelfer, who at the time of writing has 37.600 followers on his YouTube channel (@itsryantelfer n.d.) Telfer posted a short video to his YouTube channel on November 15th, 2023, beginning with the statement *"Iceland might not exist as a country anymore"*. He then goes on to explain that the streets have cracked and split open and that the country has suffered more than three thousand earthquakes (Telfer, 2023). This video has been seen by more than 15.000 people and has more than three hundred likes. The information in this video is clearly incorrect, as there are no indications that Iceland will stop existing due to the volcanic eruptions and the creator also portrays this event as if it is affecting the entire country rather than the reality, that it is highly localized around only the Reykjanes Peninsula. Statements like these are a very big contributor to the framing of the volcanic eruptions as catastrophic and can contribute to people choosing not to visit Iceland when considering possible destinations.

Conclusively, the examination of the media representation and public perceptions about the volcanic eruptions in the Reykjanes Peninsula has highlighted the complexity of the difference between how the media sees an event versus how the public sees it. Through a combination of survey data and an analysis of media coverage, insights into the diverse viewpoints and frames about the eruptions emerged. The analysis of the media coverage underscores how the event was framed by the media, with articles often using sensationalized language and dramatic imagery to convey the frame that the eruptions are dangerous and very serious. Exaggerated headlines using click-bait, emotive language, and personal accounts underscore the framing of the volcanic eruptions as a catastrophic event possibly influencing decision-making regarding people's travels to Iceland. Overall, the examination of the framing of the volcanic eruptions has offered valuable insights into the complexities of communicating about natural disasters and the subsequent consequences for tourism.

5.2.3 Sub-conclusion

To conclude the framing analysis, the following will outline the findings of the analysis.

The analysis of media representation and public perceptions surrounding both the volcanic eruptions in the Reykjanes Peninsula and the idea of overtourism in Iceland has underscored the connection between media framing, public opinion, and their impact on tourism.

When looking into the media coverage of the volcanic eruptions, it became clear that the communication was highly sensationalized and exaggerated, leading to a framing of the event as being very dramatic and dangerous. This framing, which was characterized by emotive language, and headlines using clickbait, has the potential to influence the general perception of Iceland and the decisions of potential visitors to Iceland.

Additionally, the analysis of the academic discourse and media representations of overtourism in Iceland revealed an overly negative portrayal of the situation. The media oftentimes highlights the issues connected with the tourists' arrivals in Iceland, such as strained infrastructure, environmental degradation, and tensions between locals and visitors, framing Iceland as a destination struggling with the effects of overtourism.

These findings highlight the importance of evaluating media representations and public discourse about these topics. Furthermore, a need for proactive communication strategies from tourism actors in Iceland has been underscored in order to foster a more balanced and informed understanding of these topics.

6.0 Discussion

In exploring the themes of this discussion chapter, the complexities of Iceland's tourism landscape come sharply into focus, particularly the contentious issue of overtourism. Through the exploration, it became evident that while overtourism is a significant topic in global tourism discourse, its applicability to Iceland causes controversy among industry professionals. Despite the media frequently portraying Iceland as a victim of overtourism, local tourism experts argue that the issue is more one of uneven tourist distribution rather than excessive visitor numbers per se. Additionally, the role of cruise tourism is often criticized for its environmental impact and perceived as a mass tourism contributor. However, some local stakeholders present an alternative view, seeing it as a tool for alleviating overcrowding and revitalizing remote areas. Furthermore, this chapter addresses Iceland's recent struggles with crisis communication during volcanic events, particularly the 2023/24 eruptions. Despite past successes, the handling of the 2023 eruptions revealed significant gaps in communication strategies, leading to a decline in tourist confidence and bookings. This chapter will discuss these topics, including various perspectives on these issues, benefits, and drawbacks as well as the need for improvement.

6.1 "Overtourism" created for Iceland

During the work to answer the problem statement, the idea of overtourism became a highly relevant topic to look into and warranted a nuanced exploration.

It became clear that the discussion of overtourism in Iceland is heavily controversial and tourism professionals adamantly denied that Iceland as a whole has ever struggled with overtourism and certainly not in the current Icelandic tourism landscape. The tourism professionals stated that there were worries of overcrowding at certain times and certain places, but that many locations in Iceland still do not see thousands of visitors and are in fact working to draw more visitors to their area. This highlights the contrast between the more unknown locations versus destinations such as Reykjavík, the Golden Circle, and the Blue Lagoon and showcases an issue of uneven distribution of tourist activities in Iceland, but not an issue of overtourism.

It is clear that Iceland as a tourist destination saw one of the fastest increases in popularity and visitor numbers when the country became internationally known for the 2010 Eyjafjallajökull eruption. Following the sudden increase in visitors, there was an adjustment period for both tourism officials and Icelandic locals, as they had to become accustomed to this new way of life. It can be argued that, during the first period of Iceland's newfound popularity as a tourism destination, they suffered from overtourism, as they were not prepared for the sudden increase in visitors, and therefore the locals suffered the consequences. However, since then, both Icelandic locals and tourism officials have learned much and have become more accustomed to the visitor numbers.

However, the term 'overtourism' continues to be used in reference to Iceland, to this day. The term, which was actually coined in 2016 to describe the situation in Iceland, is still used to compare Iceland with cities such as Barcelona and Venice, even though these cities see a higher number of visitors within a smaller area. This showcases the power of the media, as evidenced by the country's ongoing efforts to dissociate itself from a term that was linked to it nearly a decade ago. From the high number of articles and books surrounding the topic of overtourism, it is clear that it is a popular topic and not only in regard to Iceland, with many other destinations being branded as suffering from overtourism. This leads to the discussion of the power media holds, as the framing of Iceland as an overtourism destination can have detrimental consequences for the tourism sector. As mentioned in the analysis, Icelandic tourism officials want to see more accountability from the media, seeing as it can affect their work greatly.

6.2 Cruise Tourism

Cruise tourism, as demonstrated by many authors, few of which are mentioned in the Literature Review, is often perceived as a significant contributor to mass tourism and environmental degradation due to its large-scale operations, rapid growth, and environmental footprint. However, some of the online interviewees presented a different perception on this issue.

The rapid growth of the cruise industry has resulted in an increase in the number of cruise ships visiting popular destinations, such as Iceland. This increase in cruise tourism has raised concerns about overtourism, pollution, and the strain on local resources. Despite

generating revenue and employment opportunities, cruise tourism is often criticized for its limited economic benefits compared to its social and environmental costs. Passengers on cruise ships typically spend less on local businesses compared to other tourists, as their expenses are mostly covered by all-inclusive packages. Moreover, the influx of cruise tourists can strain local infrastructure, leading to issues such as traffic congestion, pollution, and pressure on natural reserves.

To conclude the academic world's findings often only see the economic benefit of cruise tourism and even this benefit is described as "modest". And emphasize the social disturbance of local lives and environmental and sustainability issues derived from cruise tourism such as pollution, mass tourism, and strain on resources. In Iceland, cruise tourism is perceived by some as a way to address and tackle overcrowding while simultaneously revitalizing and strengthening the economy of isolated and remote towns.

6.3 Iceland's Crisis Communication

Despite positive trends in international tourist numbers, there was a one percent decrease compared to 2019. This decline may be attributed to a series of volcanic eruptions that started to occur during November 2023, significantly impacting tourist arrivals and bookings for the latter months of 2023 and the first months of 2024. The November 2023 eruption near Grindavík, Iceland, had a negative impact on local residents and received sensationalized media coverage, hindering potential visitors. The media's portrayal of the eruptions as a significant threat to both residents and tourists sparked widespread concern and a drop in bookings for airlines, accommodation facilities, travel agencies, and tour operators. Regardless of statements from tourism officials and airline executives that the eruptions posed no direct threat to visitors or flights and that the eruptions are localized to the Grindavík area, media coverage contributed to a perception of Iceland as unsafe, unstable, and undesirable for travel. The inability to effectively manage the narrative and counter misinformation led to further uncertainty among travelers and a decline in bookings.

The situation demonstrated the importance of crisis communication and preparedness in managing such events. Previous eruptions, such as the Eyjafjallajökull eruption in

2010, prompted efforts to boost community resilience and improve crisis management plans. There was a response team appointed to manage crisis communication and provide tourists with updates and information. However, the response to the 2023 eruptions lacked effective communication strategies and stakeholder coordination in relation to the tourism industry. The lack of clear and consistent messaging, coupled with sensationalized media coverage, undermined the efforts of Destination Management Organizations to reassure travelers and mitigate the impact on tourism. Initiatives such as the 'Inspired by Iceland' advertising campaign were not sufficient to counteract the negative perceptions created by the eruptions.

Moving forward, it is essential for Iceland's tourism industry in collaboration with relevant Government bodies and authorities to strengthen its crisis communication capabilities and develop proactive strategies for managing volcanic events and other disasters. This includes improving coordination among government agencies, airlines, and tourism operators, as well as implementing measures to address media sensationalism and combat misinformation and reassure travelers of their safety. By learning from past experiences and investing in effective communication strategies, Iceland can better weather future volcanic crises and protect its tourism sector.

7.0 Conclusion

As this thesis draws to a close, the following chapter summarizes the key findings, offers insights into the research process, and suggests implications for theory and practice.

The media representations of tourism in Iceland starkly contrast with the perspectives of Icelandic tourism professionals, creating significant implications for the tourism industry. The interviews with local stakeholders reveal that while they unanimously reject the term "overtourism" as an oversimplification, they acknowledge the challenges posed by tourist arrivals, such as strain on infrastructure and natural attractions. They advocate for strategies like implementing regulations, diversifying tour routes, and investing in sustainable tourism practices to mitigate these issues.

