

**Becoming Smart-
Exploring Tourism Suppliers' Perspectives on
Smart Tourism Destination Engagement**

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Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of
University of Nottingham for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

April 2021

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my parents. Thank you for always being there for me on this journey daily, though virtually. Thank you also for never letting go of my hand and I hope this brings you happiness in these times.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to acknowledge the support of the many who have contributed to making this thesis possible. First, this PhD journey would have not commenced without Professor Jillian M. Rickly and her kind consideration, sincere interest and confidence in me as a potential PhD student at the University of Nottingham. You have been instrumental in opening my eyes to see beyond the dominant, thus paving the way for my future endeavours. Thank you, Professor Scott McCabe, for not only agreeing to be my supervisor alongside Professor Rickly but playing an active role in my development. Professor McCabe provided the space to communicate my ideas prior to presentation and paved the way for creating connections with other tourism scholars in Slovenia. I am truly grateful for the unwavering support, detailed guidance, academic opportunities, conversational space and open doors provided by my supervisors, Professor Rickly and Professor McCabe. Numerous conversations and meetings with them have shaped my thinking. Both have challenged and pushed me beyond my comfort zone at times as well as consoled me during times of immense criticisms from anonymous reviewers. I thought handling industry criticisms were hard and a hurdle I had mastered but those who have walked the path of industry and academia know the latter is worse, which I experienced when I submitted journal articles. I also appreciated the input from those who reviewed and will review my work. Thank you, Dr. Robert Cluley and Professor Caroline Tynan for providing constructive and invaluable feedback and brilliance annually. Thank you, Professor Scott Cohen, for your consideration and contribution.

I am grateful to the Nottingham University Business School (NUBS) for full funding as this thesis could not have been completed without it. I appreciated the support that I received from the administrative and ancillary staff during this journey. I am grateful to Elaine who was based at the NUBS South Building reception who never ceased to assist me with my stationery needs. I appreciated the kind morning messages from the cleaners based on the B Floor on the 7 am shift as well as the conversations and hospitality extended by Donna and Jasmine based at Costa Coffee Shop on the South Building. I also want to thank Dr. Cvelbar, Yana Bilynets and Miha Bratec and as well as the accommodations team at the University of Ljubljana for your hospitality. This thesis could not have been produced without the participants in Ljubljana, Slovenia. I sincerely appreciate them for allowing me the chance to capture their perspectives on such a current and relevant issue.

I am forever grateful to my immediate family, friends and mentors who have supported my life goals. Specifically, thank you dad for your constant affirmations, prayers and generosity. I appreciate the fact that you never refused to support me even when you did not entirely favour the path I took. To my mom, thank you! Thank you for being my biggest cheerleader who

from the start believed in me and encouraged me to pursue this PhD journey when I thought it was far-fetched since it was not on the industry-dominated vision board and path I was on in 2017. My mother's belief gave me the drive to reject the offer letters for industry opportunities that had arrived the same week when acceptance and funding to University of Nottingham was granted. I have no regrets in choosing this journey. I am grateful to Dr. Andrew Spencer, Dr. Cynthia Williams-Cooke and Dr. Shona Heron for your confidence in me. Thanks to my friends, Amani, Ajeseun, Yana, Ioanna, Deasia, Vanessa and Cary for creating the feeling of home away from home. May all your dreams and aspirations come to fruition in this season and beyond.

To my supervisors, examiners, NUBS and Ljubljana community, I am indeed grateful for your efforts that have contributed to the creation of a better version of myself and this work.

To one and all, whether your contribution was immense or minute, I thank you.

To God, I am forever grateful for your spirit, blessings of grace, favour and answering my prayers.

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines suppliers' perspectives on engagement in smart destinations. Research on technologies in tourism follows a long-held tradition of lacking diverse theorisation and this has influenced knowledge development of smart tourism, which continue to draw on narrow perspectives of engagement. In order to provide a more holistic understanding of engagement in smart tourism, a collaborative approach was applied to this thesis. Power was identified as not being extensively discussed in tourism collaboration and smart tourism research, which is necessary for exploring smart contexts. This thesis applies Michel Foucault's ideas on power, namely discourses and governmentality. This was done in order to unravel power relations and their effects on multiple individual suppliers in a destination that facilitates a participatory, bottom-up approach. This move can aid in understanding challenges experienced by suppliers within a smart context.

The aim of this research is to examine suppliers' perspectives on engaging in smart destinations, which is achieved through the following objectives: to understand the rationale for developing smart tourism, examine how smart tourism was developed, explore perceptions on the factors that influence engagement, examine supplier engagement through an analysis of discourses and governmentality. Methodologically, the research design employs a case study approach to Ljubljana, Slovenia, a 2019 and 2020 European Capital of Smart Tourism. Data collection focused on online material, printed documents and semi-structured interviews with suppliers, which are analysed using thematic and Foucauldian discourse analyses.

