

Anti-Tourism Protests in European Cities

The influence of tourism critical encounters on
young travellers' travel behaviour in the city of Barcelona

Case Study Barcelona

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Picture 1: Anti-Tourism Protests near Parc de Güell in the neighbourhood Gracia, Barcelona (by author).

Abstract

This thesis seeks to partake in the discussion on overtourism by displaying the perspective of young travellers. The focus is on critical encounters with anti-tourism protests and how it influences the travel behaviour of young travellers. Negative emotions towards the anti-tourism protests keep the overtone in this study. However, they do not always lead to behavioural changes. New dimensions of behavioural responses are presented in this thesis which gives an overview of the travel behaviour and attitude towards the publicly presented frustration of local communities in European cities. Through a closer interpretation on the young travellers' view on overtourism, it is presented that the core of the local communities frustration is not evident for the young travellers. This results in having limited knowledge about how tourist should behave to minimize disturbance to the life of locals.

Keywords: overtourism, critical encounter, anti-tourism movements, emotional and behavioural responses.

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1. Introduction

“Barcelona has become worse than a zoo. Visitors leave the animals alone in a zoo whereas tourists interrupt the lives of the inhabitants of this city. Everything is allowed. And the visitors do not care where they are. Whether it is Barcelona, Amsterdam or Paris, they come to get drunk for a week. The rest is a side-issue.” (Nuria Poch, Barcelona, Documentary ‘City for Sale’)

A local who lives in the city centre of Barcelona shares how mass tourism has marked her daily life (Alvarez Solar, 2017). The documentary ‘City for Sale’ shows how the pressure of mass tourism is leaving its mark on Barcelona. Districts have changed fast in recent years together with the type of tourism. Barcelonians argue that no one cares about the city and that the charisma of Barcelona seems to have disappeared. The pressure of mass tourism is not only applicable for Barcelona, but tourism is causing unsustainable impact worldwide whereby many destinations fail to manage the growing visitor arrivals (Koens et al., 2018; Peeters et al., 2018; UNWTO, 2018, 2019). The rapid tourism growth leads to increasing pressure on destinations in terms of quality of life, overcrowding, pressure on facilities, crime, nuisance and community acceptance. In the perception of the residents, tourism disrupts the experience of their home environment, whereas it might damage the destination experience of a tourist as well (Dioko, 2017). Long-term residents are becoming displaced by tourists due to the gentrification of neighbourhoods. The increase of rental accommodations in private apartments leads to an invasion of tourists in public space and the disturbance of youngsters during the day and night which is changing everyday urban life (Bellini & Pasquinelli, 2017).

Previous research primarily investigates the consequences of overtourism. These are anti-tourism movements, pollution and tourism-phobia (Croes et al., 2017; Milano, Novelli & Cheer, 2019) whereby the focus is on the effects related to residents. Thus, how they perceive the growing visitors arrivals in their home environment and what kind of impact it has on the social carrying capacity (Hughes, 2018; Muler Gonzalez, Coromina & Gali., 2018). The growing visitors’ numbers and their allied behaviour resulted in social movements of locals. Various protests occurred against the social, environmental and economic consequences that the current type of tourist numbers has on numerous European cities, from Dubrovnik to Rome and San Sebastian to Barcelona (Hughes, 2018). Other existing research focuses on the potential solutions, such as putting campaigns in place aimed at tourist to educate them (Seraphin et al., 2019). These campaigns are comparable to the anti-tourism protests because these are directed towards the tourists as well. However, do the anti-tourism protests make tourists aware that they are part of the problem? There is knowledge about the effects of overtourism and potential solutions together with the local’s perception and the anti-tourism movement, as mentioned. Also, there are studies concerning tourist perception, acceptability and preferences of overcrowding (Neuts & Nijkamp, 2012) and environment quality (Bird, 1996; Petrosillo et al., 2007). All of these studies are mainly concerned with the relationship between the perception of the surroundings and visitors’ characteristics. It also shows that tourist perception studies are scarce in urban areas with high density. Whereas previous research did not take into account the awareness of tourists of the locals’ feelings towards tourism, this research does focus on this matter and urban areas. It combines the tourist perception towards overcrowding and environment whereby they are being confronted with the locals’ feelings concerning tourism impacts.

This thesis aims to explore the critical encounter of tourists with anti-tourism protests. A critical encounter refers to the moment that tourists encounter anti-tourism slogans, signs and demonstrations in real life (Flanagan, 1954). The encounter leads to observable human activity that can be used to make predictions about the person that is performing the act. This critical encounter might raise questions such as if the tourists are really becoming (more) aware of the locals' frustration through this confrontation and what kind of impact this exactly has on the tourists in the form of decision-making of their actions. Since the anti-tourism protests are visible in the popular Spanish tourism destination Barcelona and because international media has paid plenty of attention in particular to the situation in this city, Barcelona makes a relevant case for study. Tourists are destabilising the neighbourhoods in the city by making them more banal and similar to each other (Burgen, 2018). Both national as local level debate about the future of the Spanish city. A central theme concerns the appropriate form of making tourists aware that they are part of the problem and become accomplices to reduce the numbers of tourists and avoid disturbance for the locals. As a side note, the bad-behaving tourists' incidents at places that are coping with overtourism are used as sensationalism and generalized by the mass media which feeds the anti-tourist sentiment again and triggers local discontent (Alexis, 2017). Nevertheless, the critical problem stays; do the current responses of the locals affect the tourists? Do they become more aware of their behaviour and site choices to visit, or might it even boost the current behaviour of tourists that are perceived negatively by locals?

Therefore, the following research question is developed in order to study the problems mentioned above:

“How do critical encounters with anti-tourism protests in Barcelona influence the travel behaviour of young travellers?”

This research offers a look behind the anti-tourism protests from the tourists' viewpoint instead of the Barcelonians. The first part of the study centres around the knowledge of tourists about overtourism and the anti-tourism protests. Are they aware of overtourism, overcrowding and the locals' frustration at all? The second part includes the critical encounter by investigating how tourists perceive the anti-tourism protests by looking at it and if this influences their decision-making process during the rest of their visit to Barcelona. It is essential to mention that the study is in particular on local responses, in the form of signs, slogans and demonstrations, that are visible when walking at the street. Local responses in the form of policies are not included in the research. By having said that, the following sub-questions are formed:

- 1) *In what way are young travellers aware of overtourism in Barcelona?*
- 2) *How do young travellers perceive the anti-tourism protests in Barcelona?*
- 3) *How do the anti-tourism protests in Barcelona influence the decision-making of young travellers?*

This thesis adheres to the following structure: the following chapter elaborates on the existing literature about the storyline of overtourism in urban areas and anti-tourism movements. Since there is little literature available about tourism critical encounters, this part is supplemented with the possible effect of critical service encounter concerning emotional and behavioural responses. After that, in the methodology, the case study will be explained together with the choice of methods and ethical considerations. After this, the results will be presented and analysed in order to answer the research questions. Next, the conclusion is discussed whereby the findings and literature are critically interpreted by discussing similarities and differences. Finally, there will be reflected on the research process in combination with future research suggestions.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Overtourism

In the last few years, in many popular tourist destinations, local people radically changed their perception about tourism since the tipping point had been reached and mass tourism became a local political issue. The concept that emerged rapidly with this development is overtourism. This term enables people to share their concerns regarding the development of the tourism industry.

However, the definition of the term is debated by several scholars. Although the term overtourism is entirely new and has been used the last few years intensively, the phenomenon in which tourism negatively affects destination has been discussed in the 1960s already (Capocchi et al., 2019). In the past, the focus was on the tourist numbers and how to find a limit to it in order to decrease the serious negative consequences which may be accompanied by tourism. Concepts as carrying capacity raised with the focus only on tourism numbers (O'Reilly, 1986; McCool & Lime, 2001). Other studies argued that concentration, location, visitor behaviour, timing, local etiquette and experience with tourism are as crucial as tourist numbers (Lindberg et al., 1997; Postma, 2013). Nevertheless, where does the term overtourism suddenly comes from? Koens et al. (2018) suggest that the term overtourism is created from media discourses which describes the negative consequences of tourism growth leading to overcrowding in places where local inhabitants suffer from the tourism effects which has led to changes in their overall everyday life and well-being in general. However, in another study, Koens et al. (2019) argue that the negative impact that is related to the concept overtourism is not only based on absolute numbers of tourists but also reflects the touristification of cities in terms of physical characteristics and tourist behaviour. This means that newly developing tourist areas can experience serious negative consequences from a small increase in tourist numbers as well. Correspondingly, Benner (2019) connects overtourism with 1) the rising living costs and housing prices which might lead to gentrification, 2) losing of a destination's characteristics which are used by residents to identify themselves with a place, 3) the privatization of previously public spaces. Benner (2019) supports this by writing about a recent debate regarding overtourism that focuses on the social, environmental and cultural sustainability of the growing mass tourism. The scholar points out that the level of awareness of the potential undesirable effects by locals and policymakers is the actual new development in the overall debate. Within this perspective, overtourism can be considered as a social issue since the phenomenon is 1) not only from the last decade, 2) impacts are not city-wide, 3) it is not a tourism problem only and 4) it is about perceived tourism clashes and violations on the lives of locals. (Benner, 2019; Capocchi et al., 2019; Koens et al., 2019).

Generally, it is claimed that overtourism is putting infrastructure under pressure, spoiling beaches, damaging the landscape and displacing residents by tourists in the housing market (Capocchi, 2019). This has led to an unpleasant atmosphere for residents as well as for tourists (Francis, 2018). A way of managing the overtourism issue is to spread tourists to undiscovered areas in the area (Koens et al., 2018). This strategy has been implemented in multiple cities at the moment. The idea behind these strategies is to increase the overall tourism carrying capacity of the cities that are dealing with overtourism issues. However, the issues are shifted by spreading visitors since the increase of visitors strengthen the negative perceptions of locals in the yet undiscovered areas.

It could be said that the term overtourism should not be describing a single phenomenon focused on tourism only, but it includes multiple phenomena that overlap with each other as multiple authors argue (Benner, 2019; Capocchi et al., 2019; Koens et al., 2019). Growing tourism arrivals is often the starting point of the overtourism discussion. However, overcrowding, gentrification and misbehaviour are also impacts that trigger the sharing of concerns by the local inhabitants, and subsequently part of the tourism discussion in European cities.

2.2 Anti-tourism movements

While many tourists want to experience the ‘authentic’ local life during their visit, the local inhabitants of many tourism destinations see their sense of place disappearing. Across the globe, the concerns towards tourism development transformed into social unrest with resistance and protests against the increasing tourism numbers and aligned policies.

2.2.1 Irridex Model

The reactions to these negative tourism impacts perceived by local inhabitants are associated with terms like tourism phobia and anti-tourism (Milano, 2018; Peeters et al., 2018). The current behaviour and feelings of some locals towards tourists are developed throughout the years. The Irridex model of Doxey (1975) relates the number of tourists with the locals’ feelings and shows the corresponding stage (Figure 1).

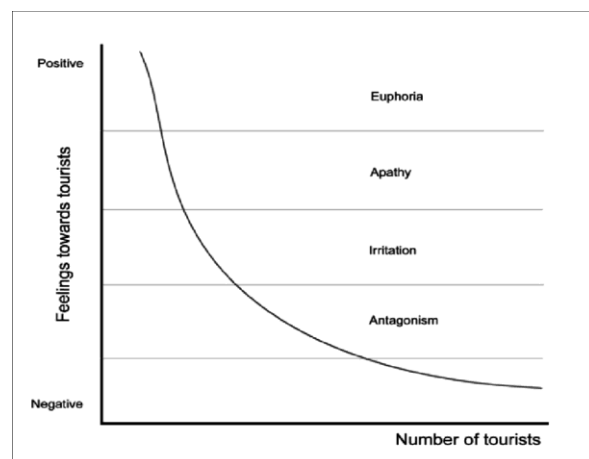


Figure 1 Irridex Doxey (1975)

The first stage is Euphoria, in which locals are open and enthusiastic to interact with tourists. The second stage is called Apathy, where tourists become part of the locals’ everyday life. The interaction between both parties decreases as tourists are taken for granted. In the third phase, locals become annoyed and believe that tourists disturb their daily life, also known as the irritation phase. By comparing the feeling of the anti-tourism with the Irridex model of Doxey (1975), it can be said that the behaviour and feelings that locals express with the anti-tourism protests are related to the Antagonism stage. This attitude is the fourth and last stage of the model. Locals tend to blame tourists for the deterioration of facilities, public space and sites. In this phase, locals also show their frustration in public which has been done in the form of anti-tourism protests in many cities across Europe.

