

Stakeholder Participation in Sustainable Tourism Development in Amsterdam



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Abstract

The tourism industry is experiencing a low due to the COVID-19 virus. Before this pandemic however, there are various cities all around the world that were coping, and will probably have to cope again with a surge of mass tourism in the future. Amsterdam is such a city where a lot of media attention goes to the negative side of mass tourism, with examples of tourists taking over the city. To prevent this from happening local municipalities develop sustainable tourism policies which very often do not work as they would have hoped for. One of the reasons for this is that in sustainable development a lot of stakeholders are involved. Stakeholder participation is argued to be one of the most (if not the most) important elements contributing to sustainable tourism development. This research focusses on the current experiences of the residents, tourism industry and municipality of the current level of stakeholder participation. In addition, a set of pivotal factors in successful stakeholder participation have been distinguished, which will help the stakeholders to participate in the development. The key findings of this research are the stakeholders in Amsterdam are mostly at a level of nonparticipation which needs to change in order to achieve more successful sustainable tourism development. Furthermore, clear communication, early involvement and a high degree of influence has been established as the factors that could help the stakeholder to participate more and therewith generate more successful sustainable tourism development.

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1. Introduction

The tourism industry is currently experiencing a low due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, in pre-COVID times, tourism is an industry which creates opportunities for countries, cities and individuals all over the globe. Furthermore, according to the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) in 2019, the tourism industry had a share of 10.3% of the total global GDP and accounted for 330 million jobs around the world. On the other hand there is the destructive side of tourism which causes negative impacts such as: destruction of wildlife, pollution, overcrowding, irritation among city locals and the loss of a destination's identity (World Tourism Organization, 1997). These negative impacts cannot be prevented, however, they can be controlled and reduced by sustainable tourism development. According to the World Tourism Organisation (WTO) (1993) sustainable tourism development is about meeting the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for future generations. Furthermore the WTO (1993) states that in sustainable tourism development cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems should be maintained.

Looking at the degree of sustainability of tourism in popular destinations, it shows that achieving successful sustainable tourism development has been proven to be a challenging and rather complex task. According to various studies, stakeholder participation is a crucial factor in this sustainable development (Cavagnaro-Stuijt & Curiel, 2012; Clifton & Amran, 2011; Faulkner, 2003; Gunn, 1988; Keeble, 1988; WTTC, 2017a; Noordeloos, 2018). Stakeholders can have different motives to involve themselves in sustainable tourism development. Moreover, Noordeloos (2018) identified three stakeholders that can be seen as the key stakeholder (groups) in sustainable tourism development: the local residents, tourism industry and the municipality. These stakeholders could have motives to participate such as: a feeling of responsibility, to share their experience or the intrinsic urge to change something that irritates them (Noordeloos, 2018). On the other side, stakeholders might be satisfied with the current situation or think they do not have the expertise to participate in the development (Noordeloos, 2018). It is important in sustainable tourism development to be aware of the fact that all different stakeholders will not have similar interests and needs when it comes to a particular development case. Therefore, in order to establish successful sustainable tourism development, it is important to get all the heads to point in the same direction and get all three stakeholders to participate.

A lot has been written on the concept of stakeholder participation already. The existing literature shows the complexity of the concept since all stakeholders will have different interests and needs. Due to the complexity of the concept of stakeholder participation, this thesis aims to gain further understanding on how participation of the identified stakeholder groups can contribute positively to sustainable tourism development. More specifically, this thesis is focusses on the capital city of the Netherlands: Amsterdam. In 2019, Amsterdam attracted over 9 million tourists, of which the vast majority was non-Dutch (CBS, 2019). The popularity of Amsterdam among tourists has resulted in various negative impacts such as irritation among the local population, pollution, overcrowding and a loss of authenticity in the inner city (Hootsmans & Berndsen, 2017). Sustainable tourism development policies and initiatives can therefore help Amsterdam to create a more sustainable situation. In order to achieve more sustainable tourism development, stakeholder participation is a crucial concept that should be taking into account.

2. Research Problem

As aforementioned, stakeholder's interests and needs are not always aligned. Looking at Amsterdam in particular, there is a lot of conflict with on the one hand the local residents who want the city to attract less tourists, since they cause nuisance and pollution which leads to irritation and frustration and on the other hand the tourism industry that wants to make a profit of the tourists. Important therefore, is to determine how participation of the various stakeholders can contribute to sustainable tourism development in Amsterdam in such a way that all stakeholders are satisfied.

To obtain the aim of this thesis, the following central research question is formulated: "how can stakeholder participation contribute to more successful sustainable tourism development in Amsterdam?". To answer this central research question, the following sub research questions have been constructed:

1. "How do the different stakeholders describe sustainable tourism development in Amsterdam?"

2. “On which level of stakeholder participation are stakeholders currently in sustainable tourism development cases in Amsterdam?”
3. “How is stakeholder participation experienced by the different types of stakeholders in sustainable tourism development in Amsterdam?”
4. “What are the success and failure factors for stakeholder participation in sustainable tourism development in Amsterdam?”

3. Structure

This thesis’ structure consists of five main sections which form a coherent and structured thesis: introduction; literature review; methodology; results and conclusions. The introduction elaborates on the background of the research and research questions. After this, the literature review defines the key concepts used in this thesis. These key concepts are defined according to existing literature to gain a better understanding of the different perspectives on the concepts. These concepts will be unpacked, compared and operationalized and form the basis for the primary data collection which is described in the methodology chapter of this thesis. In this chapter, the decisions regarding the research methods will be described and substantiated using research literature. When the foundation of this thesis has been laid, the results will be presented in the results chapter. The data is discussed through the lens of the studied literature. In other words: the data will be compared to the literature to illustrate the similarities and differences which results in conclusions. In this last section of this thesis, the main and sub-research questions will be answered. Furthermore, there will be a reflection on the strengths and weaknesses of this study which then concludes to recommendations on how stakeholder participation can be used to positively impact sustainable tourism development in Amsterdam.

4. Theoretical framework

In this chapter, two topic-related articles and the key concepts in those articles have been unpacked. The articles by Silvius & Schipper (2014) and Noordeloos (2018) form the foundation of this theoretical framework. Besides these articles, more literature on sustainable tourism development and stakeholder participation has been analysed in order gain a better understanding of the concepts.

4.1 Sustainable (tourism) development

Noordeloos (2018) uses the widely cited definition of The World Tourism Organisation of sustainable (tourism) development: “it meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future. It is envisaged as leading to the management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems” (World Tourism Organisation, 1993, p. 19). Furthermore, Silvius and Schipper (2014) discuss sustainable development using the triple bottom line concept of Elkington (1997). This concept is a model which is often used to ensure a holistic perspective of sustainability (Silvius & Schipper, 2014; Elkington 1997). The Triple Bottom Line (TBL) illustrates a balance between three different dimensions which need to be taken into account in sustainable development: the social, economic and environmental dimension (Elkington 1997).

In addition to these perspectives on sustainable (tourism) development, Noordeloos (2018) argues that stakeholder participation is one of the most important implications for sustainable tourism management. Besides Noordeloos (2018), the World Tourism & Travel Council (WTTC) (2017), state that in order to achieve successful sustainable tourism development, it is crucial to involve stakeholders in long-term planning. Furthermore, various studies argue that stakeholder participation is a vital concept when it comes to sustainable (tourism) development (Cavagnaro-Stuijt & Curiel, 2012; Clifton & Amran, 2011; Faulkner, 2003; Gunn, 1988; Keeble, 1988; WTTC, 2017a; Noordeloos, 2018)

4.2 Levels of participation and nonparticipation

Since stakeholder participation has been argued to be a vital element in sustainable tourism development, it is important to gain a further understanding of the concept. In the article “a ladder of citizen participation” (Arnstein, 1969), she defines a total of three levels of stakeholder participation, which are then unpacked into eight rungs of participation as presented in fig. 1. Within this thesis, it is important to note that even though Arnstein (1969) focusses on citizens, these levels of participation can be applied to all stakeholders involved in sustainable (tourism) development.