The surge of Northern Lights activity also highlights differing opinions. Some professionals stress the importance of managing visitors' expectations and promoting diverse attractions beyond the Northern Lights, due to the unpredictability of weather and competition from other destinations offering similar experiences. Others see this as an opportunity to attract visitors for the winter season and the more remote areas of the island. Doing so may assist in decreasing the number of tourists coming in summer resulting in fewer crowds and queues.

Regarding recent volcanic eruptions, opinions on their impact on visitor numbers vary. Some professionals note increases in interest, while others report declines in bookings. The interviews underscore the necessity of clear communication among tourism stakeholders and ethical considerations in marketing volcanic sites, given the displacement and losses experienced by local residents.

The analysis of media representation and public perceptions reveals that media framing significantly influences public opinion and tourism. Sensationalized and exaggerated coverage of volcanic eruptions portrays them as highly dramatic and dangerous, potentially deterring visitors. Similarly, media depictions of overtourism in Iceland emphasize strained infrastructure, environmental degradation, and local visitor tensions, framing the country as struggling with excessive tourism. These findings emphasize the importance of evaluating media representations and public discourse. Icelandic tourism

actors need proactive communication strategies to foster a balanced and informed understanding of these topics. By addressing media sensationalism and providing accurate information, Iceland can better manage its tourism narrative, mitigate negative perceptions, and ensure sustainable tourism growth. Moreover, it highlights the importance of accountability in media and responsible journalism in shaping public opinion and fostering a balanced understanding of tourism-related issues.

In conclusion, this thesis highlights the stark disparity between media portrayals of the issue of overtourism and the representation of volcanic eruptions in Iceland and the perspectives of local tourism professionals, significantly impacting the industry.

8.0 Bibliography

Adams, C., and H Coffey. 2019. "Where Not to Go in 2020. Where to Leave off Your Bucket List Next Year." *The Independent*. December 30.

Ahern, J., S. Galea, H. Resnick, and D. Vlavhov. 2002. "Television images and probable post-traumatic stress disorder after September 1, 2001 terrorist attacks. ." *The Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease, 19(2)* 289-300.

Aldred, Genelle. 2021. *Communicate for Change - Creating Justice in a World of Bias*. SPCK Publishing.

Ali, R. 2018. *The genesis of overtourism: Why we came up with the term and what's happened since.* August 14. Accessed April 25, 2024. https://skift.com/2018/08/14/the-genesis-of-overtourism-why-we-came-up-with-the-term-and-whats-happened-since/.

Aljerf, L., and A. E. Choukaife. 2016. "Sustainable development in damascus university: A survey of internal stakeholder views. ." *Journal of Environmental Studies, 2(2)* 1–12.

Almannavarnir. "Aukið aðgengi í Grindavík," February 12, 2024.

https://www.almannavarnir.is/frettir/aukid-adgengi-i-grindavik/.

Andrews, Robin George. "Iceland Has Entered a New Volcanic Era." *Environment*, July 24, 2023. https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/article/iceland-eruption-fiery-volcano-earthquakes.

Aquino, R. S., H. A. Schänzel, and K. F. Hyde. 2017. "Analysing push and pull motives for volcano tourism at Mount Pinatubo Philippines." *Geoheritage, 11(1)* 177–191.

Archaeological Park Of Pompeii. n.d. *Pompeii*. Accessed May 7, 2024. https://pompeiisites.org/en/.

Armstrong, Kathryn. "Iceland Violent Volcanic Flare-up Triggers State of Emergency,"

March 16, 2024. https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-68589594.

Armstrong, E. K., and B. W. Ritchie. 2008. "The heart recovery marketing campaign-destination recovery after a major bushfire in Australia's national capital." *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, 23(2)* 175 - 189.

Aumiller, Haley Elizabeth. 2018. *The Relationship Between Tourism and the Marine Environment: A Case Study of Eyjafjördur, Iceland*. 30 ECTS Thesis, Reykjavík: Faculty of Life and Environmental Sciences, University of Iceland.

Aurora Zone. n.d. *How likely am I to see the Northern Lights?* https://www.theaurorazone.com/about-the-aurora/the-science-of-the-northern-lights/aurora-likelihood.

Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum. 2024. *MEMORIAL AND MUSEUM Auschwitz-Birkenau* . Accessed May 7, 2024. https://www.auschwitz.org/en/.

Avraham, E. 2003. *Behind Media Marginality: Coverage of Social Groups and Places in the Israeli Press.* Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.

Baldicchino, G. 2006. *Extreme Tourism: Lessons from the World's Cold Water Islands.* Oxford: Elsevier.

Baloglu,] S., and K. McCleary. 1999. " A model of destination image formation." *Annals of Tourism Reserach 25.*

Barney, Nick. 2023. *Tech target.* August. Accessed April 1, 2024. https://www.techtarget.com/whatis/definition/crisis-management.

Becken, S., and K. Hughey. 2013. "Linking tourism into emergency management structures to enhance disaster risk reduction. ." *Tourism Management, 36* 77–85.

Becken, S., C. Zammit, and J. Hendrikx. 2015. "Developing Climate Change Maps for Tourism: Essential Information or Awareness Raising? ." *Journal of Trav. Res.,* 430–441.

Becken, S., R. Mahon, H. Rennie, and A. Shakeela. 2014. "The Tourism Disaster Vulnerability Framework: An application to tourism in small island destinations." *Natural Hazards, 71(1)* 955–972.

Beerli,] A., and J.D. Martin. 2004. "Factors influencing destination image." *Annals of Tourism Research 31 (3)* 657-681.

Beirman, D. 2006. "Best education network think tank V keynote address: marketing tourism destinations from crisis to recovery." *Tourism Review International, 10* 7-16.

Beirman. 2003. *Restoring Tourism Destinations in Crisis.* Oxon: : CABI Publishing.

Bettiza, Sofia, Oliver Slow, and Marita Moloney. 2023. *BBC- Iceland volcano: Pollution warning for capital after eruption.* December 20 . Accessed April 20, 2024. https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-67756413.

Bhati, A., A. Upadhayaya, and A. Sharma. 2016. "National disaster management in the ASEAN-5: An analysis of tourism resilience." *Tourism Review, 71,* 148–164.

Bird, D. K., G. Gísladóttir, and D. Dominey-Howes. 2011. "Different communities, different perspectives: issues affecting residents' response to a volcanic eruption in southern Iceland. ." *Bull Volcanol 73* 1209–1227.

Bird, D. K., G. Gísladóttir, and D. Dominey-Howes. 2009. "Resident perception of volcanic hazards and evacuation procedures." *Nat Hazards Earth Syst Sci 9:* 251–266.

Bird, D., and G. Gísladóttir. 2012. "Residents' attitudes and behaviour before and after the 2010 Eyjafjallajökull eruptions—a case study from southern Iceland." *Bull Volcanol 74* 1263–1279.

Bird, D.K., G. Gisladottir, and D. Dominey-Howes. 2010. "Volcanic risk and tourism in southern Iceland: implications for hazard, risk and emergency response education and training." *Journal of Volcano Geothermal Research 189* 33–48.

Bird, Deanne K., Guðrún Jóhannesdóttir, Víðir Reynisson, Sigrún Karlsdóttir, Magnús T. Gudmundsson, and Guðrún Gísladóttir. 2018. "Crisis Coordination and Communication During the 2010 Eyjafjallajökull Eruption." In *Advances in Volcanology - Observing the Volcano World - Volcano Crisis Communication*, by Carina J. Fearnley, Deanne K. Bird, Katharine Haynes, William J. McGuire and Gill Jolly (Eds.), 271–288. SpringerOpen.

Birties, Katie. 2020. *Trafalgar - 9 destinations struggling with overtourism*. April 22. Accessed March 7, 2024. https://www.trafalgar.com/real-word/iconic-struggling-overtourism-destinations/.

Bjarnadóttir, E.J. 2019d. *Viðhorf Heimamanna til Ferðamanna og Ferðaþjónustu 2018–Egilsstaðir [Residents' Attitudes towards Tourists and the Tourism Industry 2018-Egilsstaðir];*. Reykjavík, Iceland: Icelandic Tourist Board.

Bjarnadóttir, E.J. 2019a. *Viðhorf Heimamanna til Ferðamanna og Ferðaþjónustu 2018–Húsavík [Residents' Attitudes towards Tourists and the Tourism Industry 2018-Húsavík*. Reykjavík, Iceland: Icelandic Tourist Board.

Bjarnadóttir, E.J. 2019c. *Viðhorf Heimamanna til Ferðamanna og Ferðaþjónustu 2018–Reykjanesbær [Residents' Attitudes towards Tourists and the Tourism Industry 2018-Reykjanesbær]*. Reykjavík, Iceland: Icelandic Tourist Board.

Bjarnadóttir, E.J. 2019b. *Viðhorf Heimamanna til Ferðamanna og Ferðaþjónustu 2018–Stykkishólmur [Residents' Attitudes towards Tourists and the Tourism Industry 2018-Stykkishólmur]*. Reykjavík, Iceland: Icelandic Tourist Board.

Bjarnadóttir, E.J. 2018. *Viðhorf Íbúa á Höfuðborgarsvæðinu til Ferðamanna og Ferðaþjónustu [Residents' Attitudes towards Tourists and the Tourism Industry—The Capital Area*. Akureyri, Iceland: Icelandic Tourism Research Center: .

Bjarnadóttir, E.J., Á.A. Arnalds, and A.S Víkingsdóttir. 2018. *Því Meiri Samskipti-Því Meiri Jákvæðni. Viðhorf Íslendinga til Ferðamanna og Ferðaþjónustu 2017 [The More Communication—The More Positivity. Icelanders' Attitudes towardsTourists and the Tourism Industry 2017]*. Reykjavík, Iceland: Icelandic Tourism Research Center.