Though the model of Doxey (1975) has received some criticism because it ignores the local community's heterogeneous profile and makes no difference between various stakeholders (Mason & Cheyne, 2000). However, for this research, it is not of the essence to research in detail the heterogeneous local community's perception of overtourism since the focus is on the locals behind the anti-tourism protests. It is about if the tourists are aware of how various local communities feel about tourism in their city.

2.2.2 Anti-Tourism Protests

Protests against mass tourism occurred already during the mid-1990s in southern European countries. However, in the last two decades, social movements expressed their concerns regarding the progressively growing tourist numbers in some European cities. Initially, tourists were welcomed by the locals since they generated income for them. However, while the tourist numbers increased, locals might have encountered that their quality of life is under-pressure which results in being less welcoming towards tourists (Croes et al., 2017). This is also known as tourism phobia; *"the emergence of social discontent with the pressures linked to tourism growth, as well towards discrediting and besmirching the activities of grassroots-led social movements and civil society groups involved"* (Milano et al., 2019, p.354). Nonetheless, local communities prefer to call it more self-defence against the death of the neighbourhood instead of using tourism phobia because they are not afraid for tourism like it was in the past (Hughes, 2018). Furthermore, Coldwell (2017) mentions that anti-tourism movements have risen quickly in many European destinations, where tourism planning is not correctly managed. For example, anti-tourism groups in Venice marched through the city, raising angry their voice at the pollution that the cruise ships cause to the city's environment. This occurred because the quality of life and well-being of local inhabitants are under pressure since the current model of tourism success around the globe during the past decades aimed at stimulating growth in tourist numbers and spending (Milano et al., 2019). Therefore, the central focus of anti-tourism movements is on making a place habitable and secure for residents who are not lost for economic purposes. Even though Delgado (2008) drew already urgent attention to the fact that the new tourist class would replace the longstanding residents out of the neighbourhood at a particular moment in time, the sensation about the impact of mass tourism in various European cities drew more attention to mass media (Milano, 2018).

To explain further, the tension between locals and tourist have arisen since both groups have different values and behaviour, which changes the characteristics of residential neighbourhoods (Mermet, 2017; Hughes, 2018). This might lead to host-visitor hostility since there is a high possibility of misunderstanding (Peeters et al., 2018). Subsequently, locals accusing young traveller of their uncivilised, anti-social behaviour. Since particular neighbourhoods are marginalized of residents and displaced by visitors with (possible) different value, the loss of the neighbourhood identity is fuel for the anti-tourism movements. The signs, slogans and demonstrations are performed with the purpose to make the locals' frustration on overcrowding and disturbance aware to the government as well as to tourists (Hughes, 2018). Local communities of European cities acknowledge that most of the problems are administrative however they want to share the message that tourists should live like a local instead of using the city as a playground where everything is allowed, and where things can be done which tourists usually do not do back home (Hughes, 2018; Milano et al., 2019).

The anti-social behaviour must be exchanged for respectful behaviour in which tourists try to interfere as little as possible with the locals' lives, for example, by not choosing a type of accommodation that has a direct negative impact on the locals or by avoiding crowded touristic hotspots.

By taken the Irridex model and anti-tourism protests into consideration, it can be said that due to the tourism planning of European cities, the identity of neighbourhoods has vanished away. Anti-tourism movements are established due to the numerous socio-cultural impacts that tourism has had on the local community the last decade (Hughes, 2018; Milano, 2018; Milano et al., 2019; Peeters et al., 2018). Misbehaviour and overcrowding of tourists are perceived negative by social movements which result in anti-tourism protests towards tourists. This indicates that the tolerance level of inhabitants towards the socio-cultural impacts of tourism has reached a point which has resulted in openly expressing their negative sentiment towards tourists. Locals of European cities want to wake tourists up of their possible behaviour consequences for the local environment.

2.3 Critical Anti-Tourism Encounters

As mentioned before, the anti-tourism protests occur to make tourists aware that they are unwelcomed by the local inhabitants unless they change their behaviour and dissolve into the local society lifestyle. Since local communities explicit express their emotions towards tourism with the use of protest, it is essential to know the impact of anti-tourism protests on tourists. Because those protests are done for a reason but how to figure out if the aim of the anti-tourism protests towards tourists is getting reached?

2.3.1 Critical Incident Technique

According to Jackson et al. (1996), for new research areas (the effect of anti-tourism protests on tourists), open-ended measures are considered to be the most useful. The Critical Incident Technique (CIT) is one of these open-ended measures. According to Flanagan (1954), an incident is "any observable human activity that is sufficiently complete in itself to permit inference or prediction to be made about the person performing the act" (p. 327). When tourists encounter an anti-tourism protest, there is an interaction between the tourists and locals which attributes to the behavioural and emotional responses of the tourists. On the other hand, Edvardsson and Roos (2001) regard an incident critical if "it deviates significantly, either positively or negatively from what is expected" (p. 18). Since the anti-tourism protests are generally not visible or formed in the streets, tourists do not expect them as being part of their tourist experience.

Moreover, Flaganan (1954) indicates that CIT could be adapted to meet the requirement of a specific study if the following five steps should be carried out 1) identification of the research aim; 2) instruct the participants so they can identify relatively recent critical encounters; 3) data collection method; 4) data analysis by using categories and (5) interpreting the results. Previous research of Gremler (2004) identified some strengths of CIT research: 1) new research evidence related to the phenomena studied can be generated; 2) the perception of participants from various cultures can be assessed with this method. Additionally, limitations of the CIT have been identified as by Gremler (2004); there might arise problems with recall bias if the data collection happens too long after that the critical incident occurred. Despite the limitation, the scholar argues that CIT is a sound method in order to analyse the emotional response.

2.3.2 *Emotional and Behavioural Responses*

Since emotions have a direct impact on tourists' behaviour, it is essential which potential emotions may lead to various potential kinds of attitudes and behaviour (Andersen & Kumar, 2006). Research showed that unpleasant emotions have the most significant effect on experience in comparison with positive emotions (Tronvoll, 2010). Also, unpleasant emotions appear the most frequently in service encounters. Therefore, four categories of unpleasant emotions are identified that covers 16 types of emotions. 1) Shame which includes guilt, embarrassment, shame and regret; 2) sadness which includes depression, unhappiness, sadness and loneliness); 3) anger which includes disgust, irritation, anger and rage, and 4) fear which includes nervousness, worry, fear and anxiety. These emotions are applicable to this study since it leads to a different kind of behaviour in order to cope with the situation. Since most of the critical encounter literature is focused on service management or residents in tourism communities, not all emotions can be applied to this research because the behavioural responses of these groups differ from tourists (Bjorklund and Philbrick 1972; Dogan, 1989; Ap and Crompton, 1993). Suitably, Edvardsson (1991) uses active and passive responses in the form of tolerance level by making a difference between toleration and tolerance threshold. Toleration includes 1) the participant accepts it, let it happen and goes on, 2) the participant adapts his/her behaviour in order to avoid the problem. Tolerance threshold means that the participant does not tolerate it and tries to remove the cause which can be done by 1) participants' reaction is aimed at the initiator's behaviour with attention to remove the cause, 2) participants' reaction is aimed to influence the institutional context either directed (specific plans) or non-directed (public opinion). Postma (2013) combines the irritation and irritation threshold to the form of tolerance level. The irritation level refers to the fact that the respondent is surprised but shows understanding and tones down the incident. In contrast, the irritation threshold implies that irritation about the incident is expressed in a highly critical, sometimes rough language.

To conclude, the CIT has been often used in order to analyse both negative as positive critical incidents (Flanagan, 1954; Edvardsson & Roos, 2001). Potential positive emotions in combination with behaviour changes are relatively unknown because they do not have the same intensity level of effect on behaviour as unpleasant emotions have. Hence, a negative emotion would be more likely to lead to a change in behaviour and decision-making during their holidays in comparison with a positive emotion (Tronvoll, 2010). Local inhabitants aim toward the negative critical incident since this make tourists more aware of their socio-cultural impact on the local community (Hughes, 2018). However, a positive critical encounter cannot be excluded from this research.

2.4 Relationships of Concepts

In this thesis, the behavioural response of young travellers as a result of a critical encounter with anti-tourism protests is being researched. The anti-tourism protests are a consequence of the rising frustration of local communities towards the growth of tourism numbers, the behaviour of tourists and the physical change of neighbourhoods (Benner, 2019; Capocchi et al., 2019; Koens et al., 2019). In other words, overtourism is the consequence of inadequate urban planning of mass tourism. The anti-tourism protests are established by anti-tourism movements who publicly want to make their frustration aware to the government as well as to tourists (Hughes, 2018; Milano, 2018; Milano et al., 2019). Tourists might become aware of the overtourism discussion via the media. However, raising awareness among tourists is also done with anti-tourism protests by locals. During and after this tourism critical encounter, emotional and behavioural responses are showed, whereas unpleasant emotions are more likely to result in behavioural changes (Tronvoll, 2010). These behavioural responses of tourism critical encounters can be divided into four dimensions (Edvarsson, 1991; Postma, 2013). In figure 2, the conceptual model is presented.

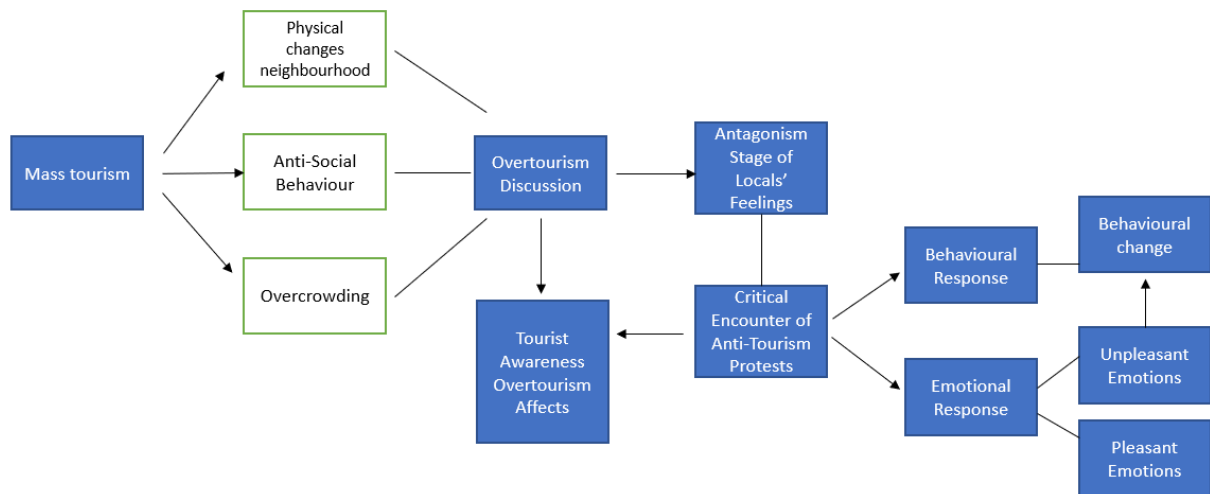


Figure 2 Conceptual Model Anti-Tourism Protests. Figure: by author.

3. Methodology

3.1 Study Area

Barcelona is one of the many European city travel destinations that experiences a negative impact of mass tourism for a couple of years now. The distribution of the tourist activity in the Spanish city is very uneven since it is mostly concentrated in the areas where the iconic sites are located, e.g. Sagrada Familia, Park Güell and the Ciutat Vella (Nofre et al., 2018). Since the tourist supply and demand is very high in these areas, they are set up for tourism activity by situating the majority of the hotels and tourist apartments in the historic centre and neighbourhoods such as Eixample, Gothic Quarter and Gracia. By changing resident houses into, e.g. Airbnb apartments to welcome tourists in the city, the price of the rent of property has risen in Barcelona. Thereby it became unaffordable to live in the city for locals. Thus, they were restricted to move out of the city. The displacement of local inhabitants in Barcelona is not only a cause due to mass tourism but also a result of real estate speculation as argued by a report of Gant (2016). However, the moving out of locals, the uneven concentration of tourists and the problem of overcrowding has changed the local living environment in a negative way according to the people who have stayed in Barcelona.

As a reaction on the arisen conflicts, the Federation of Barcelona Neighbourhood Association (FAVB) has been formed in order to act on the impacts of the tourism developments in Barcelona (Hughes, 2018). Multiple protests have been carried over the last four years to complain about the effects of overtourism. The famous street La Rambla has been occupied by around 2000 people who were holding posters with the text “Learn from Venice” and “Barcelona is not for sale” as they protested against the transformation of La Rambla in a tourists route (Bürgen, 2017). Next to that, numerous buildings in the city have been painted with graffiti slogans such as “This is not a beach resort” and “Tourist go home, refugees welcome!” In some cases, the anti-tourism protests even turned into violence against tourist buses by puncture the tyres while tourists were currently sitting on the bus and spraying anti-tourism slogans on the windows (Hunt, 2017). The latest protest against the growing tourism has been introduced by the FAVB by launching a covert bid to stop tourists from telling anyone that they have been in Barcelona. The idea behind the campaign is to avoid word of mouth, and hence others are not encouraged to visit the Spanish city (Perring, 2019). Since all these anti-tourism actions occurred in Barcelona in the last three years, the city is suitable as a case study for this research.