The three overarching levels: ‘nonparticipation’, ‘degrees of tokenism’ and ‘degrees of citizen power’ can be used to quantify and determine the current level of stakeholder participation among the earlier distinguished stakeholders in Amsterdam. The lowest level of participation ‘nonparticipation’, is a substitute of genuine participation. At this level of ‘participation’, the powerholder’s real objective is to pretend to involve the stakeholders, or to ‘educate’ or ‘cure’ the other stakeholders, rather than them actually participating in planning programs (Arnstein, 1969). In the second level of participation ‘degrees of tokenism’, stakeholders are informed and in some cases even being heard. This level however, does not assure a stakeholder’s wishes to be met by the powerholder and therefore in some cases can be seen as symbolism rather than real participation (Arnstein, 1969). At the last, and highest level of participation ‘degrees of citizen power’, stakeholder do actually have a certain degree of power. At this level, stakeholders are actively involved in and influence for example planning and development processes (Arnstein, 1969).

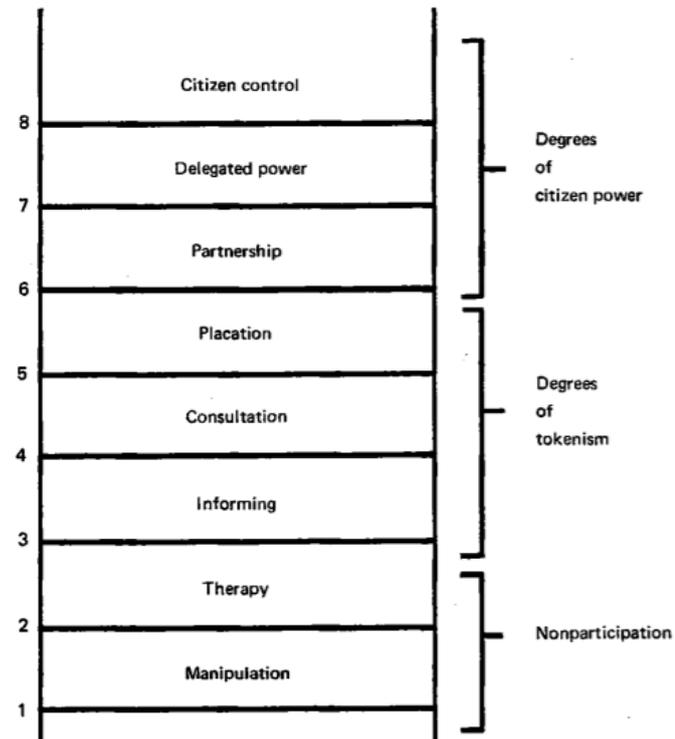


Figure 1

4.3 Success- and failure factors stakeholder participation

In the existing literature, a substantial amount of papers have been written on the success- and failure factors of stakeholder participation, which is one of the research questions of this thesis. It is important to determine the main factors influencing stakeholder participation, since this is a vital element to answer the central research question as well as the sub question.

1) Clear communication

Reed (2008) argues the importance of a respectful discussion among the different stakeholder groups which should result in a mutual, clear, collective goal. This respectful discussion and collective goal can also be interpreted as equality between the stakeholders. In addition Glicken (2000) states the importance of clear communication from the beginning of the process, as she argues that many participatory processes fail because of stakeholders believing that powerholders only seek validation for decision made prior to the process (Glicken, 2000). Clear, and honest communication is necessary in any dialogue among stakeholders, as well as for any other type of communication (Glicken, 2000). Furthermore, Ommen et al. (2016) also confirm that transparency during the participation process is one of the factors which results in more successful stakeholder participation.

2) Degrees of power

Reed (2008) also describes that in successful stakeholder participation, the ‘experts’ should not take in a too pro-active role during the process. Instead, they should simply facilitate the opportunity for interaction between the different stakeholder groups and themselves. A much experienced unsuccessful factor in stakeholder participation is the powerholder restricting certain demands of the involved stakeholder, which could cause less active stakeholder participation. In addition, Ommen et al (2016), also identify the factor ‘degree of influence’ as one of the key factors contributing to successful stakeholder participation. Ommen et al. (2016) argue that the participating stakeholders need to be taken seriously and that the stakeholders should have a high level of decision-making power in the form of for example voting rights. If a high level of stakeholder influence results in successful stakeholder participation, the opposite can be said about how a low level of stakeholder influence, will result in unsuccessful stakeholder participation.

3) Early engagement

According to Reed (2008), engaging stakeholders from the beginning of a project is essential in stakeholder participation. On a very regular basis, stakeholder only get involved in the process at the implementation stage of a particular project and not in the preparation or identification phase (Reed, 2008). When stakeholders are not involved at an early stage, there is the risk

that only stakeholders which interests align with the prior made plans of the powerholders, will engage in the process which could result in a misrepresentation of a particular stakeholder group. Besides Reed (2008), Ommen et al. (2016) also argue the importance of an early involvement of stakeholders. However, there is also a downside in involving stakeholders from earliest stage possible since this could cause stakeholders to be involved in a project which contradicts the stakeholder's interests. This could result in a challenging position for these particular stakeholder since they often end up in being in a reactive position (Reed, 2008).

4.4 Comparing concepts

Some aspects used by Silvius and Schipper (2014) can be found within the definition of the WTO (1993). The WTO (1993) refers to fulfilling social, ecological and economic needs, while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems. This part of the definition strongly relates to the Triple Bottom Line concept (Elkington, 1997) since two out of the three perspectives are covered: social and environmental. Something to note however, is that the definition of the WTO (1993) does not mention maintaining an aspect that relates to the economic dimension, which is relevant since tourism is a commercial activity which needs to be feasible for companies to operate in.

Furthermore, there is the concept of stakeholder participation, which has been argued by multiple authors to be one of the most important elements within sustainable tourism development. In the existing literature, a lot has been written on factors that contribute positively and negatively to stakeholder participation, and thus sustainable tourism development. Reed (2008) for example, claims that there should be a clear, collective goal for all stakeholders as well as room for a respectful discussion. In addition, Glicken (2000) also states that various stakeholder participation processes fail because of the lack of transparency provided by the powerholders. Glucken (2000) argues that in these cases, goals have been set prior to the involvement of stakeholders, which results in distrusts towards the ones in power.

In order to prevent the stakeholders to distrust the powerholders, the stakeholder in power should involve the stakeholders from a very early stage, which is something Reed (2018) advocates on doing. There is however, also a risk that needs to be taken into account whilst involving stakeholders from the very first beginning of a development project. Involving a stakeholder from the first stage onward, might result in a contradiction between the initial interest of the stakeholder and the interests of the project, which then often causes these particular stakeholders to be set in a reactive position (Reed, 2008). More often than not however, stakeholders are only involved from the implementation stage onward, which causes only same-minded people to participate in a particular kind of development project (Reed, 2008). In the study of Ommen et al. (2016), various stakeholders also mention the lack of early involvement in development projects. The main difference between Ommen et al. (2016) and Reed (2008) is the acknowledgement of the risk for too much homogeneity within the involved stakeholders by Reed (2008), which could result in a misrepresentation of a particular group.

To conclude, various studies describe the degree of power a stakeholder should have whilst participating. Arnstein (1969), for example argues that in a lot of participatory processes, the powerholders pretend to involve stakeholders in their plans, however, these stakeholders often end up having a very minor (if any) influence. In addition, Ommen et al. (2016) argue that stakeholders should have a high degree of influence in the decision making process, for example in the form of having voting rights.

5. Conceptual model

All the above mentioned theories has led to the following conceptual model, which shows the factors contributing to more successful stakeholder participation, which on its turn will cause more successful sustainable tourism development.