Bjarnadóttir, E.J., A.Þ Jóhannesson, and G.Þ. Gunnarsdóttir. 2016. . *Greining á Áhrifum Ferðaþjónustu og Ferðamennsku í Einstökum Samfélögum: Höfn, Mývatnssveit og Siglufjörður [An Analysis of the Impacts of the Tourism Industry and Tourism on*

Selected Communities: Höfn, Mývatnssveit and Siglufjörður. Akureyri, Iceland: Icelandic Tourism Research Center:.

Boissevain, J. 1996. *Coping with tourists: European reactions to mass tourism.* Volume 1: Berghahn Books.

Bongato, Bianca. 2023. *Skynews Australia.* December 20. Accessed April 20, 2024. https://www.skynews.com.au/world-news/pollution-warning-for-icelands-capital-reykjavk-as-spectacular-images-emerge-from-volcano-eruption-after-weeks-of-seismic-activity-detected-in-the-region/news-story/d1e5e626566a2d80e9d2c865daed0a56.

Boulding, Kenneth Ewart. *The Image: Knowledge in Life and Society.* Fac-sim. Ed. Ann

Arbor Paperbacks 47. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan press, 1991.

Boustan, L.P., M.E. Kahn, and P.W. Rhode. 2012. "Moving to higher ground: migration response to natural disasters in the early Twentieth Century. ." *American Economic Review P&P, 102(3)* 238-244.

Boustan, L.P., M.E. Kahn, P.W. Rhode, and M.L. Yanguas. 2020. "The effect of natural disasters on economic activity in US counties: A century of data. ." *Journal of Urban Economics, 118* 103257.

Braun, V., and V. Clarke. 2006. "Using thematic analysis in psychology." Qualitative Research in Psychology.

Braun, V., V. Clarke, N. Hayfield, and G. Terry. n.d. "Thematic Analysis." *Retrieved from The Uversity of Auckland.* https://www.thematicanalysis.net/.

Briassoulis, H. 2002. "Sustainable tourism and the question of the commons." *Annals of Tourism Research 29* 1065-1085.

Bryant, Miranda. 2023. *Winter to bring best Northern Lights displays for 20 years, scientists say.* November 6. Accessed February 24, 2024. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/nov/06/winter-best-northern-lights-displays-for-20-years-scientists-say.

Bubola, Emma. 2024. *The New York Times - Belching Volcano and Flowing Lava Dent Tourism in Icelandic Region.* March 20. Accessed April 20, 2024. https://www.nytimes.com/2024/03/20/world/europe/iceland-volcano-tourism-impact.html.

Buhalis, Dimitrios, and Rob Law. 2008. "Progress in information technology and tourism management: 20 years on and 10 years after the Internet – The state of eTourism research ." *Tourism Management" 29(4* 609–623.

Burby, R. J., and F. Wagner. 1996. "Protecting tourists from death and injury in coastal storms." *Disasters 20(1)* 49–60.

Burns, P. M., and M. Novelli. 2008. *Tourism development: Growth, myths, and inequalities*. Wallingford: CABI Publishing.

Business Iceland. 2023. *Visit Iceland*. https://www.visiticeland.com/.

Butler. 1993. "Tourism development in small islands: past influences and future directions." In *The Development Process in Small Island States*, by D. Lockhart, D. Drakakis-Smith and J. Schembri, 71–91. London: Routledge.

Butler, R.W. 1980. "The concept of a tourist area cycle of evolution: Implications for management of resources." *Canadian Geographer, 24(1), 5* 12.

Campbell, V. 2014. "Framing environmental risks and natural disasters in factual entertainment television. Environmental Communication." *A Journal of Nature and Culture, 8(1)* 58-74.

Casal-Ribeiro, Mariana, Inês Boavida-Portugal, Rita Peres, and Cláudia Seabra. 2023. "Review of Crisis Management Frameworks in Tourism and Hospitality: A Meta-Analysis Approach." *Sustainability* 1-17.

Cavallo, E., A. Powell, and O. Becerra. 2010. "Estimating the direct economic damages of the earthquake in Haiti. ." *The Economic Journal, 120 (546)* F298-F312.

Chapman, Michael. 2017. *Iceland's Troubled Environment*. August 7. https://www.savingiceland.org/2017/08/icelands-troubled-environment/.

Chen, Han, and Imran Rahman. "Cultural Tourism: An Analysis of Engagement, Cultural Contact, Memorable Tourism Experience and Destination Loyalty." *Tourism Management Perspectives* 26 (April 1, 2018): 153–63. doi:10.1016/j.tmp.2017.10.006.

Chew, E.Y.T., and S.A. Jahari. 2014. "Destination image as a mediator between perceived risks and revisit intention: a case of post-disaster Japan." *Tourism Management 40* 382-393.

Chong, Dennis, and James N. Druckman. "Framing Theory." *Annual Review of Political Science* 10, no. 1 (June 1, 2007): 103–26. doi:10.1146/annurev.polisci.10.072805.103054.

Clark, Connor, and Gyan P. Nyaupane. "Overtourism: An Analysis of Its Coverage In the Media by Using Framing Theory." *Tourism Review International* 24, no. 2 (August 4, 2020): 75–90. doi:10.3727/154427220X15845838896314.

Clarke, V., and V. Braun. 2013. *Successful Qualitative Research: A Practical Guide for Beginners*. SAGE.

Clarke, V., and V. Braun. 2017. "Thematic analysis." *The Journal of Positive Psychology* 297-298.

Collison, F., and K. Poe. 2013. "Astronomical tourism': The astronomy and dark sky program at Bryce Canyon National Park." *Tourism Management Perspectives, 7* 1-15.

Condé Nast Traveler. "15 Beloved Places Struggling With Overtourism." *Condé Nast Traveler*, June 19, 2015. https://www.cntraveler.com/galleries/2015-06-19/barcelona-bhutan-places-that-limit-tourist-numbers.

Conkling, P. 2007. "On islanders and islandness." *, Geographical Review, 97(2)* 191–201.

CRR Hospitality. 2024. *CRR Hospitality.* January 2. Accessed May 7, 2024. https://crrhospitality.com/blog/identifying-the-target-audience-for-glamping-a-detailed-guide/.

Cruise Iceland. 2019. *Fréttatilkynning mars 2019.* www.cruiseiceland.com/frettatilkynning-mars-2019/ .

Cunff, Anne-Laure Le. "The Hermeneutic Circle: A Key to Critical Reading." *Ness Labs*, October 21, 2020. https://nesslabs.com/hermeneutic-circle.

Darren, Adam. 2024. *RÚV Eruption risk increases.* February 27. Accessed February 27, 2024. https://www.ruv.is/english/2024-02-27-eruption-risk-increases-405961.

Davis, H., and S. L. McLeod. 2003. "Why humans value sensational news. ." *Evolution and Human Behavior, 24(3)* 208-216.

De Jager, A. 2010. "How dull is Dullstroom? Exploring the tourism destination image of Dullstroom." *Tourism Geographies, 12(3)* 349–370.

De Sausmarez, N. 2004. "Crisis management for the tourism sector: Preliminary considerations in policy development." *Tourism Hositality Plan. Development* 157–172.

Destination Management Organisations Of Iceland. n.d. *Destination Management Organisations Of Iceland.* Accessed May 7, 2024. https://www.markadsstofur.is/en.

Dickinson, Greg. 2024. *The Telegraph.* April 23. Accessed April 26, 2024. https://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/news/overtourism-beauty-spots-travel-hawaii-maya-bay-iceland/.

"Disaster | UNDRR." United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, August 30, 2007. http://www.undrr.org/terminology/disaster.

Donovan, A., and C. Oppenheimer. 2012. "Governing the lithosphere: insights from Eyjafjallajökull concerning the role of scientists in supporting decision-making on active volcanoes." *J Geophys Res 117:B03214.*

Dowling, R. K. 2018. " New Zealand – A diverse array of geotourism resources. ." In *Handbook of geotourism*, by R. K. Dowling and D. Newsome (Eds.), 462–474. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar.

Dowling, R. K. 2010. "Emerging volcano and geothermal related tourism in Iceland. ." In *Volcano & geothermal tourism: Sustainable geo-resources for leisure and recreation*, by P. Erfurt Cooper &M. Cooper (Eds.), 209–220. London, UK: : Earthscan.

Dowling, R. K. 2014. "Galápagos: An emerging volcano tourism destination." In *Volcanic tourist destinations*, by P. Erfurt-Cooper (Ed.), 193–200. Germany: Springer, Heidelberg.

Dowling, R. K., and J. Margueritte. 2014. "Reunion Island: A volcanic showcase. ." In *Volcanic tourist destinations* , by P. Erfurt-Cooper (Ed.), 325–336. Germany: Springer, Heidelberg.

Doxey, G. V. 1975. "A causation theory of visitor/resident irritants: Methodology and research inferences." *Proceedings of the Travel Research Association 6th Annual Conference*. San Diego: Travel Research Association . 195-198.

Drabek, T. E. 1995. "Disaster responses within the tourist industry." *International Journal of Mass Emergencies and Disasters 13(1)* 7–23.

Dutta, N. 2013. "Massacres and media representations: viewing north-east violence." *Journal of Creative Communications, 7(1-2)* 5-18.

Echtner, C. M., and B. Ritchie. 1991. "The Meaning and Measurement of Destination Image." *The Journal of Tourism Studies, 2(2)* 2-9.

Edensor, T. 1998. *Tourists at the Taj: Performance and Meaning at a Symbolic Site* . London: Routledge.

Egilsdóttir, Urður. ""Hvar á maður að kaupa?"," February 12, 2024.

https://www.mbl.is/frettir/innlent/2024/02/12/hvar_a_madur_ad_kaupa/.

Eisner, E. W. 1991. *The enlightened eye: Qualitative inquiry and the enhancement of educational practice.* . New York: NY: Macmillan Publishing Company.