3.2 Method

In order to answer the research question “*How do critical encounters with anti-tourism protests in Barcelona influence the travel behaviour of young travellers?*” the most appropriate research method is a qualitative research method. This because the study focuses on getting an insight into how individuals experience a place together with capturing their perception which is related to the search of meaning what qualitative research is known about (Hay, 2016). In this thesis, the Critical Incident Technique (CIT) is used, which is explained in more detail later in combination with the walking interviews. The CIT is often used with service-related experiences (Flanagan, 1954). However, the CIT can be applied to this study since it is investigating a locally produced process powered by tourists and residents, which is seen as tourism (Postma, 2013). The technique can be used for critical encounters with anti-tourism protests because it has an emphasis on the process of consuming moments (Milne & Ateljevic, 2001). CIT is most frequently integrated within an in-depth semi-structured interview with open-ended questions (Easterby-Smith et al., 2002).

With this method, individuals provide an insight into their opinion through behaviour, reaction and narratives. It is about understanding the process of how tourists perceive the anti-tourism protests and what kind of influences it has on their decision-making. According to Longhurst (2010), this method leads to partly insights into the thoughts and behaviour of people, and it not used to measure the occurrence of a specific phenomenon in order to generalize.

3.2.1 Interviews

Semi-structured interviews are characterized by a beforehand established structure of subjects with the use of an interview guide (see Appendix 1). The interview consists of funnel structured questions which mean that broad questions about tourism impacts concerning no specific destination are asked first, whereas later on more specific questions based on the sub research questions are asked (Hay, 2016). The latter focuses on the knowledge about tourism issues in Barcelona, how they perceive the anti-tourism protests and if the critical encounter influences their decision-making while on holiday can be connected to the specific questions. Thus, the interview is structured according to the concepts; awareness, perception and decision-making. This structure guarantees the redirection of the conversation if it wanders away from the research topic, which increases the validity among the interviews as well. In addition, the probing questions open space for the participant' addition of issues and feelings (Dunn, 2016). Since the participant is able to speak in detail and depth for themselves with little direction from the researcher, the trustworthiness of the given answers is high.

Next to that, what do they think about the anti-tourism protests when they actually encounter them in real life and which feelings are expressed? Semi-structured interviews are chosen due to the informal characteristics of this type of interview (Longhurst, 2010). The informal tone is needed to keep the conversation open and give the respondents the feeling that they share their personal experience and perception with an acquaintance. The researcher has taken the participants on a walking interview through the streets or at a site where the anti-tourism protests are visible. In this way, the participant is experiencing the environment and get a critical encounter with the anti-tourism protests (Hay, 2016). The researcher has found the location of these protests through a local guide in Barcelona and a local researcher from the University of Barcelona. Most of the slogans are dated from 2017 when the issue of overtourism in Barcelona was at its peak. These slogans are situated in the old centre of Barcelona, which has been visited by the researcher before the actual data collection in order to determine the actual place of the anti-tourism protests. Since the Covid-19 crisis prevented the researcher to go to Barcelona once again to collect more participants, it has been decided to interview two participants through skype. It needs to be mentioned that the participants were not able to encounter the anti-tourism protests in real life but encountered them via photos that were taken by the researcher. This could lead to recall bias since the participants are not in Barcelona at that moment (Gremler, 2004). Also, standing eye to eye with the anti-tourism protests might lead to more extreme negative emotions since the participants could feel the frustration of the Barcelonians more present at that moment than when they would see the picture later after the holidays. On the other hand, the experiences are still at the top of their minds because the skype interviews took place two weeks after the visit to Barcelona, which prevents recall bias. They know how the current situation fields like in Barcelona. Additionally, the answers given by these two participants overlap on several topics with the viewpoint of various other participants who have done the walking interviews while being in Barcelona. This increases the trustworthiness of the skype interviews.

For all interviews applies that the answers of the participants throughout the interview are verified in the form of summarizing. This is also known as continuous member-checking, according to Harvey (2014), which increases the trustworthiness as well. Since there are many anti-tourism actions visible throughout the old centre of Barcelona, four graffiti slogans have been chosen to be used in this research. They are displayed below (Figure 3).



Figure 3 GIS Map Anti-Tourism Protests in Barcelona. Figure: by author.

3.2.2 Data Collection

To have a representative study, the focus of this study is not on all the tourists visiting Barcelona but on a specific target group that visits a site located in Barcelona where local anti-tourism protests are clearly visible. The chosen target group is young travellers that are characterized by their age (18-30). Young travellers are preferred since the misbehaviour reported by locals and newspapers are mostly concentrated on youngsters who disturb the neighbourhoods by their (mis)behaviour towards the locals.

Therefore, it is interesting and relevant to see how this target group reacts on the anti-tourism protests visible in the city and if this influences their decision-making of visiting certain places and also if this makes them aware of their behaviour while being in Barcelona. Especially since the target group awareness of the anti-tourism protests and how this affects their decision-making is underresearched yet by previous studies connected to overtourism. In general, it is challenging to interview tourists because overall, they have not much time to participate in research as they are on holiday and want to make the most of their time. Since the researcher is in the same age group and has similar interests as the target group, there is a reciprocal relationship; the researcher and participants are incomparable social positions which is beneficial when approaching and gaining participants to take part in the study (Hay, 2016). The participants are sampled at hostels, guided tours and cafés since these places and activities are most visited and carried out by young travellers. Relationships can be built which helps to encourage young travellers to participate. Since young travellers generally spend four to five days in a city to visit it on a lower scale, the researcher was able to approach them, make a connection and plan in a suitable time for the participant to carry out the interview divided over multiple days. In addition, by being an insider, the participants are more likely to share their opinion freely, and the researcher is more likely to understand what the participants are saying. This increases the validity since the collected information together with the researchers' interpretation are more valid and trustworthy than compared with an outsider (Hay, 2016).

Next to that, since it depended on which potential participant the researcher would be approaching, it can be seen as purposive sampling with a random character since every young traveller in Barcelona has the same chance of being chosen by the researcher to participate (Clifford et al., 2010). Two main strategies are used, which are (1) snowball sampling and (2) opportunistic sampling (Patton, 2002). The former describes using the network of previous participants to contact potential participants for the research. A weakness of the snowball sampling method is that young travellers with similar viewpoints, nationalities and characteristics are more conveniently accessed by the researcher, which limits the trustworthiness of the data. To overcome this but at the same time using the snowball technique, it is chosen to have a variation in participant selection, e.g. age, gender and nationality which is a strategy to enhance the validity of the research for the reason that culture might have an impact on the viewpoint of participants (Golafshani, 2003). Within this technique, young travellers who were eager to participate during the time that the researcher was in Barcelona has been selected. The reason for this is that even Barcelona is easily accessible for the researcher, time-limitation prevented the researcher from going multiple times. Opportunistic sampling expects flexibility from the researcher in case new leads follow during fieldwork (Clough et al., 2004). Advantage should be taken on unexpected situations which skype interviews are an example of. Contact details were sampled in Barcelona by having the coronavirus in the back of the researchers' mind, whereas two interviews have been done through skype two weeks later. A critical note, since various graffiti slogans are used in the walking interviews, it could be that one slogan is perceived as less vicious than others. Therefore, the slogan of "why call it tourism season if we cannot shoot them" is presented to all participants as the second slogan through an image. Figure 4 presents the characteristics of the participants.

Characteristics	Nationality	Age	Gender	Slogan	Neighbourhood
Participant 1	Finnish	25	Female	Tourism Kills The Cities	Gracia
Participant 2	Dutch	22	Female	Tourist Go Home	Gothic Quarter
Participant 3	American	23	Male	Tourists This Is A Conflict Zone Tourism Kills The Cities	Gracia
Participant 4	Italian	26	Male	Tourism Kills The Cities	Gracia
Participant 5	Dutch	23	Female	Tourism Kills The Cities	Gracia
Participant 6	Dutch	24	Female	El Turisme Mata Els Barris	El Raval
Participant 7	French	26	Female	El Turisme Mata Els Barris	El Raval
Participant 8	German	27	Male	Tourists This Is A Conflict Zone	Gracia
Participant 9	English	27	Male	Tourist Go Home	Skype
Participant 10	New Zealander	28	Male	Tourist Go Home	Skype

Figure 4 Characteristics Participants. Figure: by author.

3.3 Data Analysis

The raw data of the interviews need to be turned into a meaningful understanding which is done by the coding of the ten qualitative interviews. According to Cope (2016), the coding of qualitative data has three main functions 1) data reduction, 2) categorisation of data and 3) data analysing. In order to ease the coding process, it is essential to have a coding scheme (see Appendix 2). This coding scheme consists of topics that were identified through the literature analysis and new codes created by the researcher. The outline of key concepts has been done before the interviews already since it helped to understand the topics that appeared during the interviews and the relation between them (Hernández et al., 2014). Once the interviews were transcribed, the data were separated in three segments 1) Before critical encounter anti-tourism protest, 2) during critical encounter anti-tourism protest and 3) after critical encounter anti-tourism protest. The coding is done with the use of Atlas Ti. Within this program, sentences were linked to possible topics out of the literature review that is connected to the segments. If they were not compatible, new codes were created which are based on the interpretation of the researcher. According to Hernández et al. (2014), this is called constant comparison. The researcher interprets sentences and compares each interpretation with existing categories and otherwise assigns a new code. This technique contributes to the research validity because the categories and codes are checked over and over again throughout the various interviews. Whereas new emotional and behavioural responses of tourists are identified through the interviews, also unpleasant emotions and behavioural responses are not detected during the interviews while they were discovered by other authors.

The essence of rigour in qualitative researches is related to trustworthiness (Hay, 2016). Since the researcher is an insider, it involves subjectivity but also intersubjectivity. The researcher needs to be aware of her own interpretations while analysing the data. Therefore, by being clear about the choices made by the researcher and the use of triangulation, the trustworthiness of the research increases (Patton, 2002). By using multiple sources and peer review the research, it opens up to other views which sharpen the findings. Moreover, critical reflexivity of the researcher is requisite due to subjectivity about the subject and how people should perceive the anti-tourism protests. As the researcher is part of the target group, the risk of inserting personal opinions is high during the interview and coding process.

A way of preventing this has been done by sharing a copy of the interview transcript with the participant afterwards, which is called participant checking, and give the participant the option to review the detailed interview response which verifies the interpretive correctness (Brink, 1993; Hay, 2016).

Since the data of young travellers in Barcelona is used as a case study, the findings of this research could be transferable to other European cities, however, not to the entire tourist population of Barcelona in the opinion of the researcher. Other European cities are similar to Barcelona in terms of visitors. Since the travel behaviour of the young travellers would not differ from city to city and personal characteristics stay the same while travelling, the findings of this research can be applied to other European cities that are struggling over-tourism and subsequently anti-tourism movements. Moreover, the travel behaviour of young travellers and other groups of the tourist population in Barcelona differ from each other and also the view on the world and other people. Therefore, the findings of this research in terms of perception and changes in travel behaviour could not be applied directly to families or older people that are visiting Barcelona.

3.4 Research Ethics

With qualitative research, ethical implications can occur since personal experiences, interpretation and interpersonal relation between the researcher and participant are central with this type of research method. Hay (2010) argues that it is crucial for a qualitative researcher to behave ethically, keep the information told by the participant confidential and take accountability for their actions. In order to behave ethically responsible, the researcher should inform the participant beforehand about the duration, content and purpose of the interview. This demonstrates respect for the values and rights of the participant.

According to Dowling (2016), the following considerations can be taken into account in order to behave ethically responsible; informed consent (see Appendix 3), privacy and the prevention of any harm for the participant by taking part in the research. Informed consent means that the participant is informed, by the researcher through written consent, about the purpose of the research and guarantees the participant's privacy and rights of withdrawing the participation during the interview (Hay, 2016). It is crucial for the study to get legitim permission from the participant to use their insights and information for behalf of the research. Before the interview, the informed consent has been discussed with the participants in which they receive information about the aim of the study, their rights as participants and the interview setting in which an audio recorder and microphone is used to collect the data. In order to guarantee the privacy of the participants, the interview is anonymous, and the participants are indicated with their country of origin and age within the research. Also, it is mentioned that the information would be confidentially handled during and after the research (Vanclay et al., 2013). The interview recordings are stored, until the research has been accomplished, on the laptop of the researcher that is only used and accessible by the researcher.