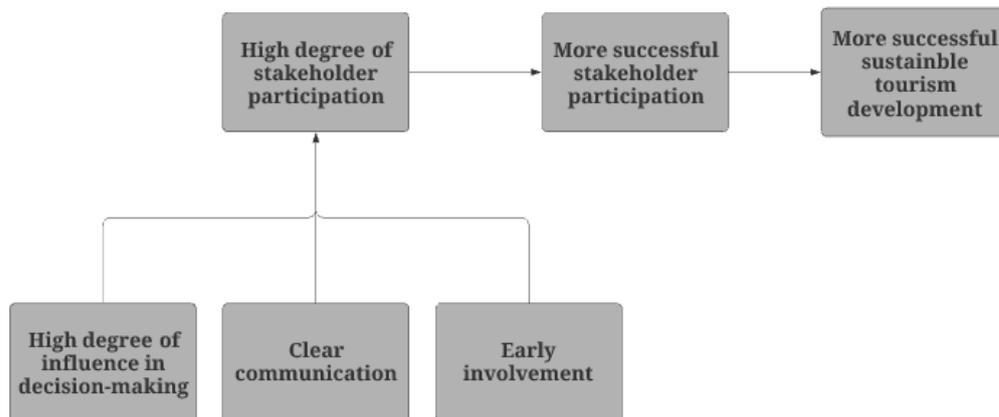


Figure 2

6. Methodology

In this research, two data collection methods have been applied: primary data collection and a literature review. The latter is done by analysing existing literature and their concepts and is presented in the theoretical framework. This framework of theory forms the basis for the primary data collection which has a qualitative research design. More specifically, 5 online in-depth online interviews have been conducted among key stakeholders involved in sustainable tourism development in Amsterdam: the tourism industry, local residents and the municipality of Amsterdam. Since this research is qualitative in its nature, a semi-structured interview is the preferred interview method (Roose and Meuleman, 2014). A semi-structured interview is a balance of structure and a regular conversation which ensures that the respondent feels free to talk, however, an interview guide is present to not go off-topic too far Roose and Meuleman (2014). The concepts of the theoretical framework are operationalized in such a way that they are suitable to adopt them to the interview guide and to the coding of the transcripts.

6.1 Method of data analysis

The audio of the interviews is recorded so it can be transcribed and coded afterwards. Roose and Meuleman (2014) describe how first, a transcript needs to be coded openly. In open coding, certain parts of the transcript will be replaced by labels, or codes. This segmentation of data will result in a list of codes. The next step in analysing the data is axial coding. In axial coding the labels of the open coding process will be combined and be placed in categories which are determined based on the operationalization of the concepts in the theoretical framework. This is the way the studied literature will be connected to the obtained data.

6.2 Ethical Considerations

Lastly, there are some ethical considerations which have been kept in mind while collecting data. First of all, the COVID-19 pandemic is something worth keeping in mind since the research is centred around tourism, which is currently a very sensitive industry as they are coping with many restrictions. This might be a reason for stakeholders to react different to questions during the interviews, for example: a local resident might not experience as much nuisance as they used to. In addition, stakeholders who are employed in the tourism industry might be less willing to cooperate since their business has most likely dropped vastly. Therefore, it is important to keep this in mind and approach all stakeholders in a respectful and appropriate manner. Another thing to keep in mind here is to inform the respondents on what will happen with the data as well as the fact that the interview's audio will be recorded and to negotiate whether or not he or she likes to stay anonymous. This way, privacy issues will be prevented and there will not be any problems regarding privacy in the future.

7. Results

In this chapter, the derived results of the 5 in-depth interviews are presented and analysed. In this analysis the main issues experienced by the stakeholders are reflected on, based on the aforementioned research questions, conceptual model and the theories discussed in the theoretical framework.

The interviewed stakeholders are described in table 1. Besides the information presented in table 1, figure 1 displays the stakeholder's locations in a GIS-map. In this map, only one stakeholder of the tourism industry is presented, since the other

organization does not have an physical office but operates fully online and gives tours in various regions of Amsterdam. Moreover, the interviewed stakeholders operating in the tourism industry happen to both be entrepreneurs. This was not a criterium while approaching stakeholders out this field, however, people of big chains were not willing to participate in the research. Therefore, the stakeholders out of the tourism industry will be referred to as ‘entrepreneur 1’ and ‘entrepreneur 2’. Furthermore, one resident has moved to Muideren four years ago, after having lived in Amsterdam for 22 years.

Table 1

Stakeholder	Organisation	Role
Resident 1	Amsterdam in Progress*	Founder
Resident 2	Amsterdam in Progress*	Member
Entrepreneur 1	Amsterdam Odyssey	Co-founder
Entrepreneur 2	Reinvent Tourism	Co-founder
Municipality 1	Municipality of Amsterdam	Program Manager

*Amsterdam in Progress is a former organization which served the interests of the residents of Amsterdam regarding tourism, but has stopped to exist since 09-2020.

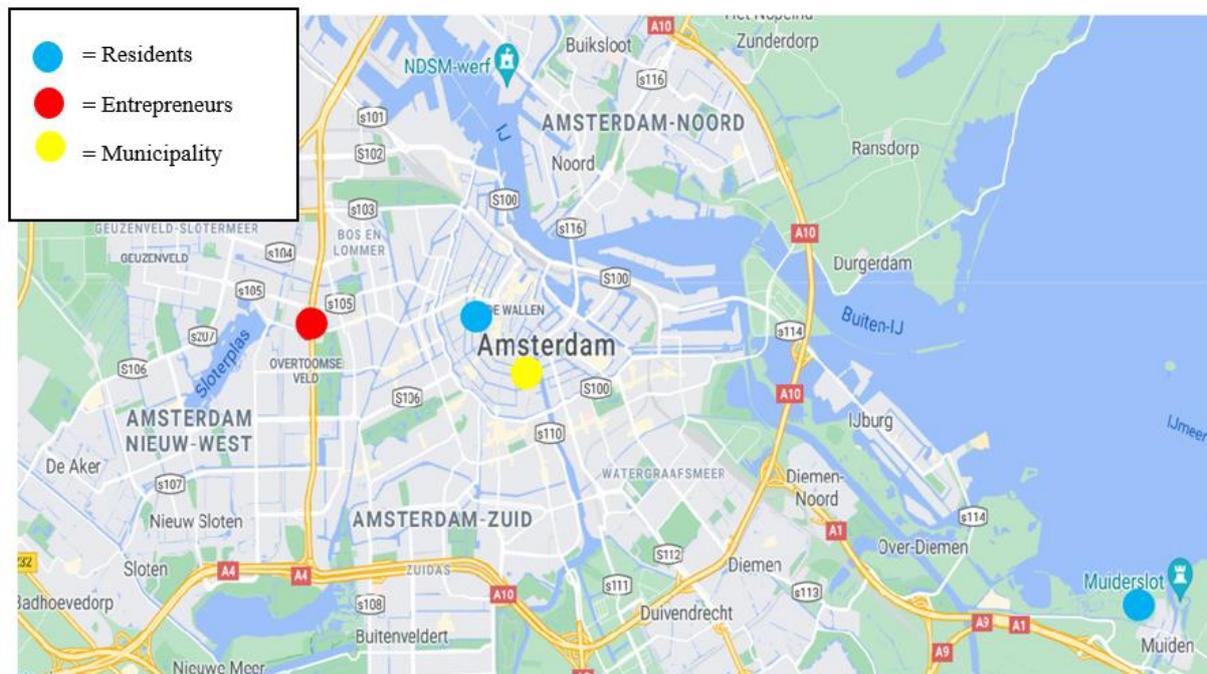


Figure 3

7.1 Differences in perceptions on sustainable tourism development

In order for the stakeholder involved to participate as a collective, it is important to determine whether there are any differences in the way the stakeholders perceive sustainable tourism development and whether all stakeholders prioritize the dimensions of the concept in the same way.

1) Residents

Before the interviews started, all stakeholders were introduced to the three main elements of sustainable tourism development: the economic, social and environmental dimension. Among the interviewed residents of Amsterdam, there is a slight difference in opinion regarding the degree of importance of the three dimensions. Resident 2 prioritizes the social and environmental dimension above the economic dimension whereas resident 1 does feel like the economic dimension plays a vital role in sustainable tourism development, and is therefore just as important as the other two dimensions. This could be a result of the neighbourhood the residents live or used to live in since resident 2 is living next to De Wallen neighbourhood, which can be considered the epicentre of tourism nuisance.

Something the residents do agree on is the feeling that the municipality pays too much attention to the economic dimension, rather than all three dimensions. Another issue both residents address is that the big chains are the ones who mainly benefit of the type of tourism Amsterdam currently attracts (mass tourism). Even though the residents do not agree on the degree of importance of all three dimensions unanimously, they do agree that at the moment, there is a lack of balance between them, which would be necessary according to the Triple Bottom Line concept in order to achieve sustainable development (Elkington, 1997).

2) Tourism industry

Both interviewed entrepreneurs operating in the tourism industry agree that the big chains who are currently located in Amsterdam are profiting too much of the mass tourism the city is currently attracting. According to both entrepreneurs this is not the type of tourism Amsterdam should focus on, but the focus should rather be on higher quality type of tourism. The preference for attracting this other type of tourism is something the residents and the entrepreneurs agree on. The entrepreneurs however, do not seem to be paying too much explicit attention to the environmental and social dimension of sustainable tourism development as entrepreneur 2 mentioned that people will travel nonetheless, since traveling is inherent to human beings. This is also something entrepreneur 1 mentions as she looks at how tourism can help solve environmental and social issues, rather than look at tourism as a problem as such.