Eldheimar. 2023. *Eldheimar*. Accessed February 27, 2024. https://www.eldheimar.is/um-eldheima?lang=en.

Entman, Robert M. "Framing Bias: Media in the Distribution of Power." *Journal of Communication* 57, no. 1 (March 2007): 163–73. doi:10.1111/j.1460-2466.2006.00336.x.

Erfurt, P. 2018. "Geotourism development and management in volcanic regions." In *Handbook of geotourism*, by R. K. Editors: Dowling and D. Newsome, 152–167. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar.

Erfurt, Patricia. "Volcano Tourism and Visitor Safety: Still Playing with Fire? A 10-Year Update." *Geoheritage* 14, no. 2 (May 3, 2022): 56. doi:10.1007/s12371-022-00691-y.

Erfurt-Cooper, P., and M. Cooper. 2010. *Volcano & geothermal tourism: Sustainable geo resources for leisure and recreation.* . London, UK: Earthscan.

Erfurt-Cooper, Patricia. 2018. "Active Hydrothermal Features as Tourist Attractions." In *Observing the Volcano World - Volcano Crisis Communication*, by Editors: Carina J. Fearnley, Deanne K. Bird, Katharine Haynes, William J. McGuire and Gill Jolly, 85–105. Springer Open.

Erfurt-Cooper, Patricia. 2011. "Geotourism in volcanic and geothermal environments: playing with fire?" *Geoheritage 3* 187–193.

Ewart, J. W., and C. J. Harpel. 2004. *In harm's way: Population and volcanic risk.* Geotimes, American Geological Institute. http://www.geotimes.org/apr04/feature_VPI.html.

Excelite Domes. 2022. *Excelite Domes - Target Market for Glamping Business* . June 1. Accessed May 7, 2024. https://excelitedomes.com/target-market-for-glamping-business/.

Faulkner, B. 2001. "Towards a framework for tourism disaster management." *Tourism Management, 22* 135–147.

Fayos-Sola, E, C Marín, and J, Jafari. 2014. "Astrotourism: No requiem for meaningful travel." *Revista de Turismo y Patrimonio Cultural 12(4)* 663–671.

Ferdamalástofa. n.d. *Ferdamalástofa (Icelandic Tourist Board) Cruise Ship Traffic in Iceland.* Accessed May 10, 2024. https://www.maelabordferdathjonustunnar.is/en/tourists-to-iceland/cruise-ships.

Ferðamálastofa Icelandic Tourist Board. "What We Do." Accessed March 28, 2024.
https://www.ferdamalastofa.is/en/about-us-1/icelandic-tourist-board.

Filimonau, Viachaslau, and Delysia De Coteau. "Tourism Resilience in the Context of Integrated Destination and Disaster Management (DM [2])." *International Journal of Tourism Research* 22, no. 2 (March 2020): 202–22. doi:10.1002/jtr.2329.

Fonseca, Ana Paula, Claudia Seabra, and Carla Silva. 2015. "Dark Tourism: Concepts, Typologies and Sites." *Journal ofTourism Research and Hospitality S2-002.*

Fountain, Joanna, and Nicholas A. Cradock-Henry. "Recovery, Risk and Resilience: Post-Disaster Tourism Experiences in Kaikōura, New Zealand." *Tourism Management Perspectives* 35 (July 1, 2020): 100695.

doi:10.1016/j.tmp.2020.100695.

Frey, Bruno S. *Overcoming Overtourism: Creating Revived Originals*. Cham: Springer
International Publishing, 2021. doi:10.1007/978-3-030-63814-6.

Fridriksson, Jon, Nicholas Wise, and Peter Scott. 2020. "Iceland's bourgeoning cruise
industry: An economic opportunity or a local threat?" *Sage Journals* Volume 35,
Issue 2.

Fridriksson, Jon, Nicholas Wise, and Peter Scott. 2020. "Iceland's bourgeoning cruise
industry: An economic opportunity or a local threat?" *Local Economy , Vol. 35(2)*
143–154.

Gallarza, M.G., I.G. Saura, and H.C. Garcı'a. 2002. "Destination image: towards a
conceptual framework." *Annals of Touism Research 29 (1)* 56–78.

Gamson, William, and Andre Modigliani. "The Changing Culture of Affirmative Action."
Research in Political Sociology , 1987, 133–77.

Gil-Alana, Luis A., and Edward H. Huijbens. 2018. "Tourism in Iceland: Persistence and
seasonality." *Annals of Tourism Research 68* 20-29.

Gillis, J. 2007. "Island sojourns." *Geographical Review, 97(2)* 274–287.

Glaesser, D. 2003. *Crisis Management in the Tourism Industry*. Burlington: Butterworth-
Heinemann.

Glamping Holiday. n.d. *Glamping Holiday*. Accessed February 27, 2024.
https://www.glamping-holiday.com/glamping-iceland-all.html.

Golafshani, N. 2003. "Understanding Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research." *The
Qualitative Report Volume 8 Number 4* 597-607.

Gössling, Stefan. 2006. "Iceland." In *Extreme Tourism - Lessons from the World's Cold
Water Islands*, by Godfrey Baldacchino, Chapter 9 115-128. Elsevier.

Government Of Iceland. 2023. *Reykjanes Volcanic Eruption: Tourism Response Team
Meeting and Media Centre Reopened*. December 19. Accessed May 12, 2024.
https://www.government.is/diplomatic-missions/embassy-
article/2023/12/19/Reykjanes-Volcanic-Eruption-Tourism-Response-Team-
Meeting-and-Media-Centre-Reopened-/.

Government of Iceland. "Funds and Grants" Accessed March 28, 2024
https://www.government.is/topics/business-and-industry/tourism-in-
iceland/funds-and-grants/.

Government of Iceland. "Tourism in Iceland." Accessed April 27, 2024.
https://www.government.is/topics/business-and-industry/tourism-in-iceland/.

Govers, R., F. M. Go, and K. Kumar. 2007. "Promoting tourism destination image." *Journal
of Travel Research, 46* 15–23.

Gretzel, Ulrike, Daniel R. Fesenmaier, and Joseph T. O'Leary. 2006. "Chapter 2 - The transformation of consumer behaviour." *Tourism Business Frontiers* 9-18.

Grosbois, D. de. 2015. "Corporate social responsibility reporting in the cruise tourism industry: A performance evaluation using a new institutional theory based model." *Journal of Sustainable Tourism 24(2)* 245–269.

Grosjean, Francois. 2011. *Psychology today - Change of Language, Change of Personality?* November 1. Accessed April 28, 2024. https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/life-bilingual/201111/change-language-change-personality.

Groundwater, Ben. 2018. *Cities suffering from overtourism: How to visit as a responsible tourist*. July 5. Accessed March 7, 2024. https://www.smh.com.au/traveller/reviews-and-advice/cities-suffering-from-overtourism-how-to-visit-as-a-responsible-tourist-20180702-h124p4.html.

Guide to Iceland. n.d. *15 Incredible Reasons to Visit Iceland*. Accessed February 28, 2024. https://guidetoiceland.is/best-of-iceland/13-reasons-to-visit-iceland.

Gunnlaugsson, Helgi Steinar. 2023. *Viðskiptablaðir*. December 20. Accessed April 20, 2024. https://vb.is/frettir/litur-thannig-ut-i-fjolmidlum-erlendis-eins-og-island-se-bara-onytt/.

Hall, C. M. 2002. "Travel Safety, Terrorism and the Media: The Significance of the Issue Attention Cycle." *Current Issues in Tourism 5(5)* 458-466.

Hall, C. Michael. 2019. "Constructing Sustainable Tourism Development: The 2030 Agenda and the Managerial Ecology of Sustainable Tourism." *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 27, no. 7 (July 3, 2019): 1044–60. doi:10.1080/09669582.2018.1560456.

Hall, C.M., and A.A Lew. 2009. *Understanding and Managing Tourism Impacts: An Integrated Approach*. London, UK: Routledge.

Hall, M., and B Weiler. 1992. "Introduction. What's special about special interest tourims?." In *Special interest tourism*, by B Weiler and M. Hall, 1-14. London: Bellhaven Press.

Hammett, Daniel. 2014. "Tourism Images and British Media Representations of South Africa." *Tourism Geographies , 16:2, An International Journal of Tourism Space, Place and Environment* 221-236.

Hardy, A., U. Gretzel, and D. Hanson. 2013. "Travelling neo-tribes: Conceptualising recreational vehicle users." *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change, 11(1–2)* 48–60.

Hassan, Azizul, and Anukrati Sharma. 2021. *Overtourism, Technology Solutions and Decimated Destinations*. Springer.

113

Heiðarsson, E. P., S. C. Loughlin, C. Witham, and S. Barsotti. 2014. p 198, FutureVolc, Reykjavík,.

Heiðarsson, E. P., S. C. Loughlin, C. Witham, and S. Barsotti. 2015. "D3.2—Information for EU-MIC and scenarios for major events. European volcanological supersite in Iceland: a monitoring system and network for the future." *FutureVolc, Reykjavík* p 72.

Helgadóttir, G., A.V. Einarsdóttir, J.M.E. Matthíasdóttir, G.Þ. Gunnarsdóttir, and G.L. Burns. 2016. *Félagsleg Áhrif Ferðamennsku og Ferðaþjónustu. [Social Impacts of Tourism and the Tourism Industry]*. Reykjavík, Iceland: Icelandic Tourist Board.

Helgadóttir, Guðrún, Anna Vilborg Einarsdóttir, Georgette Leah Burns, Guðrún Þóra Gunnarsdóttir, and Jóhanna María Elena Matthíasdóttir. 2019. "Social sustainability of tourism in Iceland: A qualitative inquiry." *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism* 4é4-421.