Findings indicate that organisational and relational factors can influence suppliers' decisions on engagement. While these factors are important, power underpins engagement in smart tourism. This power manifests through individuals and organisations, discourses of sustainability, technology and marketing as well as specific technologies of power such as space, data and assessment procedures, and a culture of collaboration. The findings also reveal the smart tourism development process as being complex but also as an occurrence within a context of neoliberal discourses. The study provides a clear link between smart tourism engagement and the operation of power and represents one of the first studies to do so, and as a result makes contributions to both academic research and practice.

This thesis is one of the few studies that has attempted to provide a deeper theoretical underpinning to an understanding of the piecemeal and variable ways that smart tourism has been deployed as a mechanism through which to develop a more sustainable and attractive destination. The conceptual contribution highlights the elaboration of discursive and technologies of power within collaboration and smart tourism literature. This study infuses a much-needed critical theory perspective to smart tourism and collaboration literature

as well as a greater understanding of governance in networks. It reveals how suppliers' level of involvement or exclusion is based on underlying power mechanisms associated with discourses linked to smart tourism. For practitioners that wish to implement smart initiatives, this thesis illustrates that smart engagement is not only concerned with the deployment of technology but also takes into account individuals, networks, suppliers' meanings and technologies of power.

PUBLICATION DECLARATION

The following publications resulted from this thesis:

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles

Johnson, A., Rickly, J. & McCabe, S. (2021). Smartmentality in Ljubljana. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 86, 103094.

Johnson, A. (2020). We are not yet done exploring the hospitality workforce. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 86, 102402.

Johnson, A. & Samakovlis, I. (2019). A bibliometric analysis of knowledge development in smart tourism research. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology*, 10 (4), 600-623.

Peer-Reviewed Conference Proceedings and Presentations

Johnson, A. (2021). Power in Smart Tourism. *American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting*.

Johnson, A. (2020). Away from Balkanness towards Europeanness- The Case of Smart Ljubljana. *Nottingham University Business School PhD/ECRs Webinar Series at the University of Nottingham, UK*.

Johnson, A., Rickly, J. & McCabe, S. (2020). Relational factors that influence multi-stakeholder engagement in inter-organisational collaboration: an examination of tourism supplier engagement in smart tourism. In J. Stienmetz, B. Ferrer-Rosell & M. Schuckert (Eds.). *Proceedings of the ENTER 2020 Ph.D. Workshop*, Surrey, U.K.: Springer, 11-15.

Johnson, A. (2019). Stakeholder Engagement in Smart Tourism. *3 Minute Thesis Competition at the University of Nottingham, UK*.

Johnson, A., Rickly, J. & McCabe, S. (2019). Reconceptualising Smart Tourism. *The Smart Conference at the University of Central Florida, U.S.A*.

Johnson, A., Rickly, J. & McCabe, S. (2018). Stakeholder Engagement in Smart Tourism. *Travel and Tourism Research Association Europe Chapter Conference at the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia*.

Book Chapters

Johnson, A. & Rickly, J. (in review). The evolution process of smart tourism initiatives. In D. Buhalis, B. Taheri & R. Rahimi (Eds.). *Smart cities and tourism: co-creating experiences, challenges and opportunities*.

Johnson, A. (in review). Developing smart experiences: towards a collaborative approach. In R. Costa, F. Brandao, Z. Breda & C. Costa (Eds.). *Planning and managing the experience economy in tourism*.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The advancement of information and communication technologies (ICTs) has impacted societies, people and businesses within tourist destinations to a vast extent (Koo et al., 2015). The idea of using technology to connect physical and virtual environments have long existed in society from the earliest introduction of smart homes in the 1960s (Aldrich, 2006) to smart buildings in 1970s (Morvaj et al., 2011), smartphones in 1990s (Esposito, 2012), smart cities with smart infrastructure (IBM, 2018; Khan et al., 2017), and smart tourism since 2000s (Buhalis, 2019). Though definitions vary (see Gretzel et al., 2015a; Li et al., 2017), “smart” is concerned with the interconnectivity and interoperability of multiple stakeholders driven by advanced technologies such as big data, internet-of-things and cloud computing (Buhalis & Amaranggana, 2013; Gretzel et al., 2016).

Technological innovations rapidly expanded since 2000, the period following the financial bubble burst of Internet-based businesses also known as the dot.com crisis (Fuchs, 2017). With investor confidence restored, technology companies needed to diversify markets for their products, which resulted in the continued and accelerated aim of making living convenient and more efficient for wider markets. Smart has moved from being considered a convenience for household users to an imperative for managing and delivering public services in cities, specifically where municipality representatives have been faced with budgetary cuts (Kitchin et al., 2019).

Smart initiatives have enabled ease, efficiency and choice to varying degrees for users. However, there is increased advocacy for the development of smart initiatives that are more inclusive and diverse to allow for benefit of all rather than select individuals (Kitchin & Dodge, 2011). The Internet, labelled “an architecture of participation” (O’Reilly, 2005, n.p.), was followed by other technological advances that were being promoted in a similar fashion such as smart cities being citizen-centred and for “democratic participants” (Simonofski et al., 2019, p. 669). Although technological advancements have facilitated bottom-up participation, many stakeholders are still excluded from benefiting and contributing to development (Auda et al., 2018). Hence, the concerns surrounding active participation have been mounting.