3) Municipality

During the interview, the program developer of municipality of Amsterdam states that the municipality feels like the economic dimension is an important element in sustainable tourism development. As mentioned earlier, the TBL concept of Elkington (1997) argues the importance of all three dimensions to be in balance in order to achieve sustainable tourism development. The municipality is acknowledging that there is no balance whatsoever between the three dimensions, since they experience lots of complains and issues relating to nuisance and pollution on both the local and global scale. The municipality of Amsterdam however, is not taking full responsibility for the mass tourism which is currently negatively impacting the social and environmental dimension. They actually point to the national government which in their eyes should be more involved and make amendments to the national laws and regulations.

7.2 Current level of stakeholder participation in Amsterdam

The discussed theory, as well as the conceptual model describe how a high degree of stakeholder participation will lead to more successful sustainable development. Therefore, it is key to determine the current level of stakeholder participation among each stakeholder group using the ladder of citizen participation of Arnstein (1969).

1) Residents

Both of the interviewed residents have not felt any involvement from the municipality of Amsterdam in the process of creating sustainable tourism development policies.

“I don’t have the feeling that we are really involved in the things regarding our neighbourhood, the municipality doesn’t contact us in any way” (Resident 2, 18-03-2021).

In both interviews it became very clear that the residents are not participating in sustainable tourism development whatsoever. The municipality does not want to talk to them when the residents try to contact the municipality and none of the interviewed residents is being invited to participate in a process or project. Moreover, resident 2 describes how the municipality’s attitude towards their former organization Amsterdam in Progress, eventually led to the organization to cease to exist. Linking this to the existing theory, using Arnstein’s ladder of citizen participation (1969), this can be defined as ‘nonparticipation’, which is the lowest layer of stakeholder participation. In the future, this might become problematic since the theory and conceptual model describe that a high degree of stakeholder participation will result in more successful sustainable tourism development (Ommen et al., 2016).

2) Tourism industry

Both entrepreneur 1 and 2 have had mixed experiences in stakeholder participation. Where entrepreneur 1 on the one hand has the feeling that the municipality sometimes does something with the ideas they provide during workshops organized by the municipality, entrepreneur 2 is not even getting responses when reaching out to the municipality. Since these experiences vary so much within this group, it is hard to determine one fixed degree of stakeholder participation based on Arnstein’s ladder (1969). What can be said though, is that entrepreneur 1 has experienced the middle level of participation and entrepreneur 2 is still at the bottom of the ladder, therefore none of the entrepreneurs are at the highest level of stakeholder participation, which is the preferred level of participation in order to achieve successful sustainable tourism development.

3) Municipality

On the other hand, the municipality of Amsterdam does feel like both the residents and the tourism industry are currently equally involved in sustainable tourism development.

“At the end of the day, all stakeholder will be involved” (Municipality 1, 29-04-2021).

The municipality’s thought of involving all stakeholders is being contradicted by the earlier described experiences of the other stakeholder groups, since they do not feel like they are participating sufficiently. Another thing mentioned by the municipality is that even within a stakeholder group, there are lots of different people with different interests and needs. Furthermore, the municipality claims that due to this heterogeneity within the groups, some stakeholders often feel not listened to which makes it particularly hard to put all heads into the same direction. According to the municipality, this

feeling of being unheard is also often confused by stakeholders not getting it their way. The municipality claims that they simply cannot grant all wishes of all stakeholders since this often is a matter of national governmental laws and regulations.

7.3 Success- and failure factors of stakeholder participation

In the existing literature, already a lot has been written on how stakeholder participation is one of the key aspects for successful sustainable tourism development. Therefore, theory derived success- and failure factors of stakeholder participation are compared to the findings out of the interviews.

Multiple authors, including Glicken (2000), argue the importance of clear and honest communication from the beginning of the participation process. The residents of Amsterdam describe no such thing in the way the municipality operates and are even accusing the municipality of being “two-faced”. Moreover, according to the residents as well as the entrepreneurs, the municipality does not take any concrete actions and are promising one thing, but doing the complete opposite. This lack of transparency and honesty in the way of communication is something Ommen et al. (2016) describe as a pitfall in stakeholder participation.

The second element discussed in the literature is early involvement of stakeholders in the participation process (Reed, 2008). Involving the stakeholders only in the implementation phase of a development project is a mistake many powerholders have made in the past and results in the involvement of only like-minded people. The latter, seems to be the case in the context of this research, as one entrepreneur accuses the municipality of being biased towards involving positive and progressive minded people.

“I think that overall, there is a bias (by the municipality) towards progressive thinkers, it was mixed in the type of people, but not regarding the attitudes they had so no angry/ frustrated people” (Entrepreneur 1, 19-04-2021).

This quote by entrepreneur 1 suggests that the stakeholders are only involved at a later stage during the development. Reed (2008) argues that if a stakeholder is involved early, his or her degree of engagement as well as the quality of the participation will be affected positively. The statement of one of the entrepreneurs seems to get substantiated by the frustrated residents and entrepreneur 2 who did not experience any involvement, not even from the implementation phase onwards. Even though the municipality seems to acknowledge the fact that there are differences within every stakeholder group regarding their attitudes towards the current policy, they do not seem to take this into account while selecting stakeholders to engage in their workshops and development projects.

Besides the importance of clear communication and early involvement, another factor contributing to successful stakeholder participation is the degree of power a stakeholder has (Ommen et al., 2016; Arnstein, 1969). This final factor has been addressed a substantial amount of times by all interviewed residents and entrepreneurs and can therefore be argued to be the most relevant and important in the context of Amsterdam. The residents and tourism industry especially mention the lack of influence they have and the way the municipality does not involve them in any way. This lack of influence and involvement becomes strikingly clear when resident 2 explained that this was the exact reason for his organization Amsterdam in Progress to cease to exist. After multiple years of trying to interact and engage with the municipality of Amsterdam, the members of the organization decided that there was no point to try any longer and therefore ceased the existence of the organization. In addition, entrepreneur 2 has experienced no degree of participation whatsoever in a so-called workshop describing how she was seated behind her laptop, only listening to the plans the municipality had. There was no room for a brainstorm, conversation, or for input of the other present stakeholders.

The theory explicitly states the more power a stakeholder gets, the more involved and invested this particular stakeholder will be in the process, and thus the more successful the stakeholder participation will be (Ommen et al., 2016; Arnstein, 1969). Furthermore, Ommen et al. (2016), argue the importance of taking stakeholders involved in the process seriously, which could be done by giving them democratic voting rights for example. This again will enhance the willingness to participate and therefore will generate more successful stakeholder participation and thus more successful sustainable tourism development.

At the moment, the municipality of Amsterdam does confirm to be the one in charge when it comes to sustainable tourism development. Reed (2008) however, describes how the ‘experts’ should not take in a too proactive leading role, but should rather take in a guiding position while facilitating the opportunity for the residents and tourism industry to interact with each other.

To conclude, an issue which both resident 1 and the program developer of the municipality mention is the importance of the involvement of the national government, since some issues are just too complex for the municipality to solve. In addition, this is also something entrepreneur 2 indicates, since she clearly wants the municipality to focus on the issues on a big scale, rather than the initiation of small initiatives which do not contribute to the national or global environmental issues.

8. Conclusions

According to the studied literature, sustainable tourism development is a complex process with lots of stakeholders involved. This complexity has also proven to be the case in the context of Amsterdam, as multiple stakeholders have indicated frustration and discontent with the current tourism situation. In order to achieve successful sustainable tourism development,

stakeholder participation is one, if not the most, decisive factor that influences the outcome of such a development. Thus in order to obtain more successful sustainable tourism development, one must ensure successful stakeholder participation.