Herrmann, Michele. 2024. *2024 Is A Great Year To See The Northern Lights, Expedia Survey Finds*. February 2. Accessed February 24, 2024. https://www.forbes.com/sites/micheleherrmann/2024/02/02/expedia-survey-finds-2024-is-a-great-year-to-see-the-northern-lights/.

Hilmarsson, Guðmundur. "Sér enga framtíð í bænum sem hann byggði," February 14, 2024.

https://www.mbl.is/frettir/innlent/2024/02/14/ser_enga_framtid_i_baenum_sem_hann_byggdi/.

HL Adventure. "About." Accessed April 5, 2024. https://hl.is/about.

Holm, Andreas Beck. *Videnskab i virkeligheden: en grundbog i videnskabsteori*. 1. udgave. Frederiksberg: Samfundslitteratur, 2011.

Huang, J., and J. C. H. Min. 2002. "Earthquake devastation and recovery in tourism: The taiwan case. ." *Tourism Management, 23* 145–154.

Hughes, Howard L. "Redefining Cultural Tourism." *Annals of Tourism Research* 23, no. 3 (July 1, 1996): 707–9. doi:10.1016/0160-7383(95)00099-2.

Hughes, Rebecca Ann. 2024. *2024 will be a bumper year for Northern Lights sightings. Why will they be so visible?* January 22. Accessed february 24, 2024. https://www.euronews.com/travel/2024/01/22/2024-will-be-a-bumper-year-for-northern-lights-sightings-why-will-they-be-so-visible.

Hutchinson, Bill. 2023. *ABC news - Iceland volcanic eruption triggers toxic air warning*. December 20. Accessed APril 20, 2024.

https://abcnews.go.com/International/iceland-volcano-eruption-toxic-air-warning/story?id=105806785.

Hutchinson, John. "Signs at Iceland's Tourist Spots Warn Visitors Not to Defecate."
Mail Online, July 20, 2016.
https://www.dailymail.co.uk/travel/travel_news/article-3699397/Tourists-Iceland-told-clean-act-Locals-fed-holidaymakers-ruining-pristine-countryside-place-not-defecate-signs-picturesque-spots.html.

Hyperborea. "Expert Guided Private Icelandic Tours." Accessed April 5, 2024.
https://hyperborea.is.

Icelandair. 2024. *Flying since 1937.* https://www.icelandair.com/en-gb/about/history/flying-since-1937/.

Iceland Challenge. "Iceland Challenge Travel Company." Accessed April 5, 2024.
https://www.icelandchallenge.is.

IcelandOnTheWeb. (n.d.). Volcanism. Retrieved May 26, 2024, from Iceland On The
Web - Tours & Articles on Iceland: https://www.icelandontheweb.com/articles-on-iceland/nature/geology/volcanism

Icelandic Tourist Board Numbers of Foreign Visitors to Iceland. n.d. *Ferdamalastofa.*
Accessed April 25, 2024. https://www.ferdamalastofa.is/en/research-and-statistics/numbers-of-foreign-visitors.

Isavia . 2019. www.isavia.is/media/1/19-1184-farthegaspa-skyrsla-final.pdf.

Ísleifsson, S., and D. Chartier. 2017. *Iceland and Images of the North.* Québec and
Reykjavík: Presses de l'Université du Québec and Reykjavík Academy.

"Itsryantelfer - YouTube." Accessed May 5, 2024.
https://www.youtube.com/@itsryantelfer.

Jacobs, Laeticia, Elizabeth A. Du Preez, and Felicité Fairer-Wessels. 2020. "To wish upon
a star: Exploring Astro Tourism as vehicle for sustainable rural development,."
Development Southern Africa, 37:1 87-104.

James, Laura, Lise Smed Olsen, and Anna Karlsdóttir. 2020. "Sustainability and cruise
tourism in the arctic: stakeholder perspectives from Ísafjörður, Iceland and
Qaqortoq, Greenland." *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 1425-1441.

James, Laura, Lise Smed Olsen, and Anna Karlsdóttir. 2020. "Sustainability and cruise
tourism in the arctic: stakeholder perspectives from Ísafjörður, Iceland and
Qaqortoq, Greenland." *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 1-17.

Jenkins, O. 2003. "Photography and travel brochures: the circle of representation."
Tourism Geographies, 5(3), 305–328.

Jin, X., M. Qu, and J. Bao. 2019. "Impact of crisis events on Chinese outbound tourist flow: A framework for post-events growth. ." *Tourism Management, 74* 334–344.

Jóhannesdóttir, G. 2005. *Við tölum aldrei um Kötlu hér mat íbúa á hættu vegna Kötlugoss.* p 103, Reykjavík: Department of Geology and Geography, University of Iceland,.

Jóhannesdóttir, G., and G. Gísladóttir. 2010. "People living under threat of volcanic hazard in southern Iceland vulnerability and risk perception." *Nat Hazards Earth Syst Sci 10* 407–420.

Jóhannesson, Gunnar Thór, and Katrín Anna Lund. 2017. "Aurora Borealis: Choreographies of darkness and light." *Annals of Tourism Research* 183-190.

Jóhannesson, Gunnar Thór, Edward Hákon Huijbens, and Richard Sharpley. 2010. "Icelandic Tourism: Past Directions—Future Challenges." *Tourism Geographies, 12: 2* 278 — 301.

Jones, P., D. Hillier, and D. Comfort. 2016. "The environmental, social and economic impacts of cruising and corporate sustainability strategies." *Athens Journal of Tourism 3(4)* 273 - 283.

Jones, Thomas E., Michal Apollo, and Huong T. Bui. 2021. "Mountainous Protected Areas &Nature-Based Tourism in Asia." In *Nature-Based Tourism in Asia's Mountainous Protected Areas, A Trans-regional Review of Peaks and Parks*, by Thomas E. Jones, Michal Apollo and Huong T. Bui, 3-28. Switzerland: Springer.

Jonsdóttir, A. A. 2011. *Impact of Eyjafjallajokull € on tourism and international flights,.* B.S. thesis, Reykjavík: Líf-og umhverfisvísindadeild, Verkfræði- og nattúruvísindasvið, Háskóli Íslands.

Jordan, E. J., and C. A. Vogt. 2017. "Residents' perceptions of stress related to cruise tourism development." *Tourism Planning & Development 14(4)* 527–547.

Kahn, M.E. 2005. "The death toll from natural disasters: the role of income, geography and institutions. ." *The Review of Economics and Statistics, 87(2)* 271-284.

Karlsson, Gunnar, Valdimar Kristinsson, and Björn Matthíasson. 2024. *Britannica - Iceland.* March 3. Accessed March 5, 2024. https://www.britannica.com/place/Iceland.

Kilmainham Gaol Museum. n.d. *Kilmainham Gaol Museum.* Accessed May 7, 2024. https://www.kilmainhamgaolmuseum.ie/.

Kim, Soo. "Iceland Tourism: How the Country Became Overrun with Tourists." *The Sydney Morning Herald*, December 19, 2017. https://www.smh.com.au/traveller/inspiration/iceland-tourism-how-the-country-is-became-overrun-with-tourists-20171219-h06xnc.html.

King, R. 1993. "The geographical fascination of islands." In *The Development Process in Small Island States*, by D. Drakakis-Smith & J. Schembri D. Lockhart, 13–37. London: Routledge.

Koens, K., A. Postma, and B. Papp. 2018. "Is Overtourism Overused? Understanding the Impact of Tourism in a City Context." *Sustainability, 10(12)* 4384.

Kotler, Philip, Donald H. Haider, and Irving J. Rein. *Marketing Places: Attracting Investment, Industry, and Tourism to Cities, States, and Nations*. New York: The Free Press [u.a.], 1993Kowalczyk-Harper, Hannah. 2019. *How the language you speak makes you think and act different*. February 11. Accessed April 28, 2024. https://medium.com/the-mvp/how-the-language-you-speak-makes-you-think-and-act-differently-de035aa88cff.

Kuo, H. I., C. C. Chen, W. C. Tseng, L. F. Ju, and B. W. Huang. 2008. "Assessing impacts of SARS and Avian Flu on international tourism demand to Asia." *Tourism Management, 29* 917–928.

Kuppuswamy, S.. 2013. "Usage of media in disaster preparedness: with reference to coastal disasters in Chennai Tamil Nadu, India. ." *Asian Journal of Environment and Disaster Management (AJEDM) e Focusing on Pro-active Risk Reduction in Asia 04 (03).*

Kuttschreuter, M., J. M. Gutteling, and M. de Hond. 2011. "Framing and tone-of-voice of disaster media coverage: the aftermath of the Enschede fireworks disaster in the Netherlands." *Health, Risk & Society, 13(3)* 201-220.

Langridge, Stephanie, and Tracy Michaud. "Stakeholder Perceptions of Managing an Emergent Tourist Destination: The Fagradalsfjall Volcanic Eruption in Iceland." *Bulletin of Volcanology* 85, no. 2 (January 27, 2023): 11. doi:10.1007/s00445-023-01629-0.

Larsen, Guðrún , Magnús Tumi Guðmundsson , Freysteinn Sigmundsson, Ármann Höskuldsson, Steinunn S. Jakobsdóttir, Björn Oddson, Eyjólfur Magnússon, Þórdís Högnadóttir, Þorvaldur Þórðarson, and Halldór Björnsson. "Hvað getur þú sagt mér um gosið í Eyjafjallajökli árið 2010?" *Vísindavefurinn*, May 31, 2013. http://www.visindavefur.is/svar.php?id=63474.

Lava Show. "Lava Show in Iceland - Feel the Heat of Red-Hot Lava." Accessed February 15, 2024. https://icelandiclavashow.com/.

Laws, E., and B. Prideaux. 2005. "Crisis Management: A Suggested Typology." *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing. 19 (2-3)* 1-8.