4. Analysis

In this chapter, the effect that a critical encounter with anti-tourism protests has on tourists is researched by conducting and analysing interviews, and at the same time, the outcomes are compared with the theory. This chapter consists of the following sections: Subchapter 4.1 discusses the awareness of young travellers on overtourism effects. The knowledge of young travellers concerning tourism impacts in Barcelona and how Barcelonians look at tourism? Following by subchapter 4.2 in which the perception of anti-tourism protests is analysed whereby the emotions and the understanding of the protests are outlined. Lastly, subchapter 4.3 presents the impact that the critical encounter with anti-tourism protests has on the decision-making of young travellers during their holidays.

4.1 Awareness Overtourism Affects

The tourism issues that occurred in Barcelona can be traced back to the studies of Benner (2019), Capocchi et al. (2019), Coldwell (2017), Hughes (2018), Koens et al. (2019), Mermet (2017) and Milano et al. (2019). This chapter shows the awareness of tourists, and what kind of impact they can have on the local communities of Barcelona in both positive as well as negative ways. Also, the knowledge about the phenomenon overtourism and its effect on the Barcelonians is presented as the media, which is openly accessible for tourists, is a significant informative player in the overtourism discussion. This effect is based on Doxey's model (1975).

4.1.1 Tourism Impacts vs Overtourism

The impulse that tourism gives to the economy is a positive impact that is mentioned by all of the participants. Barcelona is a city that partly runs on tourism in some participants' opinion, and it is a way to earn money for local businesses. All Barcelonians earn directly and indirectly from tourism, even if they do not work in the tourism industry. This is because the city earns money which again can be used to improve the infrastructure and providing amenities which makes life better. In contrast, the participants do not unanimously state the negative impacts that tourism can have on an urban tourism destination, of which Barcelona is an example and, in that line, the connection with overtourism (§4.1.1.3). The pollution that tourists can have on the environment is most mentioned as a negative tourism impact in the interviews (§4.1.1.2) —followed by overcrowding (§4.1.1.1.) which is connected to the absolute tourist numbers that have been the focus for years when talking about decreasing the negative consequences of tourism (Capocchi et al., 2019). Also, nuisance and gentrification are stated in the interviews (§4.1.1.2).

Overcrowding

"... like I said I am from near New York. So basically people do not go to Times Square because it is too crowded with tourists because it is not fun anymore. Same goes for, well, I have seen pictures of the Pyramids in Giza in Egypt. You see these beautiful pics of the pyramids, and if you view them from another angle, you see this huge city and sprawling. And lots of tourists." – (American, 23)

This quote signals that the participant is talking out of self-experience while sharing his view on impacts that he can have as a tourist.

The annoyance leads to the avoidance of a particular place in his home environment due to the overcrowding; An action that the Barcelonians wish for that tourists would do (Hughes, 2018). Four participants avoid crowded places in their home environment as much as possible. On holiday, they avoid crowded or favourite places as much as possible as well because they do not like crowds themselves and rather go somewhere else. One participant also noticed differences between overcrowded places and places that have less tourism.

“You just noticed, you noticed it about the local people. In some way, they are more open to you. Because you are not one of a billion tourists that go there.” – French, 26

It describes how locals view tourists. A noticeable feeling that the participant remembers by comparing different places with each other. She recognizes the difference in openness towards tourists; however, the locals' attitude is not the main reason why she avoids overcrowded places. Two other participants add to this that they do not take the locals into account while avoiding overcrowded places or famous attractions.

Before the critical encounter with the anti-tourism protests, the researcher asked the question if the participants take the impacts that they can cause into consideration while they are in the city, the answers differ slightly from each other. Eight participants just go wherever they want to go. Four of them do not see it as their issue or, as stated by a participant, *“I think it is a bit selfish, but I do not think it is my problem”* – American, 23. This selfishness has a high potential to cause host-visitor hostility as mentioned by Peeters et al. (2018), since the norms and values of tourists, in those selfish cases, often differ from the local ones. Locals are asking to stick to the local etiquette and interfere with the locals' life as less as possible (Koen et al., 2019), thus tourists should act like they would be back home, e.g. avoid overcrowded places which they do back home pointed out by 5 participants. However, on holiday if they want to go somewhere, they will go without having the impacts of their behaviour in mind. Contrarily, one participant mentions that she is having trouble to find a balance between her wishes and the keeping in mind the locals.

“The one thing that we were thinking about was about the Sagrada Familia, like, should we go. Because it was like, people were waiting for, going there, it was like a big queue. So we were thinking should we go but then we went there. Well it is a big thing in Barcelona, and also my friend wanted to go there quite badly” – Finnish, 25

This states a dilemma between going to a busy hotspot and behave like the other tourists or skip it and do not sight the hotspot which genuinely makes the city worth visiting. Diversely, one other participant sees himself as one of many in which he would not make that big of a difference if he would not go to the popular hotspots. In the end, these hotspots are generally the reason why tourist go to a city as mentioned by three participants. They want to see the popular hotspots with their own eyes when they are in Barcelona.

Pollution, Nuisance and Gentrification

Furthermore, nuisance and pollution of the environment are acknowledged by seven participants as tourism impacts as well. Drunk people on the street, leaving trash behind or damaging cultural statues are examples that could destroy the daily life according to the participants. These examples are related to the examples that Barcelonians are mentioning as a frustration point for the anti-tourism movements (Hughes, 2018). Only three participants apply tourism impacts to the destination characteristics that can be changed due to tourism.

“Like housing gets very expensive. ... and also I think that the shops in the city centre change for tourism rather than for locals.” – (Dutch, 24)

This shows again that the participant is conscious of the tourism impacts by having it experienced in their own home environment. In this particular quote, the city mentioned is Amsterdam which is another urban city that is having trouble with the flow and behaviour of tourists. It mentions that the city has been adapted to the wishes of the tourists by having tourism shops instead of shops for the locals. This is precisely what Alvarez Solar (2017) shows in her documentary about Barcelona as well by mentioning the loss of the city charisma. By comparing with the literature, Capocchi et al. (2019) do not mention the shop changes while talking about overtourism, but it could be mostly connected to damaging of the landscape since locals see their home environment slowly changing in a city focused on tourism. Nevertheless, Benner (2019) does somehow connects overtourism with dissolved destination characteristics which are initially part of locals' sense of place. By having small local shops swapped with multiple touristic shops, the characteristics and dynamics of a neighbourhood can be impacted massively. It can even happen that it does not feel like home anymore because the key characteristics are vanishing as the documentary pointed out (Alvarez Solar, 2017). However, the literature mostly focused on overcrowding, nuisance and gentrification. The shop changes can be put under gentrification; however, it is not mentioned that it contributes to the frustration of the locals while it is pointed out massively in the documentary. Gentrification in the literature is mostly focused on the rising housing prices and privatizing of public spaces in the case of urban tourism developments. Nevertheless, the quote, which is mentioned above, shows the importance of including it since the participant refers to her own frustration about tourism developments in her home city, Amsterdam. This city is comparable with Barcelona and other European cities who are struggling with urban tourism developments.

Overtourism

The tourism impacts that the participants have mentioned are mostly not being associated with the concept overtourism by them. When the question is asked if the participants have ever heard of the word overtourism since it has been frequently mentioned in the media, half of the participants have never heard of it. The rest links it to the increase of the absolute number of tourists that results in overcrowding. The term overtourism is also multi-dimensional however, the participants gave it a description which is similar to the meaning that the media has given the concept overtourism (Koens et al., 2018). This shows that the term overtourism does not explain the overall issue in European cities. Therefore, the critique that overtourism is overused can be assumed as well by the participants' view on overtourism.

The touristification of cities in terms of physical characteristics as tourist behaviour is missing in the description given to the concept. In this research, nine participants do not take the well-being of the locals, in terms of the living environment, sense of place and social life, into account. The issue in Barcelona has started due to overcrowding. However, it involves more than that which has also been argued by Benner (2019) and Capocchi et al. (2019). Only one participant shares that view and thinks further about what the tourist numbers could cause to the locals and mentions that *“it (overtourism) puts a lot of strain on infrastructure, local communities and how people view or experience the quality of living”* – American, 23. This participant sees it as harmful since Barcelonians are not able to do what they like. In other words, they cannot live their everyday life since the tourism flow increased too suddenly. Others do not have a clear opinion about the issue and see it as a dilemma.

“On the one side, you want tourism for your economy. So on the one side, I am like you get a lot of money from it, it creates a lot of jobs and opportunities for all of you. So what is the big problem? But sometimes when you are in really touristic places in Barcelona like La Rambla, or like the Gaudi Parc. Then it is just like crazy. You cannot even walk there, and it is just insane. And then I am like I really get that you think it is too much because it is still your city.” – Dutch, 23

This quote shows that the growth of tourism leads to conflict. On the one hand, the attractiveness of the city decreases when it is too overcrowded. On the other hand, the limitation of the tourism flow is undesirable because Barcelonians earn lots of money from it. This is the dilemma that the Barcelonians are facing as well since they are aware of the positive impact that tourism has on their lives; however, they cannot cope anymore with the negative impacts.

4.1.2 The Notion of Barcelonians' Tourism Opinion

The anti-tourism protests are established due to the frustrations that are made visible by the Barcelonians. Even though not all the Barcelonians are pessimistic about the effects of tourism, the local communities behind the anti-tourism protests share the frustration with each other. This subchapter reviews the viewpoint of the participants on the locals' feelings towards tourism in their home environment by using the Irridex model (Doxey, 1975) as a guideline. Being positive and part of daily life (§4.1.2.1) are mentioned by participants as the current feelings of locals towards tourism. Nevertheless, there is also made a difference between Barcelonians who benefit directly from tourism in comparison who do not (§4.1.2.1.). Thereafter, participants do acknowledge that there are multiple irritation points for locals, whereas others disbelief that locals could be frustrated about tourism (§4.1.2.3).

Differences in Tourism Embracement

When the question is asked how locals view tourism in Barcelona, six participants share the same view: Most of the locals see tourism as positive according to them.

“I do not think there is hate with tourism in general. Not in Italy, not in Venice, not here in Barcelona, not in Spain because all the people love tourism. Tourism is a way to earn money for the city, for the people and for the state.” – Italian, 26

Since tourists put money in the economy of Barcelona, locals embrace tourism as it is. Also, the local business can exploit tourists as more tourists spend more money in a restaurant or bars than the Barcelonians. Hereby, the rise of tourist numbers leads to no frustration but to more enthusiasm since it boosts the city' economy. This is in contradiction with the stages of Doxey's Irridex model (1975) whereby the feelings towards tourism becomes more negative if the tourist numbers go up. Contrarily, two of these six participants acknowledge that overcrowding could be a frustration point for the locals, but at the same time, they are reasoning it back to the fact that the locals could have become used to busyness the last few years, also since it is an international, vibrant city.

"I think tourism there is perceived as positive because there are so many people that everyone has kind of adapted to it. And that people just accept tourists. ...I think you also benefit indirectly whether or not you have a restaurant, bar or a nightclub or something else. Whether you like it or not, the tourists will, well, you will not get rid of them. So I think they are used to it in the meantime and benefit from it." – English, 27

This quote illustrates that Barcelona is a city that is always busy. Every day the city has tourists walking around. As being a local, over time, they got used to the number of people coming over because when a city changes, they needed to change as well in the view of three participants. It became part of their lives mainly, and they learnt to live with it. A participant even argues that the locals should deal with the changes to their living environment and otherwise should move out of the city. This also refers back to the selfishness of young travellers, whereby the focus is on themselves instead of the locals and their surroundings. Nonetheless, when the question is asked if this applies to the local community of Barcelona in general, four participants recognize differences between particular groups who live in the Barcelona based on their connection with the tourism industry. This corresponds with the criticism of Mason and Cheyne (2000) on the Irridex model, whereby the difference between stakeholders are no taken into account.

"I think that people who do not work in the tourism sector they think more negative about it because they do not directly benefit from it. And they mainly feel the burden of having so many people in their city." – Dutch, 24

The participant points out that Barcelonians who do not earn directly from tourism would feel different about tourism than people who directly earn from tourist spendings. They can understand that Barcelonians who are not working in the tourism industry are irritated by the number of tourists, tourists' anti-social behaviour and the changes that tourism has done to Barcelona. Two participants do not agree since they argue that even when you are not working in the tourism industry, either way, Barcelonians benefit indirectly from the tourism expenditures due to facilities and investment of the government. Another participant even argues that also, people who are dependent on the tourism industry can be irritated by the number of tourists and their behaviour. However, they are torn between two things: money or tranquillity.