First, there is the lack of stakeholder participation, which is currently a major factor influencing sustainable tourism development in Amsterdam negatively. During the interviews conducted in this research, **all** residents and entrepreneurs experienced a lack of actual decision making power, or did not even get the chance to interact with the municipality at all. An example of how a lack of power can negatively influence stakeholder participation, is how the organization Amsterdam in Progress ceasing to exist because they felt like the municipality did not listen to their ideas and input. This lack of participation, and thus lack of actual influence in the decision-making process is a factor which is elaborated on extensively in the existing literature (Arnstein, 1969; Ommen et al., 2016; Reed, 2008). In other projects all around the world, powerholders often fail to give sufficient power to the stakeholders, do not respect them and are often not taking them seriously. At the moment, this is also happening in Amsterdam which is a problem, as these factors are all pivotal points when aiming to achieve successful stakeholder participation. According to Reed (2008), a powerholder should not take in a too dominant position, but should rather enable the stakeholders to interact with each other and develop sustainable tourism through co-creation with the stakeholders being equal to the powerholder. This is something the municipality should be taking into account while involving stakeholders in their development projects.

In addition, there is a discrepancy between the way the municipality think they involve the stakeholders and the degree to which the stakeholders experience this involvement. This discrepancy however, can be explained by looking at the type of people currently participating. As entrepreneur 1 confirms, the municipality of Amsterdam is only involving positively and progressive minded people out of both stakeholder groups, which leaves the more critical and frustrated stakeholders out of the equation. This has most likely led to the misperception of the municipality feeling like they involve all stakeholders, while in fact they are only involving a very specific type of person of these stakeholder groups; people who do not express themselves too critically towards the municipality and the current policy. Ommen et al. (2016) describe the importance of early engagement in stakeholder participation, since this will prevent only like-minded people to participate, which is something the municipality should consider in their sustainable tourism development processes.

Furthermore, according to Glicken (2000), honest and transparent communication are also key in stakeholder participation. The experiences of the stakeholders in Amsterdam indicate that there is a lack of clarity and honesty in the way the municipality operates and communicates and in some cases no communication whatsoever. This unclear, noncommunication could cause the stakeholders to generate distrust over time, which will also negatively influence stakeholder participation and thus sustainable tourism development (Reed, 2008; Glicken, 2000).

To answer to the main research question of this research: “how can stakeholder participation contribute to sustainable tourism development in Amsterdam?” The municipality of Amsterdam should start to focus on involving frustrated stakeholders, as well as the more positively minded people of both the residents and tourism industry. This could be done by involving the stakeholders from a very early phase in the development process, which stimulates inclusivity of all people and organizations. While involving these stakeholders, the municipality should give them a high degree of influence in the decision-making process, for example by giving them voting rights which would place them at the highest level of stakeholder participation. At the moment, the lack of power given by the municipality is the main factor negatively influencing stakeholder participation and thus sustainable tourism development. Therefore, giving stakeholders more decision making power causes them to be more invested in the development process and will foster the quality of the outcome. Furthermore, the municipality of Amsterdam should take a step back and treat all stakeholders, including themselves equally and solely provide the opportunity for all stakeholders to meet, interact and develop sustainable tourism policies.

In addition, the municipality of Amsterdam should provide clarity and transparency in the development process, as well as in the way they communicate and reach out to stakeholders. The way the municipality is currently communicating is very unprofessional and unclear and should change in order for stakeholder to feel like they are being taken seriously.

While concluding this, it should be taken into account that the COVID-19 virus affects the overall attitudes of people towards the municipality and national government which might have influenced the outcomes of the conducted interviews. Therefore, it would be interesting to compare this research to a post-covid research on how stakeholders are currently participating in developing sustainable tourism policies in Amsterdam to see whether there are any different outcomes.

Besides these factors that will positively influence sustainable tourism development in Amsterdam, an insight has been discovered which is not covered in the studied literature. During this research, there was a focus on the residents, tourism industry and municipality of Amsterdam. However, a fourth key stakeholder has been identified while interviewing various stakeholders: the national government. The municipality of Amsterdam should involve and work together with the national government of the Netherlands, since certain things are beyond the power of the municipality. The importance of involving the national government is not limited to the context of Amsterdam, but could also be an important fourth stakeholder in other cities and countries where tourism accounts for a big share of the economy. Every big tourism city has to deal with laws and regulations which a local municipality cannot change and are a matter of national policy. Therefore further research needs to be done on how a national government can be involved effectively to generate even more successful sustainable tourism development.

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Appendix 1 – Interview Guide

Topic	Sub-topics
<p>Sustainable Tourism Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic How do the stakeholder perceive the economic perspective of sustainable tourism development? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is economy an important aspect of sustainable tourism development? • What is economic sustainability for you? • Does the creation of jobs matter in sustainable tourism development? • Does the type of job matter, or does profit matter more? • Does affordable housing also belong to economic sustainability? • Are there any other elements that belong to the economic perspective of sustainable tourism development?

Topic	Sub-topics
<p>Sustainable Tourism Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social How do the stakeholder perceive the social perspective of sustainable tourism development? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the social dimension an important aspect of sustainable tourism development? • What is social sustainability for you? • Have you ever experience a lack of social sustainable tourism development? • Have you ever experience tourism nuisance? And how? • Would you consider moving, or do you know people who moved because of tourism nuisance?

Topic	Sub-topics
<p>Sustainable Tourism Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enivornmental How do the stakeholder perceive the environmental perspective of sustainable tourism development? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is environment of Amsterdam an important aspect of sustainable tourism development? • What is environmental sustainability for you? • Have you ever experienced environmental damage to the city of Amsterdam as a result of tourism • Have you experienced pollution? • Would you consider the replacement of local shop by big chains environmental damage?

Topic	Sub-topics
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<p>Stakeholder participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current level of participation among various stakeholder groups <p>How do different the stakeholders experience stakeholder participation in sustainable tourism development?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you consider your role withing sustainable tourism development in Amsterdam? • Are you satisfied with the amount of involvement at the moment? • Do you feel like other stakeholder groups are more involved than yours? • Do you feel like all stakeholder groups should have a similar amount of power withing sustainable tourism development? • Is there one particular group in power at the moment? How do you feel about this? Should there be one?
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Topic	Sub-topics
<p>Stakeholder participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Success- and failure factors within sustainable tourism development <p>According to the stakeholders involved, what are the success- and failure factors within sustainable tourism development?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What elements of the current stakeholder involvement do you consider successful in sustainable tourism development in Amsterdam? • What elements of the current stakeholder involvement could still be improved within sustainable tourism development in Amsterdam? • Looking at the current situation, which processes are crucial in stakeholder participation? • How could these things be improved upon according to you? • How do the powerholders currently communicate? What do you think of this way of communication

Appendix 2 – Transcripts

Transcript resident 1

I: How important is the economic dimension within sustainable tourism development in Amsterdam for you?

R: I'm not sure whether this dimension belongs to sustainable tourism development. Because there are also a lot of costs related to this dimension and a lot of the profits are leaking out of the city. The economic dimension would only be relevant if the profits would contribute positively to Amsterdam.

I: And you are referring to costs, what kind of costs are you referring to?

R: Think of police, pollution, the trash needs to be transported and cleaned, the maintenance of ports, airports and also immaterial costs of course.

I: And what about the creation of jobs created by tourism?

R: Yes, but then you can discuss the quality of these jobs, and whether we would have them when we would focus on qualitative tourism instead of mass tourism. I do think tourism is part of Amsterdam, its just the type of tourism that bothers us.

I: And the housing market has become unaffordable as well, to what extent do you think tourism contributed to this?

R: The expats and the opportunity to spend your holidays in these houses has definitely caused the housing market to explode. But also the local chains which has disappeared in the city centre, the rents are just too high for them to pay, it's just the big chains which can afford these rent prices.

I: And now about the second aspect of sustainable tourism development: the social dimension. To what extent do you think this dimension is important in sustainable tourism development?

R: I think it is really important, I am a resident of this neighbourhood and its just being exploited by tourists, there are tourists everywhere, and that's not a problem as such, it's just that there is too much focus on generating profits with mass tourism instead of qualitative tourism. Also, attracting these tourists causes the degradation of such neighbourhoods for the local residents.

I: So you think there isn't enough attention on the social part in sustainable tourism development in Amsterdam?

R: I think, there is a lot of attention on this (social dimension) when it comes to words, but there aren't any concrete actions undertaken. There is this whole policy document, with an extreme amount of measures, but at the same time, they want to attract as many tourists as possible.

I: You also mentioned a change in your own neighbourhood, have you seen people move because of the nuisance?

R: Yes, definitely, a lot of people considering, and some of them actually moved.

I: Are you also experiencing the rise of prices due to the tourism?