Lee, Y. F., and J. R. Harrald. 1999. " Critical issue for business area impact analysis in business crisis management: Analytical capability." *Disaster Prevention and Management, 8(3)* 184–189.

Lehto, X., A. C. Douglas, and J. Park. 2008. "Mediating the effects of natural disasters on travel intention." *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, 23(2)* 29-43.

Leonard, S. G., M. D. Johnston, Paton D., Christianson A., Becker J., and Keys H. 2008. "Developing effective warning systems: ongoing research at Ruapehu volcano, New Zealand." *Journal of Volcano and Geothermal Research 172(3–4)* 199–215.

Leoni, Veronica, and David Boto-García. 2022. *The effect of natural disasters on tourism demand, supply and labour markets: Evidence from La Palma volcano eruption.* Quaderni - Working Paper DSE N°1177, Via Angherá, 22 47921, Rimini (Italy): Center for Advanced Studies in Tourism.

Lepp, A., and H. Gibson. 2003. "Tourist roles, perceived risk and international tourism." *Annals of Tourism Research, 30* 606-624.

Lexow, Margrete. 2004. "Effects of Negative Media Events on Tourist's Decisions ." *International Tourism and Media Conference* 51-60.

Liu, B. F. 2009. "An analysis of US government and media disaster frames. ." *Journal of communication Management, 13(3)* 268-283.

Lockhart, D. 1997. " Islands and tourism: an overview." In *Island Tourism: Trends and Prospects, pp. 3–20 (London: Pinter).*, by D. Lockhart & D. Drakakis-Smith.

Lockhart, D. 1997. "Islands and tourism: an overview." In *Island Tourism: Trends and Prospects*, by D. Lockhart & D. Drakakis-Smith, 3-20. London: Pinter.

Loftsdóttir, Kristín, Katla Kjartansdóttir, and Katrín Anna Lund. 2017. "Trapped in clichés: masculinity, films and tourism in Iceland." *Gender, Place & Culture -A Journal of Feminist Geography* 1225-1242.

Mack, B. 2020. "Destinations that were ruined by tourists over the past decade." *Insider*. January 15. https://www.businessinsider.com/places-ruined-by-tourists-over-the-past-decade-2019-12.

MacRobert, A. 2012. "How to start right in astronomy." *Sky and Telescope Magazine* Retrieved from http://www.skyandtelescope.com/howto/basics/How_to_Start_Right_in_Astronomy.html.

Magnúsdóttir, Ásta Hlín. "Grindavík Rýmd – Tilmæli Almannavarna - RÚV.Is." *RÚV,* November 11, 2023. https://www.ruv.is/frettir/innlent/2023-11-11-grindavik-rymd-tilmaeli-almannavarna-396390/.

Malley, Tom. 2023. *The Irish Sun*. December 19 . Accessed April 20, 2024. https://www.thesun.ie/news/11879984/iceland-volcano-continues-spewing-lava-eruption-lasting-months/.

Mao, C. K., C. G. Ding, and H. Y. Lee. 2010. "Post-SARS tourist arrival recovery patterns: An analysis based on a catastrophe theory." *Tourism Management, 31(6)* 855–861.

Market and Media Research. 2020. *Jákvæðni Gagnvart Erlendum Ferðamönnum Eykst [An Increase in Positive Attitudes towards International Tourists].* https://mmr.is/frettir/birtar-nieurstoeeur/703.

Marra, F. J. 1998. "public relations. ." *Crisis communication plans: poor predictors of excellent crisis Public Relations Review, 24(4)* 461-474.

Martens, Hanno Michail, Kim Feldesz, and Patrick Merten. 2016. "Crisis Management in Tourism – A Literature Based Approach on the Proactive Prediction of a Crisis and the Implementation of Prevention Measures." *Athens Journal of Tourism - Volume 3, Issue 2* 89-102.

Massidda, C., and P. Mattana. 2013. "A SVECM analysis of the relationship between international tourism arrivals, GDP and trade in Italy." *Journal of Travel Research, 52 (1)* 93–105.

Maudlin, Laura. 2024. *Tourism review - ICELANDIC TOURISM INDUSTRY AFFECTED BY VOLCANIC ERUPTIONS.* February 5. Accessed April 20, 2024. https://www.tourism-review.com/icelandic-tourism-industry-affected-by-volcanoes-news14174.

Mazzocchi, M., and A. Montini. 2001. "Earthquake effects on tourism in central Italy. ." *Annals of Tourism Research, 28* 1031–1046.

McDermott, T.K.J., F. Barry, and R.S.J. Tol. 2014. "Disasters and development: natural disasters credit constraints, and economic growth. ." *Oxford Economic Papers, 66,* 750-773.

McLaughlin, Kylie. "Countries with the Most Tourists per Head of Population: Destinations Suffering 'Overtourism.'" *The Sydney Morning Herald*, May 25, 2018. https://www.smh.com.au/traveller/inspiration/countries-with-the-most-tourists-per-head-of-population-destinations-suffering-overtourism-20180524-h10huf.html.

Menzel, H., and E. Katz. 1955. "Social Relations and Innovation in the Medical Profession: The Epidemiology of a New Drug." *Public Opinion Quarterly, 19 (4)* 337-352.

Meyer, Denis. "Iceland Faces Mass Tourism's Challenge." *Al Jazeera*, April 12, 2018. https://www.aljazeera.com/gallery/2018/4/12/iceland-the-tourism-epidemic.

Milano, C. 2018. "Overtourism, malestar social y turismofobia. Un debate controvertido." *PASOS Revista de Turismo y Patrimonio Cultural, 16(3)* 551-564.

Milano, C., J. M. Cheer, and M. Novelli. 2019. "Overtourism: an evolving phenomenon." In *Overtourism: Excesses, discontents and measures in travel and tourism*, by C., Cheer, J. M., & Novelli, M. Milano, 1-17. Abingdon: CABI.

Milohnić, Ines, Josipa Cvelić Bonifačić, and Ivana Licul. 2019. "TRANSFORMATION OF CAMPING INTO GLAMPING – TRENDS AND PERSPECTIVES." *Tourism in Southern and Eastern Europe* Vol. 5; 457-473.

Mizerski, R. W. 1982. "An Attribution Explanation of the Disproportionate Influence of Unfavorable Information." *Journal of Consumer Research, 9* 301-310.

Monitor, Iceland. 2018. "Northern Lights tourism remains extremely popular in Iceland." *Artic Business Journal*.

Morton, Caitlin. 2023. *Condé Nast Traveler*. October 19. Accessed May 7, 2024. https://www.cntraveler.com/gallery/most-haunted-places-in-the-world.

Morris, Hugh. "Iceland Becoming 'Disneyland' as US Tourists Outnumber Locals." *The Telegraph*, October 19, 2016. https://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/destinations/europe/iceland/articles/Reykjavík-compared-to-disneyland-as-number-of-us-tourists-pass-population/.

Moses, Claire. "Empty Roads and Spewing Lava: 4 Months Into Iceland's Eruptions." *The New York Times*, March 29, 2024, sec. World. https://www.nytimes.com/2024/03/29/world/europe/iceland-volcano-eruption-photos.html.

Murphy, P. E., and R. Bayley. 1989. "Tourism and disaster planning." *Geografical Review 79(1)* 36–46.

Nanjangud, Apoorva, and Stijn Reijnders. 2022. "On the Tracks of Musical Screenscapes: Analysing the Emerging Phenomenon of Bollywood Filmi-song Tourism in Iceland." *Tourist Studies* 175–199.

National Geographic Partners. 2015-2024. *National geographic*. Accessed March 5, 2024. https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/geography/countries/article/iceland.

Nelson, V. 2005. "Representations and images of people, place and nature in Grenada's tourism." *Geografiska Annaler B, 87(4)* 131–143.

Nielsen, C. 2001. *Tourism and the Media*. Sydney: Hospitality Press Pty Ltd.

NOAA. n.d. *Aurora Tutorial*. https://www.swpc.noaa.gov/content/aurora-tutorial.

Nordic Council. n.d. *Nordic Co-operation*. Accessed March 5, 2024. https://www.norden.org/en/information/facts-about-

iceland#:~:text=Iceland%2C%20the%20volcanic%20island%20in,Norway%20a
nd%20the%20United%20Kingdom.

Okuyama, T. 2018. "Analysis of optimal timing of tourism demand recovery policies from natural disaster using the contingent behavior method." *Tourism Management, 64* 37-54.

Óladóttir, O. Þ. 2015. "Tourism in Iceland in figures." *Ferðamálastofa, Reykjavík* 27.

Óladóttir, O.Þ. 2019. *Erlendir Ferðamenn á Íslandi 2018: Lýðfræði, Ferðahegðun og Viðhorf (International Visitors in Iceland 2018. Demography, Travel Behaviour and Attitudes)*. Reykjavík, Iceland,: Icelandic Tourist Board:.

Óladóttir, Oddný Þóra. 2022. *Erlendir ferðamenn á Íslandi 2021: Lýðfræði, ferðahegðun og viðhorf (Foreign tourists in Iceland 2020 & 2021: Demographics, travel behavior and attitudes)*. Reykjavík: Ferðamálastofa (Tourism Office).

Ólafsdóttir, R., and M. Runnström. 2013. "Assessing hiking trails condition in two popular tourist destinations in the Icelandic highlands." *Journal of Outdoor Recreational Tourism , 3–4* 57–67.

Ólafsdóttir, Runnström R. 2013. "Assessing hiking trails condition in two popular tourist destinations in the Icelandic highlands." *Journal ofOutdoor Recreation Tourism* 57-67.

Onmanorama. 2024. *Travel - Volcano tourism: Here's why adventure seekers love it*. February 9. Accessed February 27, 2024. https://www.onmanorama.com/travel/outside-kerala/2024/02/08/volcano-tourism-adventure-seekers-iceland.html.