Awareness of irritation

Five participants can imagine the level of irritation by some Barcelonians of the indirect and direct impacts of tourism development over the years.

“The only issue might be the language barrier, but then that is how the locals look at it. The locals might be offended if you cannot speak Spanish. That could be an issue. We had not that issue, but I understand that the UK produces a lot of, how would you say, a lot of annoying and bad behaving tourists for the rest of the world. Especially in Spanish speaking places or countries. They might come in and be ignorant of the culture and the norms over there and cause drama. But that has nothing to do with me”. – New Zealander, 28

“If I would be a Barcelona citizen and I would have been born here and would have seen the changes and all the tourists would come, then I would be like super annoyed because this is my city and what are you doing here”. - Dutch, 23

It seems that these participants are aware of the fact that Barcelonians could be offended by the absent of local etiquette by tourists in the way of adjusting to the local environment by communication but also behaviour. Next to that, another irritation point could be the way how tourism has developed over the years and affected the city of Barcelona in the eyes of the locals. Nevertheless, the participants think that they would not show their frustration to the outside world and act upon it:

“I cannot imagine that as in a city like Barcelona, anti-tourism would be launched. I cannot imagine that because I think for most of the people who live there tourism is their primary income ... Those have not been bullfighting protests? You are sure it was about tourism?” – English, 27

This participant even questioned the researcher when anti-tourism protests in Barcelona are mentioned. The undoubtedness of anti-tourism protests and unfamiliarity by nine participants suggest that they are unaware of the irritation level that is deep-seated in the emotions of some Barcelonians. There is only one exception under the participant. She mentions that *“if you really hate them, then it is really like in your heart, then you also express yourself in a different way.”* – Dutch, 23. This exception could be explained by the fact that she has already seen an anti-tourism protest during her visit to Barcelona before the interview. This head start has provided her with more knowledge about the Barcelonians’ frustration than others who have not seen an anti-tourism protest yet. She acknowledges that the frustration is at its highest level for some Barcelonians.

Conclusions

It can be said the minority of the young travellers in this research is familiar with the concept and mostly relates overcrowding to the phenomenon which is, of course not totally wrong. Therefore, it shows the overusing of the concept in the media (Koens et al., 2019). In addition, the rising housing prices and gentrification are not mentioned in the case of Barcelona. As a side note, young travellers are conscious of these negative tourism impacts only not in the case of Barcelona. The awareness of most of the participants on the issues in Barcelona stays superficial to overcrowding and drunken behaviour of tourists instead of having in-depth knowledge about the city. Even when the issues are clearly visible in their home environment, the knowledge about tourism issues in Barcelona has not reached them.

On the other hand, most participants are aware of their own local etiquette in terms of language, visitor behaviour in terms of nuisance and location in terms of local restaurants and try to take this into account. Despite the fact that it is an irritation point to the locals, the young travellers have the idea that the locals overall embrace tourism in a positive way. The mentioned irritation points are mostly applicable to the locals who are not benefiting from tourism. This adds to the criticism of Doxey's Model (1975) that the course of the model does not apply to all the Barcelonians in this case and shows a homogeneous view. In addition, other literature does not compare the local communities with each other either. Coldwell (2018), Hughes (2018) and Milano et al., (2019) focus mainly on the frustration of the local communities who have risen their voices related to the current tourism development rather than making a comparison between two groups of stakeholders; the ones who are benefitting directly from tourism and the ones who are not. In contrast, the young travellers in this research do show a heterogeneous view on tourism impact and its effects on the local communities. They showed awareness of how the various local communities could feel about tourism in Barcelona by making differences between local communities and understanding their way of thinking. According to most of the young travellers before the critical encounter, locals view tourism more positive than negative. Differences between various participants' nationalities are not clearly visible. The Italian, whose country is similar to Spain in terms of tourism, shares the same strong view on tourism impacts and locals' frustration as the English and a Dutch participant, whose countries differ from Spain. Nevertheless, people from cities, that must deal with similar tourism issues as Barcelonians, recognize the frustration due to their own experience. Surprisingly, the occurrence of anti-tourism protests in Barcelona is disbelieved by the participants, thus showing the frustration that some Barcelonians has towards tourism. However, it does happen in some city districts in Barcelona but also in other European cities (Coldwell, 2017; Hughes, 2018).

4.2 Perception Anti-Tourism Protests Barcelona

Participants were taken on a walking interview through the streets of Barcelona near an anti-tourism protest. When the participants were confronted with the anti-tourism protests in front of them, a critical encounter appeared or as argued by Postma (2013), a tourism critical encounter. The emotions and understanding associated with these critical encounters are displayed in this chapter with the notion of Ap and Crompton (1993), Bjorklund and Philbrick (1972), Dogan (1989), Edvardsson and Roos (2001) and Tronvoll (2010) who partly have been investigating the emotions that are appearing during critical encounters. Next to that, studies from Coldwell (2018), Hughes (2018), Milano (2018), Milano et al. (2019); Peeters et al. (2018) back up the objective and reason behind the anti-tourism protests.

4.2.1 Emotional Responses

The tourism critical encounter that occurred between the young travellers and the anti-tourism protests leads to emotions. All the emotional responses of the participants can be categorized as negative. This backs up the findings of Tronvoll (2010), who argued that positive emotions occur less with critical service encounters than negative. The negative emotions can be divided into two categories; the participants' own unpleasant emotions (§4.2.1.1) and emotions concerning the locals' feeling (§4.2.1.2). The first part is about emotional responses that involve the reflection on the participants' own feelings. The second part refers to participants' emotional responses related to the locals' feelings that are projected through the anti-tourism protests.

Reflection on Young Travellers' Emotions

By asking about the participants' emotions while looking at the anti-tourism protests, various negative emotions are felt and described by the participants.

"Yeah, I am actually surprised. In a negative way because I cannot imagine there are people who are thinking this." – Italian, 26

"I felt unwelcome like it did not give me a warm welcome feeling at all. I was like okay this is really for me? Am I really like that kind of tourist that has to go?" – Dutch, 23

The first quote indicates that the participant could not believe the existence of anti-tourism protests because he could not believe that people are frustrated about tourism in Barcelona. It differs significantly negatively from what he expected before the critical encounter. This is comparable to how Edvardsson and Roos (2001) regard a confrontation critical. Since the participant does not share the locals' frustration, the encounter with anti-tourism protests results in an unpleasant surprise which is seen as a negative emotion. The second quote indicates that the participants feel upset because she got the idea that she behaves respectfully towards locals, but the slogan gives her an unwelcome feeling. This is echoed by multiple participants. This participant feels addressed by the slogan. It offends her that the behaviour of tourists is generalized whereby all the tourists are measured by the same standards. Another participant compares it with racism since it brings up the same emotions.

"... you do not know who has written it here. So you do not know if they can see you right now and looking at it and realise that you are a tourist. There are many kind of things that people could think about when they would see me reading this. Maybe, it is the thing, ehm, like.. like.. people who do not like other people. What do they say, something like racism? ...I have been confronted with racism before. So I know that feeling. So it is not a good thing. It makes me feel afraid." – German, 27

It shows that he is unaccustomed with the reaction that locals, who share the aspirations on the walls, can have towards tourists. He connects this unawareness with racism because, in racism-related situations, one side does not appreciate the others either. Furthermore, by not knowing what to expect, it worries him of being in a neighbourhood where these anti-tourism protests are displayed because, as a tourist, you never know who is watching you. Some other participants share the same feeling of fear or anxiety because they feel that the local do not want them to be in the city while they are actually there and at the same moment they are standing eye in eye with the anti-tourism protests. These are unpleasant emotions that are identified by Tronvoll (2010) related to service encounters.

Emotional Responses related to the Locals' Feelings

A small number of those interviewed also felt sadness. Nonetheless, this feeling was more pointed towards the locals than feeling sad for themselves as tourists that they have to witness these anti-tourism protests. It is more about them, as tourists, feeling bad for the locals that they feel the way they do about tourism which reaches so far that they have to write it on their own Barcelonian building walls. One participant feels sad for the locals but on the other hand, also sees the protests as a pathetic action of the locals.

“We laughed cause we thought, well, tourists are part of this city same as the locals. We do not think that tourists are gonna go home.” - American, 23

Later on, the same participant refers to *“silly locals”* since the locals cannot disallow people to visit their living environment. He sees it as a pathetic action which leads to an apathetic feeling. He positions himself as indifferent towards the message of the Barcelonians in the streets. The participant, who in the first instance did not believe that anti-tourism protests could exist, has a mutual feeling as the American male.

“I do not care as a tourist. For me, it is just another tourist who has written this down as a joke. That is how I feel about it.” - English, 27

“Yes, no, this is more violent, serious. Here they really talk about killing tourists. That is not a joke anymore, that is not humour. I am a little bit shocked.” – English, 27

Assigning uncaring would be the most accurate emotion to the first quote. The anti-tourism protests are not taken seriously by the participant since he does not know who has written it on the wall. After the researcher has explained that particular local communities stand behind this protest, and another anti-tourism has shown, the second quote showed that his emotions have changed. Comparing the reaction on two different anti-tourism protests, it seems that the emotions by some participants differ. To note, the anti-tourism protest *“Why call it tourism season if we cannot kill them”* is shown to all participants at last. The emotional response becomes more negative when the anti-tourism protest refers to violence.

Contrary to the literature, the emotions apathetic and uncaring came forward out of the tourism critical encounter, whereas it was not found in the literature (Postma, 2013; Tronvoll, 2010). It could have been viewed as neutral in their studies since these emotions do not lead to behavioural changes that quickly in comparison with negative emotions. Fear and sadness are more likely to change behaviour. However, in this research, apathetic and uncaring can be seen as a negative emotion because the indifference characteristic of these emotions is perceived negative by the locals. Anger and shame are not felt by the participants who were indicated by previous studies concerning tourism and service encounters ((Ap and Crompton, 1993; Bjorklund & Philbrick, 1972; Dogan, 1989; Postma, 2013; Tronvoll, 2010).

4.2.2 *Understanding of Anti-Tourism Protests*

After having identified the participants' emotions, questions concerning the reason and objective behind the anti-tourism protests were next, and the outcomes are discussed in this subchapter. What locals would like to reach with it according to the participants (§4.2.2.1) and why (§4.2.2.2)? At last, the views towards the feelings of the locals are described (§4.2.2.3).

Purpose of the Anti-Tourism protests

Diverse messages have been presented to various participants from ‘tourists go home’, ‘tourism kills the neighbourhoods’, ‘tourists, this is a conflict zone’ to ‘why call it tourism season if we cannot shoot them’. These slogans are presented by the locals with a purpose. The question remains do the young travellers understand what kind of aim the locals want to reach by seeing the slogans on the wall. Is the message clear of what do the young travellers think about what they have to do?

Three of the participants share the same opinion; they do not know what the locals exactly expect from the tourists.

“I do not think that they really mean that everybody should stay at home. I think that they just want everybody should notice that there are too many people and should do something about it. But I do not know what.. I would like to know who has written these.. Talk with them like what do you mean?”

– Finnish, 25

“Well, especially the one about the conflict zone does not make any sense to me cause I would I know this is a conflict zone and what conflict is here? I do not see what the conflict is. I am sorry, like, I get tourists go home or tourism kills the cities... But with a conflict zone, what is it? A gang war? Are they selling drugs there? If I would be a tourist that is bothered by it, maybe I should not go into this street, but right now I do not know.” – American, 23

By analysing the first quote, the participant questions the bluntness of the graffiti slogan. She cannot imagine that the locals imply that all the tourists should go home. Confusion can be avoided if the tourists get in direct contact with the locals who are responsible for the slogans. There is also a difference between the slogans as the second quote indicates. The rest participants, who have encountered ‘tourist go home’ and ‘tourism kills the cities’, guess similar expected actions. By taking it very clearly, three participants refer to no tourism at all in Barcelona, whereas two other participants think that the locals want to reduce or spread tourism by displaying these protests.

“I think they want to make the people, the rest of the locals, and the tourists aware of a problem. But I think that when they say 'tourists kills the city', I think that they are doing bad for Barcelona. They are killing Barcelona.” – Italian, 26

This quote backs up the opinion of two participants who refer to the objective of raising awareness on how some Barcelonians think of tourism and its impacts. The thought behind is that if the slogans are encountered as shocking, it is more likely that the experience is told to other people as well. This comes down to the purpose of anti-tourism protests and protests in general (Hughes, 2018; Seraphin et al., 2019). However, the participant indicates that this is not the way of doing that by having such a strong, violence message presented on the street walls. It could create the opposite according to the participant by having 1) less tourist coming in and 2) receive worse behaving tourists in Barcelona which affects the city more negatively on the economy and social side.