R: Yes, in particular when going out for dinner or going for a drink at a terrace. Also, another pub has been invaded by tourists which causes locals to not come there anymore. Neighbourhoods have become more anonymous, a loss of identity.

I: Okay, and the ecological dimension of sustainable tourism development, when do you think the city lost its identity?

R: I think it went gradually, however, from 2014 onward the amount of tourism increased very rapidly.

I: Do you also experience pollution in certain parts of Amsterdam?

R: Yes, the city is very polluted, but I don't think that's due to the tourists, it is also due to lack of informing, but also local residents are just throwing their trash on the ground. But the communication should be improved as well, however, we could also predict what the tourists will do and we could anticipate accordingly.

I: And what about the pollution caused by the flights?

R: This is a major problem as well, definitely the really, really cheap flights, the tourists arriving in those aren't even interested in the culture, they just want to go to 'De Wallen'. We should focus on tourists who spend more time in Amsterdam and are really interested in the city and its neighbourhoods and culture.

I: And what are your main dimensions of sustainable tourism development?

R: For me personally, the economic dimension isn't as important as the other two.

I: And the second main topic is stakeholder participation within Amsterdam. How would you describe your own role withing sustainable tourism development in Amsterdam.

R: We have tried to pay attention to what changed due to tourism to try and make a case for this. But we do feel like they (the municipality) has given the priority to other things. Maybe that this isn't always the case, but this is the feeling we get due to the way the government acts and has contact with us. I don't have the feeling that we are really involved in the things regarding our neighbourhood, the municipality doesn't contact us in any way.

I: And what kind of priorities are being taken over the social dimension of the neighbourhoods?

R: The economic dimension, so mass tourism.

I: And do you think that the tourism industry is involved more than the local residents? Do you think they benefit of the tourism as well?

R: Yes, the hotels, restaurants and cafés are definitely participating and benefitting of it. But the traditional local entrepreneurs are being pushed away by the big international chains. But also the AIRBNB business benefits massively of it. The municipality has tried to reduce the amount of Airbnbs, but this became a lawsuit and therefore they failed to do so.

I: Do you think there is a difference between the involvement of tourism industry and local residents of Amsterdam in sustainable tourism development?

R: I think there is a difference between residents who have been living here for a long time and saw the city change and the students and expats who don't know how the city used to be.

R: The municipality isn't making any concrete decisions, they are really two-faced in that sense, they say one thing, and then they do the other. In an online debate, the municipality told they felt like they were really involving all parties in sustainable tourism development, however, they are very naïve and the resident was explaining she did not feel involved at all.

I: Then the last topic of sustainable tourism development: what are the success factors in sustainable tourism development in Amsterdam?

R: That's a hard one, what is going well. The spreading policy is going 'well' but I still don't feel like it is going well at all, they perceive it to go well, but in fact you're just spreading the problem. The municipality should put the city as the main priority, just ensure your city is beautiful and the tourists will come, but don't focus on attracting tourists, focus on making your city more beautiful. It is not too late yet, but if they should act NOW.

Transcript resident 2

I: How do you feel about the economic development being part of sustainable tourism development

R: Yes, absolutely, of course, tourism is an economic activity, it is very important, the economic benefits are part of this development. It is about the balance, between the economic, ecological and social. To summarize: the problem is the person responsible for the tourism in Amsterdam: the alderman for economic affairs. His only priority, as his title already shows, is making money.

I: The economic aspect of tourism is multi-interpretive, what is often written is that the big money goes to the big chains and that the local entrepreneurs do not benefit from this as such.

R: Of course, we live in a global economy, countries profit from other countries, cities. Especially the hotel chains are highly benefitting from the mass tourism the city is receiving. However, the local restaurants and souvenir shops benefit from this as well. It is just the big money goes to the hotel chains, airlines and the cruise ships.

I: What is the influence of tourism on the housing market in your opinion?

R: Yes, there is a big discussion going on whether AirBnb affects the housing prices dramatically, but I think it does have an effect, however, it is not the main reason for the housing market being expensive right now.

I: When looking at the social aspect of sustainable tourism development, the journals are writing a lot about the tourism creating nuisance among the local residents, how do you feel about this?

R: Until four years ago, I lived in Amsterdam myself, and I have to say that the tourism definitely has to do with me moving to a more quiet city. I was surrounded by AirBnb, which caused me to move to Muiden.

I: Did you seen the neighbourhood of Amsterdam change during the period you lived there?

R: I have seen the city change drastically, the prices have risen gigantically, which attract a different kind of people. When I left my house in the inner city, there were only two near-by houses where families lived, and the others were property of really rich people from for example Brasil, who visited Amsterdam during the summer. I have sold my house in the inner city for a ridiculous amount of money to a family, which have renovated the house for 1.5 million euros and they are only there for two weeks a year!

I: Do you think there is a lack of attention of the municipality of Amsterdam, or do you think the residents of Amsterdam should be more active and engaging in the way these kind of developments take place.

R: Both, I think everyone has got the obligation to actively participate in the society and the city of Amsterdam, the involvement has decreased so much, Femke Halsema tries to do something about this, to engage the residents, but she does not engage the entire country. Femke Halsema asked prof. Zef Hemel to make a advisory policy for the city, however, this has been thrown in the bin, since alderman of economic affairs had no interest in using this document, nor did the other responsible persons of the municipality.

I: How did you see Amsterdam's identity change over the past decade?

R: I am living in the Netherlands for 50 years now, Amsterdam has become a place for the visitor and not for the residents. There has been a schism between visitors and residents, what Amsterdam made special in the past was the mix between people with a different demographic background.

I: To what extent do you think the municipality is responsible for this?

R: Completely, they don't act adequately, they just experiment all the time and conclude that it did not work for the past 10 years, it is shocking, not professional at all.

I: Did you feel heard by the municipality during your time at Amsterdam in Progress?

R: Absolutely not, Femke Halsema has declined my invitation for a conversation, her answer to my invite was "I am not responsible for tourism" however, she constantly implements new policies in the city which influence tourism. They believe in market forces, but that is in my opinion not how a city should develop their city when it comes to tourism, that way the short-term economic dimension comes above the other two and that is not ok.

I: Do you have the feeling that other than the municipalities, have more influence on the municipality than the residents?

R: Yes, the tourism industry has had a lot more influence on this then the residents of Amsterdam. The share of tourism industry is a lot bigger than the resident's share. The companies are organized, they are easy to identify, professional. The residents are extremely bad organized, this explains the discrepancy between the influence and involvement of citizens vs the tourism industry.

I: So this is the fault of the residents than?

R: Mainly yes, there is this residents group which consist of 13 organizations which needs to come to mutual positions. I know that Wij-Amsterdam has been searching for over a year for a chairman.

I: What are the elements that the municipality of Amsterdam is currently doing well?

R: Zero, absolutely nothing.

I: And what are the things they should concretely improve?

R: They invent new rules, and the judge constantly pushed aside because the municipality hasn't got the proper lawyers, this cannot happen to the municipality. They develop a law for over a year and it gets pushed aside by the judge, because of a lack of professionalism.

I: Do you think it is too late for Amsterdam?

R: I am an optimist, I will keep fighting, but they need to act now, the solution is very complex, this can only been found if all sub-sectors collaborate with each other. And on the other hand Amsterdam should interact with the national government, the national government should interfere in for example the maximum amount of flights to Amsterdam and from Amsterdam.

Transcript entrepreneur 1

I: To what extent is the economic dimension important for you in sustainable tourism development?

R: Personally it is not. But it is essential for Amsterdam to make a profit, since our goal is to make sure for Amsterdam to attract people who do good things. So the thing is to make all kind of different things which benefit to the city.

I: Would you like to see the local entrepreneurs to make a profit, or also the big chains as long as they contribute positively to the city?

R: I would promote a mix of those. Firstly the locals, I wouldn't like it if only the multinationals would benefit. But I would like a mix of the two. We would like the big ones (companies) to help the little entrepreneurs to grow.

I: And looking at the bigger picture: do you think job creation is part of the economic dimension of tourism development as well?

R: I try to look at the even bigger picture: climate change: therefore the scale of the tourism isn't particularly good. Here at reinvent tourism we try not to look at what is wrong with tourism, but rather what kind of tourism there is and how we can do something better with those tourists. I have to say, I work a lot with entrepreneurs, residents who have been hit hard by the crisis, therefore, I hope that when everything is possible again that they make a profit as well.