Owen, Joanne. 2023. *Is Iceland expensive? 2024 Travel Tips*. https://www.roughguides.com/articles/is-iceland-expensive/.

Pan, Zhongdang, and Gerald Kosicki. "Framing Analysis: An Approach to News Discourse." *Political Communication* 10, no. 1 (1993): 55–75. doi:10.1080/10584609.1993.9962963.

Pearlman, D., and O. Melnik. 2008. " Hurricane Katrina's effect on the perceptions of New Orleans leisure tourists. ." *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, 25(1)* 58-67.

Peeters, P., S. Gossling, J. Klijs, and et al. 2018. *Research for TRAN Committee – Overtourism: Impact and Possible Policy Responses*. Policy Department for Structural and Cohesion Policies, Brussels: European Parliament,.

Perlan. n.d. *Perlan - Icelandic Folklore about the Northern Lights*. Accessed March 7, 2024. https://perlan.is/articles/icelandic-folklore-northern-lights.

Pétursdóttir, Jóhanna. "From Iceland — Iceland Doesn't Want More Tourists, According To Business Insider." *The Reykjavík Grapevine*, May 27, 2016.

https://grapevine.is/news/2016/05/27/iceland-doesnt-want-more-tourists-according-to-business-insider/.

Pforr, C., and P. Hosie. 2008. "Crisis management in tourism: Preparing for recovery." *Journal Travel Tourism Marketing 23* 249–264.

Pforr, Christof, Ross Dowling, and Michael Volgger. 2021. *Consumer Tribes in Tourism - Contemporary Perspectives on Special-Interest Tourism.* Singapore: Springer.

Prakash, PRARTHANA. 2024. *Iceland's booming tourist industry and hot housing market is leaving locals out in the cold.* January 3. https://fortune.com/europe/2024/01/03/iceland-tourism-housing-costs-inflation-residents/.

Pritchard, A., and N. Morgan. 2000. "Constructing tourism landscapes—gender, sexuality and space." *Tourism Geographies, 2(2)* 115–139.

Promote Iceland. 2017. *Inspire by Iceland.* http://www.islandsstofa.is/en/tourism/inspired-by-iceland.

Puckett, JESSICA. 2024. *What Travelers Should Know About Iceland's Latest Volcanic Eruption.* January 24. Accessed February 27, 2024. https://www.cntraveler.com/story/iceland-volcano-eruption-flights-travel-advice#:~:text=from%20the%20country.%E2%80%9D-,Site%20closures,Grindavik%2C%20is%20closed%20to%20visitors.

Purvis, Ben, Yong Mao, and Darren Robinson. "Three Pillars of Sustainability: In Search of Conceptual Origins." *Sustainability Science* 14, no. 3 (May 2019): 681–95. doi:10.1007/s11625-018-0627-5.

Rao, G. Kondala. 2017. " Role of media in tourism & new communication technologies *International Journal for Innovative Research in Multidisciplinary Field issn – 2455-0620 Volume - 3, Issue - 1* 35 - 39.

Ravilious, Kate. "Iceland's Reykjanes Fires May Burn for Decades, History Suggests." *The Guardian*, January 24, 2024, sec. World news. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/jan/24/terrawatch-iceland-reykjanes-volcano-fires-continue-decades-history-suggests.

Remer, Michele, and Jianguo Liu. 2022. "International Tourism in the Arctic under COVID-19: A Telecoupling Analysis of Iceland." *Sustainability* 1-21.

Reykjavík AFP. "Iceland Declares State of Emergency over Volcanic Eruption Threat." *The Guardian*, November 10, 2023, sec. World news. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/nov/10/iceland-declares-state-of-emergency-over-volcanic-eruption-threat.

Ritchie, B. 2008. "Tourism disaster planning and management: From response and recovery to reduction and readiness." *Current Issues in Tourism, 11(4)* 315–348.

Ritchie, B. W. 2004. "Chaos, Crisis and Disasters: A Strategic Approach to Crisis Management in the Tourism Industry." *Tourism Management. 25* 669-684.

Ritchie, B. W., J. C. Crotts, A. Zehrer, and G. T. Volsky. 2013. "Understanding the effects of a tourism crisis: The impact of the BP oil spill on regional lodging demand." *Journal of Travel Research, 53(1)* 12–25.

Ritchie, Brent W. 2003. "Chaos, crises and disasters: a strategic approach to crisis management in the tourism industry." *Elsevier - Tourism Management 25 (2004)* 669–683.

Rittichainuwat, B. N. 2008. "Responding to disaster: the case study of Phuket, Thailand. ." *Journal of Travel Research, 46(4)* 422-432.

Rodrigues, A. L. O., A. Rodrigues, and D. M. Peroff. 2015. " The sky and sustainable tourism development: A case study of a dark sky reserve implementation in Alqueva." *International Journal of Tourism Research, 17(3)* 292–302.

Roehl, W. S., and D. R. Fesenmaier. 1992. "Risk perceptions and pleasure travel: an exploratory analysis." *Journal of Travel Research, 32(2)* 255-273.

Rogers, E. M. 1962. *Diffusions of Innovations.* New York: Free Press of Glencoe.

Rosengren, K. E. 1994. *Media Effects and Beyond (Culture Socialism and Lifestyle).* Great Britain: T.J. Press (Padstow).

Rossello, Jaume, Susanne Becken, and Maria Santana-Gallego. 2020. "The effects of natural disasters on international tourism: A global analysis." *Tourism Management 79 104080* 1 - 10.

Rossi, Ashley, and Shannon McMahon. "12 Dream Destinations That Don't Actually Want You to Visit." *Business Insider*, April 4, 2016. https://www.businessinsider.com/destinations-putting-limits-on-tourists-2016-4.

Ruan, W. Q., Y. Q. Li, and C. H. S. Liu. 2017. "Measuring tourism risk impacts on destination image. ." *Sustainability, 9(9)* 1501–1516.

Rucinska, Dorota. "Natural Disaster Tourism as a Type of Dark Tourism." *International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences* 10, no. 5 (2016).

Ryu, K., B. M. Bordelon, and D. M. Pearlman. 2013. "Destination-image recovery process and visit intentions: lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina. ." *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management, 22(2)* 183-203.

Sæþórsdóttir, Anna Dóra, C. Michael Hall, and Margrét Wendt. 2020b. "Overtourism in Iceland: Fantasy or Reality?" *Sustainability*, September 8: 1-ěř.

Sæþórsdóttir, Anna Dóra, Michael C. Hall, and Margrét Wendt. 2019. " Senses by seasons: Tourists' perceptions depending onseasonality in popular nature destinations in Iceland." *Sustainability 11* 3059.

Sæþórsdóttir, Anna Dóra, Michael C. Hall, and Margrét Wendt. 2020a. "From Boiling to Frozen? The Rise and Fall of International Tourism to Iceland in the Era of Overtourism." *Sustainability* (MDPI) 1-19.

Salazar, N., and N Graburn. 2014. "Introduction." In *Tourism Imaginaries. Anthropological Approaches* , by N. Salazar and N Graburn, 1-28. New York: Oxford: Berghahn Books.

Sausmarez, N. de. 2007. "Crisis Management, Tourism and Sustainability: The Role of Indicators." *Journal of Sustainable Tourism. 15 (6),* 700-714.

Schmallegger, D., and D. Carson. 2008. "Blogs in tourism: changing approaches to information exchange." *Journal of Vacation Marketing, 14(2)* 99–110.

Semetko, Holli A., and Patti M. Valkenburg. "Framing European Politics: A Content Analysis of Press and Television News." *Journal of Communication* 50, no. 2 (June 1, 2000): 93–109. doi:10.1111/j.1460-2466.2000.tb02843.x.

Sennert, S. S. K., E. W. Klemetti, and D. K Bird. 2018 . " Role of Social Media and Networking in Volcanic Crises and Communication." In *Observing the Volcano World: Volcano Crisis Communication*, by CJ Editors: Fearnley, DK Bird, K Haynes, WJ McGuire and G Jolly, 733-743 . Berlin : Springer-Verlag Berlin .

Séraphin, Hugues, Tatiana Gladkikh, and Tan Vo Thanh. 2020. *Overtourism -Causes, Implications and Solutions.* Palgrave Macmillan.

Shakeela, A., and S. Becken. 2015. "Social amplification and attenuation of climate change risk in a vulnerable tourism destination." *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 23(1)* 65–84.

Sharifpour, M., G. A. Walters, and B. R. Ritchie. 2014. "Risk perception, prior knowledge and willingness to travel. ." *Journal of Vacation Marketing, 20(2)* 111-123.

Sharifpour, M., G. Walters, B. Ritchie, and C. Winter. 2014. "Investigating the role of prior knowledge in tourist decision making: A structural equation model of risk perceptions and information search." *Journal of Travel Research, 53(3)* 307–322.

Sharpley, Richard, and Phillip R. Stone. *The Darker Side of Travel : The Theory and Practice of Dark Tourism*. 1st ed. Vol. 41. Aspects of Tourism Series. Channel View Publications, Limited, 2009.

Sheivachman, Andrew. 2016. Iceland and the Trials of 21st Century Tourism. https://skift.com/iceland-tourism/.

Name—. 2019. *Skift.* September 11. Accessed April 26, 2024. https://skift.com/2019/09/11/the-rise-and-fall-of-icelands-tourism-miracle/.

Shondell Miller, D. 2008 . " Disaster tourism and disaster landscape attractions after Hurricane Katrina. International Journal of Culture." *Tourism and Hospitality Research, 2 (2)* 115–131.

Shulman, Hillary C, and Matthew D Sweitzer. "Advancing Framing Theory: Designing an Equivalency Frame to Improve Political Information Processing." *Human Communication Research* 44, no. 2 (April 1, 2018): 155–75. doi:10.1093/hcr/hqx006.