Also, the question is asked if the young travellers feel that the protests are directed at them or in other words; do they feel addressed by the frustration of the locals? Literature states that anti-tourism protests are partly established due to the anti-social behaviour of young travellers (Coldwell, 2018; Hughes, 2018; Milano et al., 2019). Hence, the slogans in Barcelona are somewhat directed at that particular tourist group who are wandering through the streets. Two participants feel addressed, simply because they are tourists and the locals refer to them in the slogan. However, the others, thus the majority, do not feel addressed by the slogan.

“Because I do not whom they are targeting or what I am doing wrong in their eyes. So I cannot feel responsible for killing their city since they are not telling me what I am doing wrong or what other tourists are doing wrong.” – American, 23

“No, because I am sure that I am a kind tourist. I do not dirt the city. I am very good with people. I give them my money, and I do not make some problems. So I am a good tourist, and I do not have the feeling that these graphics are for me.” – Italian, 26

The quotes show that the majority of the group can also be placed in two groups. 1) young travellers who think that they are well-behaving tourists; thus, the protests are not meant for them. Five participants feel that well-behaving tourists who know their place and do not cause any hazard. A remarking point can be placed here since the participants mainly point their good behaviour towards no nuisance and pollution whereas the choices made regarding accommodation, the choice of activities and the timing of visiting attractions. If tourists had these last-mentioned points also in mind while visiting Barcelona, the neighbourhood of the local communities would be more secure and habitable (Milano et al., 2019).

Well-behaving tourists would take these points into consideration as well according to Barcelonians. The other participants belong to 2) the group who do not feel spoken to through the anti-tourism protests since the graffiti slogans and signs do not mention the wrong behaviour of the tourists. It is unclear for the young travellers what they are doing wrong in the eyes of the local communities in Barcelona. Three of this group see the protests more like a frustration utterance to the government instead of to the tourists. This corresponds to the fact that most Barcelonians know that the tourism issues in Barcelona are a government issue however tourists and their behaviour are part of the problem whereby the anti-tourism protests are placed to create awareness of tourists' involvement. Raising awareness of the influence of tourists on Barcelona citizens is, in case of the three participants, not succeeded.

Possible Reasons behind Locals' Sentiment

Correspondingly, it is asked what for possible reason Barcelonians could have to write these anti-tourism protests according to the participants. The thoughts were divided; however, the main comment was that the participants were unsure what the frustration of the locals actually is. They know about overtourism and the impact that they can have as tourists on a city and its locals, but they are unsure which issues are applicable to Barcelona.

“I do not know what the actual issue is with tourists in Barcelona. I do not know if what you are saying that overtourism, in general, applies to all of these countries and destinations or if you are just saying that this is the issue of Barcelona with overcrowding or higher or upscaling of rents for AirBnB and the prices for commodities and other services are going up because tourists are there and they can get more out of them you know. I do not know if it is because of that or if they are disrespecting and causing a hazard in the streets, you know. I am not too sure what it is.” – New Zealander, 28

This shows that the anti-tourism protests, in the form of graffiti and signs distributed through the city, are not creating the awareness of the problems which are occurring in Barcelona in the locals' view. Same time, it is not in line with the message that the locals genuinely want to distribute as argued by Hughes (2018) and Milano et al. (2019); follow the local etiquette and do not use the city as a playground. These awareness points cannot be linked with the protests according to the participants. On the other hand, the participants who gave it more a try came up with possible reasons that are linked to the irritation points of Barcelonians. Overcrowding was mentioned by three participants because they have experienced themselves, which irritated them as tourists as well. This adds up to the argument of Dioko (2017) that the rapid growth of tourism damages the city experience of a tourist as well. The damaging of a destination experience that is what the residents also wants to avert for tourists. It is not only for their own ends since they also need tourism for their economy. Also, nuisance is mentioned as a possible frustration point of locals.

“Yes maybe the young tourists are not that sustainable and do not .. they are reckless about the locals. Because they consume alcohol or something else, are loud, throw their trash on the street. That is the main thing about young people who do it more often than older people. So I can think that this is one reason.” – German, 26

This participant refers to the behaviour of especially young travellers in the streets by being ignorant to the locals. Two others agree with him. Somewhat in line as Peeters et al. (2018) have pointed out. The host-visitor hostility rises as locals view the behaviour of young travellers as anti-social behaviour. Other participants talk more in-depth about this topic and share possible reasons behind the misbehaviour of especially young travellers by sharing their own behaviour as examples.

“Yeah, I think that is when people go for a weekend away with friends. You would misbehave in your own city, but when you are abroad, you would also misbehave. But maybe in a larger amount because you are not at home and it does not matter, and you are on holiday, and that is bad.” – Dutch, 24

This participant expresses her view on the misbehaviour of tourists, whereby she refers to the unfamiliar environment as a reason why tourist could misbehave. She also shares that she behaves differently on holiday as well, if she is with her friends, but her behaviour cannot be compared with the annoying and bad behaving English tourists according to herself. The view on bad behaving English tourists is confirmed by other participants who explained it with potential differences in norms and values between tourists and locals. Different people have different norms and values which are not similar to each other, which can lead to ignorance of tourists towards the locals' culture. This is recognized by Tolkach, Pratt and Zeng (2017) who reasoned that people are more likely to engage in unethical behaviour while they are on holiday in comparison with back home, mainly Western tourists.

Unethical behaviour can be seen as drunkenness in public or cutting the queue. The reason for this can be related back to the fact that some societal pressures are removed on holidays. Judgements from friends or relatives are disappearing, which makes it easier to misbehave since they will not find out about the actions.

Viewpoint Locals' Sentiment and Approach

Changes in behaviour start by becoming aware of problems but also the understanding of the problems and the corresponding locals' sentiment, which is part of the behavioural changes process. Some Barcelonians have written these graffiti slogans on the wall for a reason, and the question is asked to the participants if they can understand why local communities feel the way they do about tourism and if this approach of anti-tourism protests is effective in their opinion. The young travellers who are participating in this research differ simultaneously of opinion from each other. First of all, the way of bringing the message is examined.

"I can understand them. Sometimes there are like, well, I live in Amsterdam and the party life is there a thing as well. And when people for example from England come there, and they go party, and they are very drunk, and they pollute the city, and they do not respect our city, and they just think that they can do whatever they want. I get frustrated about them as well. But if I would shoot them, no." –

Dutch, 23

The comment above illustrates that the messages on anti-tourism protests cross a line for the participant. Frustration is allowed to be expressed; however, the way how some Barcelonians express the view towards tourists goes too far. This is appointed by three participants who all think that the messages are quite dark or harsh. They understand the frustration because they notice that they themselves are also frustrated by some tourist their behaviour. However, it is not the way how the Barcelonians should make their frustration aware to the tourists by bringing in violence in the message. Another participant also questions the effectiveness of the slogans.

"I am sure that they (locals) want to keep them (tourists) away, but I do not know, I cannot imagine that this is so effective to keep them away. Because I think that many tourists, even if they recognise it, they just ignore it" – German, 27

He indicates that no matter what the locals would display in the street, some tourists would not even pay attention to it while others see it and might ignore the messages out of egoism. He also refers to himself that he might forget the message at the end of the day. This would, of course, differ per person depending on the impact that the words have on a person. Nevertheless, in his opinion, the effect of raising awareness for the tourism issues in Barcelona is not getting reached through these slogans and signs which are displayed on the street. In addition, another participant also understands the frustration but see the approach of raising awareness by the tourists as not the right one.

"With a text on the wall I do not think you are achieving very much and it does not evoke a certain emotion in me that results in 'I am going home now because I feel sorry for them.' ... I understand their frustration from their point of view, but on the other hand, it is a country where you can just go on holiday, and I should not see that as forbidden or that I cannot come here as a tourist."

– Dutch, 22

Together with two other participants, this participant does not see it as her problem or that the locals should express their frustration towards tourists because it is still possible for tourists to visit Barcelona. They see it more as a government issue instead of involving the tourists with the locals' problems. This indicates that these young travellers do not feel responsible for their actions while being abroad or visiting another city. These findings are rather disappointing for the locals since they wanted to evoke emotions in the tourists who would result in thinking about their behaviour and actions taken on holiday in Barcelona (Coldwell, 2018; Hughes, 2018; Milano et al., 2019).

Conclusions

By taken the emotions together, all participants mentioned only negative emotions while being confronted with the anti-tourism protests. Unpleasant emotions appeared the most under the participants of this research with anti-tourism critical encounters. This is similar as Tronvoll (2010) has indicated concerning service encounters. These emotions can be assigned to the categories of sadness and fear. Shame is not felt by the young travellers in this research. In addition, the sadness was more related to the locals' feelings. This is a difference that is not made by previous studies that have researched a critical encounter whether it is service or tourism-related (Ap and Crompton, 1993; Bjorklund & Philbrick, 1972; Dogan, 1989; Postma, 2013; Tronvoll, 2010). Same applies to the emotions apathetic and uncaring. These negative emotions could have been seen as neutral in previous researches since it does not lead to an action or change in behaviour. Nevertheless, while these emotions are not unpleasant for the participants, these emotions are perceived negative because the emotions are related to denial, which is seen as a negative emotion in this research.

To move over to the understanding of the anti-tourism protests by young travellers. Even though the messages are perceived unwelcome and impolite by some participants, due to the violent words in the slogan, the majority of participants in this research do not feel addressed by the messages on the wall. The opposite of what the locals are aiming for with the anti-tourism protests (Coldwell, 2018; Milano et al., 2019). They hoped to raise awareness of the problems that they encounter with tourism in Barcelona. Nevertheless, the young travellers became aware of the Barcelonians' frustration obviously, but the reason why some locals are frustrated is still unclear for the participants. It is unclear for them how to help the locals. Some young travellers would like to know in what way they might indirectly affect the Barcelonians' life, whereas others do not bother to support the locals since it is allowed for them to be in Barcelona. Alternatively, for the reason that the young travellers see themselves already as good tourists, namely tourist who do not interrupt locals in a negative way.

4.3 Impact of Critical Encounter on Decision-making

The anti-tourism protests are set up to let tourist think about their behaviour and decision-making while being in Barcelona. A critical encounter with one of these protests might change the way how a tourist would normally make certain decisions while being on holiday or in Barcelona or in other words, behavioural responses. The study from Edvardsson (1991) has been set as a guideline in this chapter for the behavioural responses of the young travellers after the critical encounter. By getting a decent insight into the impact of the anti-tourism protests, a comparison is made between decision-making before and after the critical encounter with anti-tourism protests.

4.3.1 Decision-making before Critical Encounter

As mentioned before already, the reason why the young travellers would go to a specific destination is that, in this study, Barcelona has something unique to offer namely touristic hotspots.

“Yes, the sights are, of course, generally the reasons why you go to a city. Look when you go on holiday you want to see a bit of what everyone always talks about. If you go to Barcelona and you do not go anywhere, and people ask what have you seen and then you cannot mention all those things that everyone always goes to because you have not been there, yes sure, you want to see that too. And I would have that in every city. Like Milan, there you also go to the Cathedral, which is standard.”

– Dutch, 22

This comment suggests that some participant felt that they have to visit the touristic hotspots. Otherwise, it is not worth visiting Barcelona. By asking about travel behaviour before the critical encounter, seven participants do search and visit touristic hotspots without having the specific desire to search for other places besides the main attractions and do stay in the touristic neighbourhoods. Same applies for accommodation choice. The participants, who have booked a place to pass the night, stayed in Airbnb’s and hostels in touristic neighbourhoods such as Gothic Quarter and near Las Ramblas. One participant comes with an explanation; *“I do not think about that (his impact on locals) that much. Because I am one of many people.”* – German, 27. Since he considers himself as one of many tourists, he thinks that he does not make a difference in spending his money or his time elsewhere than the touristic places.

Another participant echoed this by saying that if she would not go, there are still thousands of others who will go. They do not think that they can make a difference in changing tourist behaviour. Contrarily, three participants do want to experience the ‘local’ side of Barcelona. In this case, the local side of Barcelona refers to the less crowded places and activities that harm the locals as less as possible according to the participants. One participant refers to the choice of the beach while talking about searching for local places. She has been to a beach a bit further down the coast, on the outflanks of Barcelona.; *“And of course they might do not like that as well because they do not want to have tourists at their beach. So I do not know if it is really, like, helping the situation.”* – Dutch, 23. On the other hand, she doubts her choice because by rethinking about it, she acknowledges that the locals may not like that as well; having tourists interfering again with the locals at another, quieter beach. This can be connected to the discussion on spreading tourism in an urban area (Koens et al., 2018). In the case of the beach, it could be that the issues of the main beach, Barceloneta, moves to the outflank of Barcelona because the sudden rise of visitors increases the negative tourism experiences of these locals, who are living on the outflanks of Barcelona near the beach.