I: To what extent is the social dimension important for you in sustainable tourism development?

R: I think it is important, especially at De Wallen here around the corner. We have to work on creative ways on how tourism can contribute positively to residents as well. Some initiatives are being developed at the moment, so it is important to have a look how the tourists can add value to the residents.

I: And to what extent does the municipality help you with this?

R: The municipality doesn't help us enough. But we have received 5000 euro for making bigger parties in the city collaborate, but it also happens a lot, we have requested a festival, which has been rejected, because they want events that happen in public space and we wanted to do it online. I often notice that the municipality is a bureaucratic, closed of club of people, which requires some patience. Something positively are the area brokers.

I: Are the area brokers part of the municipality?

R: Yes, they are responsible for connecting the municipality and other stakeholders in a particular area of the city.

I: You just summed up a couple of initiatives which focussed on the interaction between tourists and residents, is that how you would describe the social dimension?

R: Yes. But making a match between a tourist and a residents requires a extra special design. But I am thinking whether the social dimension also can.. There has been another examples of how tourists can contribute to the city such as: Amsterdam Brainstorm book and Brainstorm platform better city. That could also be a social contribution without the resident and tourist interacting.

I: And you are living in Amsterdam yourself right?

R: Yes

I: Have you ever experienced nuisance caused by tourists?

R: Yes, but I shouldn't complain, but when I bring my sun to my mother in law on the bike, even permanently pressing the bell isn't enough to go through the mass of tourists. And another example is that coming down my house, standing face-to-face with 5 Spanish boys because apparently the neighbours have decided to AirBnb their house without letting me know and then you just hope they won't party all night. So I have a lot of understanding for people who encounter problems on a frequent basis. But on the other hand I don't find it a world problem, I would rather look on how tourism can help to solve world problems, than look at the problems around tourism.

I: I can understand that yes, and have you been living in Amsterdam for a long time now?

R: Yes, my whole life except for one year whilst studying in America.

I: Alright, and have you seen the city change over the years?

R: Yes, the notorious Nutella shops for example and the waffle shops. But I have to say, I was working here since I was 19, and back then you also need your bicycle bell to come through the tourists. And then you hear people complain about the lack of different shops, but I have to say that I think there are plenty of authentic shops, besides these Nutella and churros shops.

I: Alright, so you should just find the right ones besides the big chains?

R: yes, as a resident, you'll know where they are.

I: And what about the ecological dimension of sustainable tourism development?

R: I would say the trash, but also green, so the idea of a guest gardener programme and the export of sustainable inspiration: when a tourist sees our green roofs, they might think, “maybe I can do something with green roofs as well”. But also the compensation of the trip itself.

I: And so what extend you tourists contribute to the trash in the city?

R: I don't have any numbers, but I do think they contribute a lot, not always foreign tourists, but also domestic tourists. I am sure that the visitors contribute to this as well.

I: And is this the visitor's fault, or should they be informed better?

R: I don't think about 'someone's fault'. Everyone has got his own responsibility, there is no one who should do something for someone, you can stimulate them, with a campaign or something. But if I think about how we can reduce the trash on the street, there are a lot of buttons to push. For example the offer of products without a packing, fun trash cans, actions where you can pick up trash, just fun ways rather than handing out fines, I think that is a last resort, it is part of some solutions, but the trash problem, I would rather see something else, more positive.

I: So the municipality has been the leading party in these kind of policies and campaigns, how closely involved are you with these plans?

R: We are close with Amsterdam & Partners, this took some time, at the time it was too early for sustainable things. And the municipality found it really difficult to cooperate in this since they struggled finding their own position in this development, while we were like: come on, vision is there so let's get to action. And at one point, Amsterdam & Partners took the initiative instead of waiting for the municipality and together with other people they wrote a vision which the municipality embraces up till now.

I: Are you optimistic about the degree of action of municipality?

R: No. Nor am I pessimistic, it is just, I always say, never make yourself too dependent on tourism. You know they act slow and it all takes a long time. I think there are good and less good things of the municipality which often go very slow and everything that works is a nice bonus.

I: Are you happy with your degree of involvement.

R: I am with writing the vision with Amsterdam & Partners, not the municipality. We have been at 4/6 sessions and we see things we have provided in the actual vision. And I also have the feeling that the municipality does something with the ideas.

I: So without Amsterdam & Partners you would be less satisfied with your degree of involvement?

R: Yes, but we still do not have any involvement on the way policy develops. We have had really mixed experiences with the involvement with the municipality.

I: Do you think that the residents and the tourism industry have had a same degree of involvement in the vision?

R: I think that there is a bias towards positively and progressive thinkers. There weren't angry and frustrated residents or people of the tourism industry. I think that overall, there is a bias towards progressive thinkers, it was mixed in the type of people, but not regarding the attitudes they had so no angry/ frustrated people. That might be a thing to do, to involve those kind of people in the plans as well, which then again will be more difficult.

I: So that group of angry and people experiencing problems is not represented?

R: No, I don't think so.

I: And then a last question regarding the pandemic we are currently experiencing, to what extend do you think it could function as a restart of the city of Amsterdam?

R: to a certain extent. I think that because of COVID we can easily implement the strategies developed. I think we will see a lot of changes. First of all, we will see less tourism, and among those tourists there will still be people celebrating their bachelor parties and they will be puking and peeing, however, among these people there might also be bigger groups who actually want to contribute to the city. Since we are in a current situation where a lot of change happened, maybe they will celebrate their holiday in a different, more meaningful way as well.

I: So that's quite optimistic.

R: Yes, definitely, I don't think we will go back to the old normal completely, however, I do see space for the special, new normal.

Transcript entrepreneur 2

R: We want to show the real Amsterdam to the people, so that they meet with the locals, this would result in the 'good' entrepreneurs to profit of tourism and not the 'bad' entrepreneurs. We go beyond the superficial mass tourism, we really make customized tours.

I: Ok, thank you for the introduction, let's get started with the first core element: sustainable tourism development. I've divided this into three dimensions: economical, environmental and social dimension. To start with this first one, to what extent is the economical dimension important within sustainable tourism development?

R: Yes, the economic dimension is extremely important, I don't want the Nutella stores benefit of the tourism. Honestly I hope that they won't survive the COVID pandemic and that they are going to execute a more meaningful job. But yes, I think those are really bad, for the visitors and the residents, De Wallen and the Inner centre were kind of a theme park where you don't want to be.

I: As a resident?

R: Yes, but we don't give tours in those areas either, we'll provide them with a bit of history, but then tell them to go and visit those areas on their own. But you know, I just don't like the fact that a superficial chain wants to make money fast and easy. I mean in the inner centre, there is a social workspace as well, I mean that would be a way more meaningful and beautiful souvenir right?

I: So, that's economic sustainability for you? What about the AirBnBs in Amsterdam, since that is part of this dimension as well.

R: Yes, if it were up to me, that can go away as well. I mean it started as a good thing, sleep at a local's house, but then again. There are people who want to make a massive profit out of it and that's sad. I myself live in a social housing group, it is not that bad here, but I know friends of mine who experience a lot of nuisance in de Jordaan or the inner centre. Some of them don't even have any neighbours anymore because their apartments are always rented to tourists.

I: And what about the social dimension, do you experience a lot of nuisance yourself?

R: No, it is ok for now, it is just our street, that is pretty quiet. But apart from Corona, most of the Amsterdammers I know do experience a lot of nuisance, for example, we would just not go to the inner city and de wallen. If we had to cycle from west to east or east to west, we would just take a different route since all the tourists on the cycling lanes are so annoying and the tourists who are cycling, but can't cycle at all. It is more relaxing to take a detour than trying to get through the centre. No it isn't just earning money of tourism, I mean it is my only income at the moment, but not that kind of tourism and I really hope that kind of tourism (mass tourism) stays away.

I: And with the tours you provide, do you think you create nuisance yourself?

R: Well, it is the kind of tours we give, I want to connect people with each other and their environment, so the tourist with the resident and the other way around. When you get to know each other, you kind have a proper conversation. Our main target group are North-American adults, who are 55+ and they do have some money, otherwise they can't afford a private guided tour through the city. So we have a higher-end customer which won't create nuisance. I mean there is this biological baker who we call upfront of our visit and she liked it a lot, she really had a conversation with the tourists as well.

I: Have you have considered moving because of the nuisance experienced?