Sigurðardóttir, Johanna. 2023. *Medium.* May 17. Accessed May 7, 2024. https://medium.com/@Johanna_Sigurdardottir23/bubble-hotel-in-iceland-glamping-under-the-northern-lights-5030eae8a24e.

Sigurdardottir, Ragnhildur. 2024. *Bloomberg - Iceland Tourism Underwhelms as Prices, Volcano Deter Travelers.* March 28. Accessed April 20, 2024. https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2024-03-28/iceland-tourism-underwhelms-as-prices-volcano-deter-travelers.

Sigurdsson, H., and R. Lopes-Gautier. 1999. "Volcanoes and Tourism." In *Encyclopedia of volcanoes*, by Houghton B, McNutt SR, Rymer H, Stix J (eds) Sigurdsson H, 1283–1299. Cambridge: Academic Press,.

Silberberg, Ted. "Cultural Tourism and Business Opportunities for Museums and Heritage Sites." *Tourism Management* 16, no. 5 (August 1, 1995): 361–65. doi:10.1016/0261-5177(95)00039-Q.

Silverstone, R. 1999. *Why Study the Media?* London: Sage Publication.

Skopeliti, Clea. "'This Is the End': People Who Fled Icelandic Volcano Fear Their Town Will Not Survive." *The Guardian*, February 10, 2024, sec. World news. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/feb/10/this-is-the-end-people-who-fled-icelandic-volcano-fear-town-not-survive.

Slattery, K., M. Doremus, and L. Marcus. 2001. "Shifts in public affairs reporting on the network evening news: a move towards the sensational. ." *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media, 45* 290-302.

Small, C., and T. Naumann. 2001. " The global distribution of human population and recent volcanism." *Environmental Hazards 3* 93-109.

Smith, A. 2005. "Conceptualizing city image change: the 're-imaging' of Barcelona." *Tourism Geographies 7(4)* 398–423.

Social Science Research Institute. 2014. *Viðhorf Íslendinga til Ferðaþjónustu. Unnið fyrir Ferðamálastofu. [Icelander's Attitudes towards the Tourism Industry. Conducted for the Icelandic Tourist Board]*. Reykjavík, Iceland: Social Science Research Institute.

Soleimani, Samaneh, Johan Bruwer, Michael J. Gross, and Richard Lee. 2019. "Astrotourism conceptualisation as special-interest tourism (SIT) field: a phenomonologica approach." *Current Issues in Tourism, 22:18* 2299-2314.

Stack, S. 2003. "Media coverage as a risk factor in suicide." *Journal of Epidemiol community Health, 57* 238e240.

Statistics Iceland. 2020. "External Trade. Trade in Goods and Services. Selected ITEMS of the Exports of Goods." *Statistics Iceland*. https://px.hagstofa.is/pxen/pxweb/en/Efnahagur/Efnahagur__utanrikisverslun__3_voruthjonusta__voruthjonusta/UTA05003.px.

Statistics Iceland. n.d. *Population* . Accessed 2024. https://statice.is/publications/publication/inhabitants/population-development-2018/.

Strobl, E. 2011. "The economic growth impact of hurricanes: evidence from U.S. coastal counties." *The Review of Economics and Statistics, 93(2)* 575-589.

Tang, Mengyao. 2009. *All year tourism in Iceland based on brand value,* . Aalborg: AAU.

Telfer, Ryan. *Iceland Might Not Exist Anymore*, 2023.

      https://www.youtube.com/shorts/E9SUhc73xsw.

The World Bank. 2020. "Indicators." https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/.

The World Bank. n.d. *International Tourism, Number of Arrivals*. Accessed 2024. https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/ST.INT.ARVL .

The World Bank. n.d. *Population, Total*. . Accessed April 25, 2024. https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL.

Tierney, K., C. Bevc, and E. Kuligowski. 2006. "Metaphors matter: disaster myths media frames, and their consequences in Hurricane Katrina. ." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 604(1)* 57-81.

Tómas, Arnar. n.d. *Guide to Iceland*. Accessed February 27, 2024. https://guidetoiceland.is/best-of-iceland/the-ultimate-guide-to-glamping-in-iceland.

Torbianelli, V. 2012. "The local economic impact of cruises: From figures to the active policies of the European harbour cities POMORSTVO ." *Scientific Journal of Maritime Research 26(1)* 139–150.

Tourtellot, Jonathan. "Overtourism: Too Much of a Good Thing." *Travel*, December 21,

2018. https://www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/article/overtourism-how-to-make-global-tourism-sustainable.

Toya, H., and M. Skidmore. 2007. "Economic development and the impacts of natural disasters." *Economics Letters, 94* 20-25.

Tung, Vincent Wing Sun, and J. R. Brent Ritchie. "Exploring the Essence of Memorable Tourism Experiences." *Annals of Tourism Research* 38, no. 4 (October 1, 2011): 1367–86. doi:10.1016/j.annals.2011.03.009.

Trumbo, C. W., L. Peek, M. A. Meyer, H. L. Marlatt, E. Gruntfest, B. D. McNoldy, and et al. 2016. "A cognitive-affective scale for hurricane risk perception." *Risk Analysis, 36 (12)* 2233–2246.

Tseng,] C., B. Wu, A.M. Morrison, J. Zhang, and Y.C. Chen. 2015. "Travel blogs on China as a destination image formation agent: a qualitative analysis using Leximancer." *Tourism Management 46* 347–358.

UNWTO. n.d. *International Tourism Highlights.* Accessed April 15, 2024. https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/pdf/10.18111/9789284421152.

UNWTO. n.d. *Resources. Tourism Data Dashboard. Global and Regional Tourism Performance. Key Tourism Indicators.* Accessed April 15, 2024. https://www.unwto.org/global-and-regional-tourism-performance.

UNWTO. 1983. *Risks of Saturation of Tourist Carrying Capacity Overload in Holiday Destinations. .* UNWTO - United Nations World Tourism Organization, Madrid: UNWTO.

UNWTO "Tourism in 2030 Agenda." Accessed March 10, 2024.

https://www.unwto.org/tourism-in-2030-agenda.

Vaya, E., J. M. Garcia, J. Roman, and et al. 2018. "Economic impact of cruise activity: The case of Barcelona." *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing 35(4)* 479–492.

Veðurstofa íslands. 2024. *Icelandic Met Office - Magma volume beneath Svartsengi reaching similar level as prior to last eruptions.* February 23. Accessed February 27, 2024. https://en.vedur.is/about-imo/news/a-seismic-swarm-started-north-of-grindavik-last-night.

Visit Iceland. 2023. *Visit iceland.* Accessed March 5, 2024. https://www.visiticeland.com/article/iceland-in-numbers.

Visit Iceland "The Regions - Reykjavík - The Capital." Accessed April 27, 2024.

https://www.visiticeland.com/the-regions/Reykjavík-the-capital/.

Visit South Iceland. "Visit South Iceland." *Visit South Iceland.* Accessed March 28, 2024. https://www.south.is/en.

Volcano trails. n.d. *Volcano Trails - Glamping*. Accessed May 7, 2024. https://volcanotrails.com/blog/glamping-iceland/.

Volo, S. 2008. "Communicating tourism crises through destination websites. ." *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, 23(2e4)* 83-93.

Voorhees, C. C. W., J. Vick, and D. D. Perkins. 2007. "'Came hell and high water': the intersection of Hurricane Katrina, the news media, race and poverty. ." *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology, 17(6)*.

Waldek, Stefanie. 2024. *The Northern Lights Could Be Extra Intense and Appear More This Year — Here's Why*. January 13. Accessed April 20, 2024. https://www.travelandleisure.com/solar-maximum-northern-lights-8424461.

Waller, M., Z. Lei, and R. Pratten. 2014. "Focusing on Teams in Crisis Management Education: An Integrated and Simulation-Based Approach." *Academy of Management Learning and Education* 208-221.

Walters, Gabrielle, Judith Mair, and Joshua Lim. 2016. "Sensationalist media reporting of disastrous events: Implications for tourism." *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management 28* 3-10.

Ward, TERRY. 2023. *2024 may bring the best auroras in 20 years*. December 1. Accessed February 24, 2024. https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/article/auroras-solar-maximum-2024.

Weaver, D. B. 2001. "Ecotourism in the context of other tourism types." *The encyclopaedia of ecotourism* 10.

Weinberger, M. C., C. T. Allen, and W. R. Dillon. 1981. "Negative Information: Perspectives and Research Directions." *Advances in Consumer Research, Vol. 8, edited by K. B. Monroe. Ann Arbor, MI: Association for Consumer Research* 398-404.

Wessely, S. 1987. "Mass hysteria: two syndromes? ." *Psychological Medicine, 17* 109-120.

Williams, A., and V. Baláž. 2015. "Tourism risk and uncertainty: Theoretical reflections." *Journal of Travel Research, 54(3)* 271–287.

Williams, K. L., and H. J. R. Keys. 2013. *Reducing volcanic risk on the Tongariro Alpine Crossing*. Report of a workshop 24 September 2013. 36 p, Department of Conservation Tongariro District.

Willsher, Kim. "'This Town Might Be over': Grindavík Residents Face Uncertain Future after Volcano Erupts Again." *The Guardian*, January 15, 2024, sec. World news. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/jan/15/grindavik-residents-face-uncertain-future-after-volcano-erupts-again-iceland.

Xiang, Z., and U. Gretzel. 2010. "Role of social media in online travel information search." *Tourism Management, 31(2)* 179–188.

Young, W. B., and R. J. Montgomery. 1997. " Crisis management and its impact on destination marketing." *Journal of Convention & Exhibition Management, 1(1)* 3-18.

Zhang, H., X. Fu, L.A. Cai, and L. Lu. 2014. " Destination image and tourist loyalty: a metaanalysis." *Tourism Management 40* 213-223.