All in all, this chapter shows that the local side of Barcelona is in the mind of some young travellers. However, the gross of the young travellers goes to places where they want to go during their holidays and choose accommodation without thinking about how their choices could be of influence on the local communities in Barcelona.

4.3.2 Decision-making after Critical Encounter

After the confrontation with anti-tourism protests, the question is asked how the young travellers look to their made travel choices and how the decision-making might change in the future after having seen the frustration of Barcelonians. The opinions of the young travellers in this research differed whether they would make other decisions in terms of travel behaviour or not. The behavioural responses can be divided into two groups partly derived from the tolerance levels of Edvardsson (1991) and Postma (2013); Neglection and adaptation. Neglection can be connected to tolerance since both are about avoidance of certain thing. Neglection is about the avoidance of responsibility, whereas toleration avoids the conflict. Adaptation refers to the tolerance threshold, whereby both reflect on the action that is needed to lessen the locals' frustration.

Neglection

Firstly, two young travellers do not see any damage to the locals in their current travel behaviour. *"Well, this is my first time in Barcelona, so I have not caused so much inconvenience yet. But yes, it would not stop me from going here again."* – Dutch, 22. This participant is aware of no harm since she sees herself as a tourist that does not interrupt the daily life of Barcelonians with her choices. Moreover, during the rest of her trip to Barcelona, she would stick to her schedule and would still go at busier times to the hotspots, just like she always did. The other participant agrees since he argues that he does not do anything that is not allowed. Everything that he decides to do is according to the rules, including partying on the street in a case that is allowed. They consider themselves a respectable behaving tourist who has no negative impact on the local environment, only positive. This level could be considered as a neglection of the possible impact as tourists as being unaware of any wrongdoing.

One participant would not change anything about his decision-making on holidays after the critical encounter.

"If it is a very beautiful city and if the locals are rude, I would not care. I would just go and see the city. The city is not theirs; I mean it is free to enter. You cannot say to anyone you cannot come here."
– American, 23

The frustration of the locals does not weight the benefits of seeing Barcelona and its attractions. Because the city is not owned by the locals in the participants' view, it does not withstand this participant to avoid places that are touristic. This is seen as an unfavourable reaction of tourists according to the Barcelonians (Hughes, 2018).

Adaptation

However, the majority of the participant would adapt their travel behaviour but still in two other manners. Two participants would even avoid cities similar to Barcelona, where anti-tourism protests are common. As reasoning, one participant gives that *"... if you do not like tourists, I will stay home and then you will not get my money either"*. – English, 27. Preferable, he spends his money elsewhere where the locals do welcome tourists with open arms without stepping on people toes and are confronted with violent messages. This participants reaction can be seen as a counteraction, an eye for an eye. If you do not allow me to show interest in your city, then you are not worth my money. Another participant would like to say that she would go somewhere else after having seen the anti-tourism protests *"because I would like to respect those kinds of things. But then, in the end, it did not really stop me before, so it is not really honest of me to say that I would not go."*– Dutch, 23. She points out that it is easier to say than actually do it when the desire to visit an attraction is high. Nonetheless, she argues that changes start with yourself. The remaining four participants agreed to this. One participant said:

"If I would like to see something I would go to. But of course, I would understand them more now. Maybe I would not go to those touristic places. I would maybe ask the locals what should I do more."
– Finnish, 25

She talks about avoiding the crowded places at all, which connects to the change of location and concentration. By avoiding the crowded touristic places and asking locals what to do, the participant hopes that she shows more respect to the locals and their home environment than before the critical encounter. Another participant indicates that he would rethink about the accommodation by finding an alternative that would benefit the locals. But again, he would like to know what the issues exactly is in each destination:

"I guess all I am saying is if we do not know about something how should we suppose to fix it or how should we suppose to avoid being a problem if we are not aware of it which can come down to anything we do. Like it comes down to supporting the locals instead of supporting some big supermarket. Who should we support and how? Whether it is financially or not financially. I am not saying that it is not my problem because essentially we are the ones causing the problem, but if we do not know that we are the problem, how can we fix that?" – New Zealander, 28

This young traveller argues that it is challenging to minimize the frustration of the locals when the issues are not evident for the tourists. The anti-tourism protest show frustration but not the reason behind it. He is willing to change his behaviour in terms of accommodation, spending his money on attractions and would like to help the locals. This shows solidarity; however, the knowledge on the core of the problem is lacking.

The figure below shows the dimensions of behavioural and attitude responses of young travellers after the critical encounter with anti-tourism protests with an explanation within the table.

Neglection	Adaptation
<p>Unaware of any wrongdoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young travellers label themselves as ‘good’ tourists • No change in travel behaviour since they do not harm anyone 	<p>Solidarity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young travellers would like to show more respect in terms of 1) avoiding crowded places, 2) accommodation choice, 3) visitor behaviour, 4) supporting locals and 5) taking locals advice by hand. • Changes start with tourists themselves
<p>Deny responsibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young travellers do not see it as their issue, more government • No changes in travel behaviour since it is not the city of the locals 	<p>Counteraction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young travellers would avoid cities, such as Barcelona, at all costs. • See the banning of as a punishment of being violent or frustrated towards tourists

Figure 5 Behavioural and attitudinal dimensions of young travellers after a critical encounter with anti-tourism protests. Source: by author.

Conclusions

As has been noted, the majority of the young travellers visit places out of self-need without thinking how their choices could impact the Barcelonians before the critical encounter. If they would avoid crowded places, it is due to personal annoyance. Also, the accommodation choice is based on easy accessibility which is the city centre of Barcelona. However, after the critical encounter, four dimensions of responses emerged, which summarize the attitude and behaviour of the tourists towards the Barcelonians’ viewpoint on tourism. On the one hand, the disagreement of changing their behaviour to respect the locals due to denying responsibility or unawareness of wrongdoing. Nevertheless, on the other hand, young travellers do want do adapt their behaviour out of solidarity or as a counteraction resulting from displeasure. By comparing these dimensions with the response level towards critical encounters of previous researchers Edvardsson (1991) and Postma (2013), the response level tolerance and irritation of locals are not applicable to the young travellers. In the case of the young travellers, it is more about do they seek for the minimizing of the locals’ frustration in themselves or not. Neglection does not lead to any differences in decision-making since they do not relate to the problem themselves. Adaptation, on the other hand, does lead to an impact on decision-making. Whereas solidarity is more elaborate on what to consider while making decisions on holiday, no matter which destination, the counteraction level reacts more out of disapproval towards the frustration of locals. In contrast, the response level of locals is more focused on if the locals would express their frustration in the first place and subsequently how. Especially a combination of location, concentration and visitor behaviour are mentioned which are taking into account while visiting Barcelona. However, none of the participants mentioned the timing of visiting particular places while discussing their travel behaviour and potential impacts even though it is as crucial as tourist numbers according to Lindberg et al. (1997) and Postma (2013).

5. Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to explore how young travellers stand towards tourism issues in urban destinations, which is Barcelona in this research. In particular, the focus has been set to the awareness of the overtourism issues and the connected anti-tourism protests which have raised quickly over the past few years. Therefore, the perception and influence of a critical encounter with anti-tourism protests are studied as well. To conclude, young travellers in this research are aware of the impact that they can have on a destination and its locals, however, the awareness of the frustration of local communities in Barcelona was lacking. Even though the media has covered the tourism problems in Barcelona and other European cities over the years (Koens et al. (2018)), it does not reach young travellers enough as the participants in this research have shown. Nevertheless, the critical encounter with the anti-tourism protests has led to more knowledge of the locals' feelings towards tourism. In contrast, the understanding of the frustration is still divided after the critical encounter due to the positive influence that tourism has as well. The anti-tourism protests are perceived negative from scared in terms of unwelcome, feeling sad for the locals to indifference in terms of seeing it as an unreasonable action towards tourists. These negative emotions differ from some categories of unpleasant emotions of Tronvoll (2010). Nevertheless, various scholars already argued that not all level of emotions and response from service encounters could be applied to tourist encounters (Bjorklund and Philbrick 1972; Dogan, 1989; Ap and Crompton, 1993). Despite the fact that negative emotions are derived from the anti-tourism critical encounter, young travellers do not feel addressed by the violent messages displayed in the streets of Barcelona. Whereas Andersen and Kumar (2006) argued the immediate direct impact of emotions on tourist' behaviour, this research shows that negative emotions not always have a direct impact on attitudes and behaviours.

Nonetheless, awareness is raised among young travellers about the frustration of the locals, which was the goal of the anti-tourism protests (Milano et al., 2019). However, awareness is not raised about the concrete problems in the city are not covered. The texts do not reflect issues that are seen as tourists' wrongdoing according to the local communities. Some are willing to change; however, do not precisely know in which direction. Guesses are made on supporting local businesses, behaving more respectfully towards locals and visiting other places than only the hotspots. There are similarities between the perspective of the young travellers and literature perspective towards decreasing the serious negative consequences related to over-tourism (Lindberg et al., 1997; Postma, 2013; Hughes, 2018; Milano et al., 2019). Nevertheless, local etiquette and timing are missing in the perspective of young travellers which also feeds the frustration of the locals. Moreover, others do not feel responsible for the frustration or are unaware of their possible wrongdoing. This gives an answer to the research question *"How do critical encounters with anti-tourism protests in Barcelona influence the travel behaviour of young travellers?"*. The core of the Barcelonians' message is unclear for young travellers to understand how the locals would like to have tourist behave. The confusing about the purpose of the anti-tourism protests makes the attitude towards the locals' frustration differ from each other. Whereas the one does not see it as their issue and does not change anything about their behaviour unless it is needed by the government, others are willing to adapt their behaviour. However, they are more or less guessing what to do. If the messages would be clear, there are young travellers who are open to behavioural changes by taking suggestions from the locals and being respectful towards them. Nevertheless, then again, the problems should be made clear to the young travellers at the destination itself without having cryptic messages. It can be said that the influence of the anti-tourism protests are not working the way how the Barcelonians would have liked to see it.

6. Discussion

Since anti-tourism protests together with tourism issues do not only take place in Barcelona, the findings together with literature are placed in a broader Western European context point of view. Overtourism is a term that is used too narrow by primarily being seen as issues concerning the increase of absolute tourism numbers which has been indicated by Koens et al. (2018) as well as by this study. Whereas overcrowding and visitors' behaviour have mostly been linked to overtourism, the well-being of locals is less taken into account by the young travellers in terms of physical touristification and displacement of locals. In contrast, as mentioned by Benner (2019), Capocchi et al. (2019) and Koen et al. (2019), it became clear that overtourism is an accumulation of various impacts and perceptions related to both tourist behaviour as changes to the physical and social environment. Tourism issues in European cities occurred due to overcrowding; however, it involves more than that. Concerning young travellers, the knowledge reaches mostly down to the cause of the problem instead of the effects which corresponds to the media meaning on overtourism. This also shows the complexity of the concept as pointed out by various studies. By adding another stakeholder perspective to the overtourism discussion, potential solutions can be better implemented due to more detailed information about tourists' knowledge level about overtourism and the perspectives of various stakeholders on the issue.

In this thesis, the focus is on the critical encounter of anti-tourism protests which has resulted in the outbreak of various negative emotions by the young travellers. This study has been unable to demonstrate that negative emotions are more likely to have a more significant impact on the experience than positive emotions since only negative emotions were revealed by young travellers. On the other hand, it supports the evidence that negative emotions occur more often than positive emotions in critical encounters. The results showed that there was an overlap with the unpleasant emotions categories of Tronvoll (2011). However, there were some categories that are not applicable to this study or missing. First, the category of shame is not applicable to this study which could be explained by the fact that the young travellers of this study do not feel that they are doing anything wrong or that they are part of the tourists on which the locals' frustration is focused. Therefore, they do not feel ashamed of their current behaviour while being confronted with the anti-tourism protests. Secondly, this study showed that indifference could be assigned as a new category with apathetic and uncaring as sub-emotions. These emotions could be seen as neutral since it is not an unpleasant emotion for young travellers. However, in this research, it can be seen as a negative emotion because the indifference is perceived negative by the locals. In contrast with other studies, unpleasant emotions would be described as better as negative emotions in this research. In particular, because indifference is not necessarily unpleasant but expresses more denial, thus a negative. This denial returns in the behavioural responses after the critical encounter.

Moreover, the dimensions of responses in this study differ from the ones observed by previous studies (Lindberg et al., 1997; Postma, 2013). By comparing with the dimensions of responses towards critical encounters of Postma (2013), tolerance and irritation are exchanged for neglect and adaptation. Within the two categories, attitude responses are also included since attitude and behaviour are interconnected. The core is similar, whereas neglect leads to no changes in behaviour and adaptation does. For example, the irritation level is related to the solidarity level since there is understanding. Moreover, the irritation threshold can be connected to the counteraction because both lead to critical and rough actions.