R: Funny you're asking this, to be honest: yes. When it was really bad I have considered it on a blue Monday, I have talked to my parents as well, that I considered moving to Haarlem or something. But all my connections, family and friends are here. So the thought of moving was there, but it has only been a thought, not an action.

I: And the ecological aspect of sustainable tourism, there are many different scales of this, but how do you perceive this dimension?

R: For our company, we only do electrical tours and when we stop somewhere for a souvenir or a coffee we go to places who operate sustainable. I mean there are also tours who go and collect trash of the street and make their own necklace out of that. Personally I find that kind of cute initiatives fine, but we don't want to operate that way, we don't attract those kind of people. We don't position ourself as 'geitenwollen sokken', we want to make the people see that being sustainable isn't that hard if you go to the right places.

I: And looking at the bigger picture, so the cruise ships and airplanes the tourists arrive in?

R: Yes! Those cruise ships, horrible. But I think, people will travel, this urge is inherent to the people and therefore the people will visit nonetheless, so I'd rather give them information on how they can be more sustainable than not inform them at all.

I: And the second core topic in this interview is stakeholder participation. How would you describe your own role within this participation?

R: Yes, well we are a partner of Amsterdam and Partners, there are multiple initiatives who try to be sustainable, actions like: when all tour guides pick up trash of the street on a particular day, it will contribute to sustainability. But I think that this does not solve the problem, the core of the problem is still there, within any working area, in this case tourism, but you should change something bigger like everyone using sustainable transportation.

I: Ok. So that is Amsterdam and Partners, but the municipality, do you have any contact with them?

R: Well, a little bit, because the department diversity of the municipality has contacted us to make a tour around a diversity campaign initiated by the municipality.

I: Amsterdam and Partners has created this policy document which is given to the municipality, where you at all involved in creating that?

R: No

I: Would you have wanted to be more involved in creating and changing sustainable policies?

R: Yes, definitely, I have tried to contact different people of the municipality and Amsterdam and Partners with my take on the current policies, but they have never replied to emails.

I: Alright, and do you share this experience with others working in the tourism industry?

R: Yes, in a small circle, but not very explicitly.

I: Out of the municipality itself there isn't that much initiative?

R: Yes that's right, not much initiatives the municipality

I: As an entrepreneur, do you have any ideas on how the municipality should improve their way of contact?

R: Yes, I do. Amsterdam & Partners recently had a meeting or workshop with something like 'sustainability' in the title, so I thought I'd participate in this session. However, A small group of people coming together is good, and (organization) did organize a workshop with a brainstorm session, but it all stays very abstract and it only resulted in these small initiatives and not in changes on a larger scale.

I: So Amsterdam and Partners is being too abstract.

R: Yes and a very high 'policy level' no concrete actions.

I: And to what degree do you think the COVID pandemic has created an opportunity for tourism to reinvent themselves?

R: I really hope mass tourism will stay away and that the 'nutella stores' will go away as well. And as a whole I hope that that the overall awareness will increase because of the pandemic.

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I: Is the economic aspect of sustainable tourism development an important part of the concept?

R: The economy plays a vital role in the visitors economy. We have a lot of hotels, which make use of the visitors, or earn money of them, so the tourism industry is quite dependent on this part of sustainable tourism development. We want to have a different kind of tourism, but the visitors economy stays an important part of sustainable tourism development

I: And do you feel like everything is in balance at the moment, economically speaking?

R: No I don't think so, but that is my personal opinion. I think we should look at the broader sense of economy, you can add value in other terms rather than just money.

I: There you aim at the social and ecological aspects of sustainable tourism development.

R: Yes

I: A lot has been written on the housing market as well, how do you feel like the tourism in Amsterdam has had an effect on this?

R: I don't think it is that simple. I think it has contributed a tiny bit to this, but I feel like the worldwide urbanization has had the biggest influence on the rise of the housing prices.

I: To what extent do you think the local entrepreneurs benefit of the tourism Amsterdam is currently receiving?

R: I think it depends on the region and neighbourhood within Amsterdam, there are certain areas where entrepreneurs benefit hugely of the incoming tourism. But there are other areas that benefit less, and are mainly focussed around their own local residents. There are definitely areas which are relying on this part of the economy, local entrepreneurs, as well as the big chains.

I: How do you think the residents, so the social side of the issue, respond to the tourism Amsterdam is currently receiving?

R: I think this also depends on the areas, for example De Wallen, these residents are extremely happy with the current situation, which is: no tourism. They have shared examples of tourists peeing and vomiting in front of their door/ houses. In this area, there is no balance whatsoever.

I: Are you living in Amsterdam, if yes, did you experience nuisance in your neighbourhood?

R: In my neighbourhood, not that much, it's mostly centred around the real centre of the city.

I: How do you feel about the identity of Amsterdam, do you feel at home in your own city?

R: I have to admit, I am an Amsterdammer who doesn't visit the inner city that often, just for work and maybe to visit a pub or store that I like. There is plenty of amenities in other parts of the city where it is less busy and where there are fewer tourists.

I: Did you see neighbourhoods change over the last years?

R: Yes, De Wallen, this neighbourhood really got out of control, the police had to block off streets to stop the experienced nuisance. It is really cheap to get here, that is one of the main problems at the moment. It is this and a lot of other small factors which create the big problem of nuisance and pollution experienced at the moment.

I: Do you think it is the quantity of tourists who create the problem, or the type of tourist?

R: I think and hope that it is the latter. But the questions raised are also regarding a maximum of tourists for Amsterdam. I don't know how this will be done, but it is something that is a current question. There are lots of economical interests on a national scale, or maybe European scale which are really difficult for just the municipality of Amsterdam. It is a far more complex and bigger issue on a far bigger scale.

I: Is the municipality of Amsterdam the leading and direction party when it comes to sustainable tourism development in Amsterdam?

R: Yes, to some extent, but we want to have conversations with residents, with real estate developers, with companies. We are leading, but it is not something we can do by ourselves, since the problems concern the different stakeholder groups within the city. Then there is Amsterdam & Partners, who is developing marketing campaigns, the hotels.. We have a big role in the development, but then again, we cannot do this alone.

I: Do you think the residents and the tourism industry contribute equally to the development of plans and policies?

R: I think when it comes to residents and entrepreneurs; yes. Real estate owners, that is something we are beginning to interact with at the moment, but not necessarily in tourism related enquiries.

I: Do you think that both parties should be equally involved in all issues at stake. Or should this be different when it for example comes to the housing market, the residents should have more power and when it comes to the rent of retail premises, the industry should have more power.

R: Those kind of issues are very complex, so at the end of the day, all stakeholder will be involved. Of course sometimes the entrepreneurs are mainly in charge in the preliminary stage, but at the end of the day all parties and stakeholders have the chance to say something about the plans and policies.

I: What are the elements which are so far successful?

R: Amsterdam & Partners made an advisory report, which involved all different kind of stakeholders involved. We, together with Amsterdam & Partners are developing a campaign which is meant to encourage the tourists/ visitors to behave in a good

manner. I think we have started good. But now it is time to shape it and hold on to it. It also depends on the political situation, for example on the coffee shops, prostitution etc. If there isn't some law which decreases this, Amsterdam will probably not lose the current image and the particular type of tourists this image attracts. If the national politics wants to change this image, I expect them to make amendments in these policies as well.

I: And to what extent do you feel like the COVID pandemic creates a restart for the city of Amsterdam?

R: I hope it does, but I don't think it will. In the summer holidays, there were a couple of tourists from Spain or France, who sleep in their cars and those aren't the type of tourists we want to attract. I expect them to come during this summer again, so that's why I don't think to pandemic will be a real reset button as such.

I: And what are the elements in the collaboration with particular stakeholder which were less successful?

R: Well, the interests of a particular stakeholder group are very divided as well. It is very to put all heads into the same direction. This is really difficult, because this way it is not possible to make everyone happy. We often get the reproach that we don't listen, but I think that those people confuse not listening with not meeting their demands or not doing what they want us to do. The pandemic has created a bigger distance between the entrepreneurs and the municipality, they want more support, but we simply don't have that kind of money, this is not something we can change unfortunately. Therefore I don't see this pandemic that positive with regards to the tourism situation. There is a lot more distrust in the government and municipality.

I: Are there any final notes you want to point out?

R: Well, it is just difficult because of this distrust, we are already behind by 2-0.

Appendix 3 – Coding Scheme