A possible clarification for this might be that the behavioural responses of previous studies are based on locals in terms of tourism critical encounters instead of tourists. Whereby tolerance and irritation are focused on the locals' behavioural responses, neglection and adaption are more related to possible behavioural responses of tourists towards a tourism critical encounter. The focus of this thesis is on young travellers' point of view who are a different interested party in the tourism problematics discussion and, subsequently, have a different response and attitude towards tourism critical encounters than locals. Therefore, the typology of behavioural and attitudinal dimensions presented in this study contributes to the overtourism discussion from a tourist viewpoint. Thus, the empirical findings of this thesis provide a new understanding of the knowledge level of young travellers on overtourism in European cities, how they perceive the locals' frustration and how they incorporate the gained awareness in their travel behaviour.

7. Reflection and Recommendations for Further Research

During the data collection of this thesis, the Covid-19 outbreak took place. Since the case study is about Barcelona and the data collection took place over there, the Covid-19 outbreak made it impossible for the researcher to go a second time to gather more interviews. Consequently, eight interviews have been held in Barcelona since the possibility to gain more was impossible in the time frame of doing this research. The decision has been made to continue the thesis without having a second trip to Barcelona. Also, two more interviews have been done through Skype with participants who have been there in March 2020. Since they have not encountered the anti-tourism protests in real life, it does not cover their behavioural and emotional responses completely. However, the tourism experience in Barcelona was still at the top of the participants' mind in which they could place the anti-tourism protests. It should be said that the number of interviews could negatively influence the validity of this research since it covers only a few viewpoints. Nonetheless, this exploratory thesis uses a case study in which only relevant young travellers of various genders, ages and nationalities are interviewed.

During the first visit to Barcelona, it became clear for the researcher that tourists, in general, do not pay any attention to the anti-tourism protests even though it was in their eyesight. Therefore, it would have been interesting to observe tourists who are walking by if they would notice the anti-tourism protests and if so, would they take a moment to drop the message in. This would have added to the visibility of the protests and the awareness of the young travellers. Next to that, a limitation of this research could be that the data has not been collected in high season. In mid-summer, the streets in Barcelona would be more packed than it was at the beginning of March. In that case, the pressure on the locals would have been more visible for the young travellers, which could have given another perspective of young travellers on the anti-tourism protests. That having said, the results could be less valid due to the data collection in low season. Nevertheless, tourism issues and anti-tourism protests are visible all year round. Therefore, the approach of using the critical encounter was valid. However, it is recommended to do it with more participants and more variety of nationalities. This thesis was unintentionally focused on young western travellers. It would be interested in looking at Asian tourists who are significantly travelling in big groups and cause overcrowding quicker. How aware are they of their impact as tourists in Europe and are they willing to adapt their travel behaviour by knowing the locals' frustration about their travel behaviour? Also, the impact on decision-making should be seen more as intended decision-making because it is not researched if the young travellers did change their behaviour. A follow-up interview could have been done to find out if they have indeed implemented

the changes in their travel behaviour. Or if they became more aware of the tourism issues around them during the rest of their trip to Barcelona after they got more knowledge about the locals' frustration. At the moment of writing, the tourism industry has come to a complete standstill due to the Covid-19 outbreak and is slowly opening again in some European countries. There are discussions about how to move forward. Should the tourism industry go back to normal or do it differently in the future? However, to start up the tourism industry again, it is recommended to learn from the past. Especially how policymakers can turn around the marks that mass tourism has printed in destinations to sustainable tourism whereby local communities satisfactory live side by side with tourists. Therefore, this research is still relevant to generate a balance between residents of a destination and tourism. Furthermore, this would be perfect timing to do so since the tourism industry has to start up again. In order to prevent the occurrence of overtourism again in the future, businesses, governments, locals, and tourists should become more aware of the social impact of tourism—both negative as positive. The level of awareness of the potential undesirable effects by various stakeholders in the overall debate should be shifting from the locals and policymakers to tourists. The anti-tourism protests created the awareness of the locals' frustration. However, concrete problems stay unknown. This information contributes to the establishment of campaigns (Seraphin et al., 2019). To achieve behavioural adaptation, the message should be clear how tourists should adjust to contribute to sustainable urban tourism. Guidance is needed. Otherwise, the ignorance stays and the negative impact of tourism in the form of overcrowding, visitor behaviour and physical touristification returns in the future. Therefore, more research should be done towards the tourists perspective since they are part of the problem, for example, which actions from businesses and governments could lead to more local support from tourists or prevent tourists from going to overcrowded places.

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9. Appendices

9.1 Interview Guide

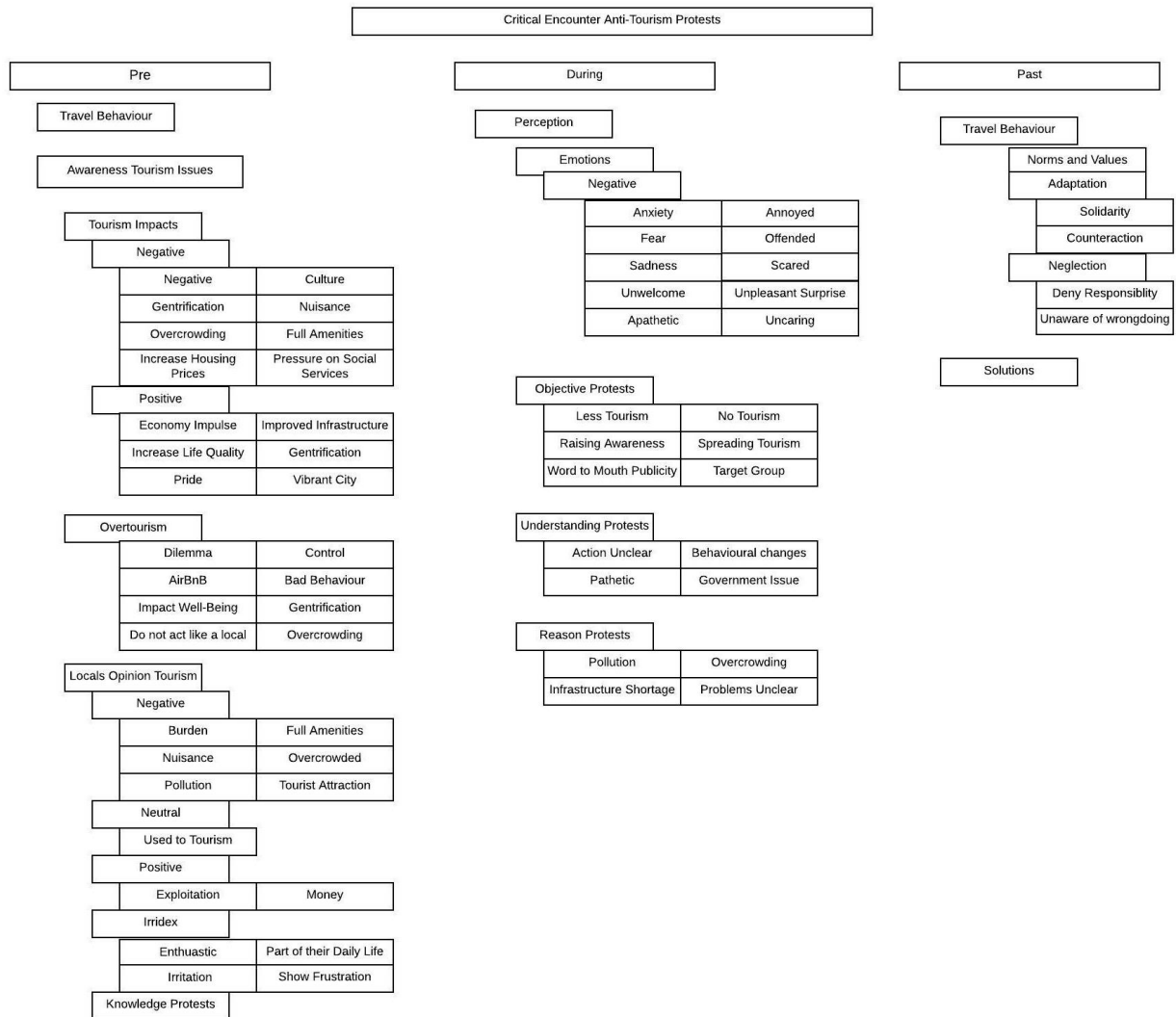
INTERVIEW GUIDE	
Introduction	Introduction + showing student card. Thanking the participant for their time. Explain informed consent.
The goal of the interview	To research how young travellers experience the anti-tourism protests that occur throughout Barcelona.
Subjects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overtourism • Anti-tourism protests • Awareness • Perception • Decision-making
Anonymity	The interview will be completely anonymous. No names will be used only your origin country and age.
Early stop	In case you would like to stop the interview, we will stop with the interview.
Recordings	Audio recorder with a microphone

Subjects	Questions	Key Concept
1. Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age • Origin • Motivation 	Can you start off by telling something about yourself? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Origin, age 	
	Tell me about the decision why you have chosen Barcelona for your holiday? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivation • Preparation in terms of information 	Decision-making
2. Overtourism	Are you aware of the impact of tourism? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prompt → In what way? 	Awareness
	How do you think that local communities stand towards tourism in their town/city? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prompt → Why do you think that? <p><i>Checklists: Enthusiastic, just part of their daily life, irritation or in need for changes</i></p>	Awareness

	<p>Have you heard about overtourism?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prompt → If so, what do you know about the issue? ⇒ Where have you heard it? <p><i>Checklist: too many tourists, overcrowding, gentrification, misbehaviour of tourists, rising housing prices</i></p>	Awareness
	<p>What is your opinion about the issue overtourism?</p>	Perception
	<p>Did it affect any of your choices regarding your travels and travel behaviour to/in Barcelona?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prompt → In what way? 	Decision-making
3. Anti-tourism protests awareness	<p>How do you think that the local community think about tourism in Barcelona?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prompt → Why? <p><i>Checklists: Enthusiastic, just part of their daily life, irritation or in need for changes</i></p>	Awareness
	<p>Have you encountered an anti-tourism protests already? (e.g. slogans, demonstrations, signs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prompt → If so, where, when, what was it about? ⇒ What was the first think that came up in your mind when you saw or experienced the anti-tourism protest? <p><i>Checklist: positive emotions or unpleasant emotion: Sadness, Shame, Anger and/or Fear OR behavioural responses: doing nothing,</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">If not, how do you think that they look alike?</p>	Awareness + Perception
4. Anti-tourism protests perception	<p>When seeing this anti-tourism protests, can you tell me what you think about it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prompt → Why? Could you explain your emotions? <p><i>Checklist: positive emotions or unpleasant emotion – Sadness, Shame, Anger and/or Fear</i></p>	Perception

	<p>What do you think that locals want to reach with these anti-tourism protests?</p> <p><i>Checklist: Change of behaviour, Decision-making in terms of other activities, visiting other sites or at least at other hours or season, act like a local</i></p>	Perception
	<p>Do you understand why locals do this?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prompt → Could you clarify? <p><i>Checklist: making neighbourhood habitable and secure</i></p>	Perception
	<p>Do you have the feeling that these anti-tourism protests are directed at you?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prompt → Why/why not? 	Perception
	<p>Often you hear in the media that the locals are irritated with the misbehaviour of young travellers. How do you feel about this?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prompt → Can you understand de locals in this sense? 	Perception
5. Influence of critical encounter on decision-making	<p>In what way could this affect your travel behaviour in Barcelona?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prompt → Could you clarify? <p><i>Checklist: other location, alternative activities, other timing</i></p>	Decision-making
	<p>Could this affect any of your choices regarding your travels and travel behaviour in the future?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prompt → Why/why not? 	Decision-making
6. Closure	<p>What are your plans for the rest of the time in Barcelona?</p> <p>Is there anything that you want to share with me in relation to this research?</p>	

9.2 Coding Scheme



9.3 Informed Consent

Young travellers' critical encounter with anti-tourism protests in Barcelona.

By signing this informed form, I agree to participate in this study. The decision to participate in the study is entirely voluntary. I was able to ask questions about the research and they were answered satisfactorily. Without giving a reason, I can withdraw from the study at any time.

- I agree with the fact that this interview is being recorded with an audio recorder.
- I want to participate **anonymously** in this interview.
- I give permission to use the interview data for educational purposes.

Name of Participant	Signature of Participant	Date
.....

I declare that I have informed the participant about the master thesis which is connected to the Faculty of Spatial Science, University of Groningen.

Researcher's name	Researcher's signature	Date
Miriam Hempen