Local engagement and consideration have been less than expected in smart cities. For instance, the collaboration between Toronto’s public development authority, Waterfront Toronto, and Google’s subsidiary, Sidewalk Labs, which commenced in October 2017, promoted plans that would foster inclusion and sustainability, but the specifics were unavailable for review. Then, there were concerns of accountability, treatment of resident data, control of services and

ownership of infrastructure. This smart development was eventually terminated as it was seen as an initiative that focused on domination through private efforts, which was incompatible with democratic processes, which foster collaboration among businesses, local citizens and government (Goodman & Powles, 2019). The increasing control by private entities that possess resources for driving innovations follow a long line of concern from the 1950s when Walt Disney introduced its “Experimental Prototype Community of the Future” (Sadowski, 2017, n.p.). The potentials of smart vary from actuality, which represents power asymmetries of influence, expertise and financial resources. Furthermore, concerns have been raised specifically about the technologies that are being placed within these cities as they are based on persuasive designs that serve to manipulate one’s behaviour (Renaud et al., 2006; Zuboff, 2019).

Smart initiatives require more human-centred collaborative designs that foster inclusion and diversity for all stakeholders. However, less attention has been placed on understanding these concerns of power in collaborative networks focused on the development of technological initiatives such as smart homes (Pimple, 2014) and smart cities (Kitchin et al., 2019). The smart concept has recently expanded to tourism to create smart destinations, which is considered an extension of smart cities (Buhalis & Amaranggana, 2013). While the benefits within the tourism industry are also far-reaching (Gretzel et al., 2016), there has been very little discussion on understanding engagement and to a greater extent, how to ensure involvement for all stakeholders.

1.2 Call for Engagement for Creating Smart Tourism Destinations

The former secretary-general of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), Taleb Rifai, called for destinations to engage in smart tourism (UNWTO, 2017). Smart tourism initiatives can be found worldwide, with notable cases in China, Spain, Norway and South Korea (Gretzel et al., 2015a; WTM, 2021). Although there is no available statistical data for tracking the total number of smart destinations, there are a variety of indexes that have measured smart cities across the world. Smart cities represent the core concept from which smart destinations have been defined (Buhalis, 2015). The Institute for Management Development (IMD) Smart City Index, developed by the Swiss IMD Business School, ranked 109 cities in 2020 (IMD, 2020). Prior, in 2019, there were 174 cities representing 80 countries that were ranked on the IESE Cities in Motion Index, an index developed by the IESE Business School’s Center for Globalization and Strategy at the University of Navarra in Barcelona, Spain (IESE, 2019). This signifies that less than 41% of the countries represented by the UNWTO are considered to have smart cities (UNWTO, 2017). Hence, there is a significant number of destinations that have not responded to Rifai’s call.

In fact, Rifai's plea did not warrant that all destinations engage, since he was speaking directly to challenges that were being experienced predominantly in European cities at the time. Cities were becoming increasingly crowded, a phenomenon sometimes classified as being overtourism (Dodds & Butler, 2019). Much of overtourism is as a result of the marketing activities of low-cost airlines (Dodds & Butler, 2019), social media (Gretzel, 2019) and sharing economy platforms such as Airbnb (Gutierrez et al., 2017). Overtourism has resulted in serious concerns and sometimes protests by local residents who have experienced reduced well-being as a result in destinations such as Paris and Palma de Mallorca (Dodds & Butler, 2019). Meanwhile, traditional tourism organisations were also facing increased competition. With half of the Airbnb listings located in Europe, the revenue and profitability of hotels were impacted by the emergence of properties on Airbnb (Dogru et al., 2020). In response to these challenges, different governments were attempting to manage growth through short-term initiatives, including imposing limitations on the number of rented nights by Airbnb hosts in Paris and London (Nieuwland & Van Melik, 2020). However, Rifai's call for the implementation of smart tourism was aimed at better decision-making related to managing tourism impacts, specifically visitor flows for the long-term (UNWTO, 2017).

A few destinations have implemented smart initiatives, providing limited evidence of success such as the implementation of technological infrastructure and intelligent systems in Spain (Femenia-Serra, 2018). Nonetheless, there were also some failures such as Amsterdam's Rijenradar virtual queuing system (IAmsterdam, 2018) and Copenhagen's city data exchange platform (Copenhagen Solutions Lab, 2018). In Copenhagen, the city data exchange, launched in May 2015, was a data exchange platform that fostered suppliers' decision-making and development of innovations. The platform was terminated in March 2018 due to lack of support from organisations situated in the urban area (Copenhagen Solutions Lab, 2018). In Amsterdam, the Rijenradar virtual queuing system was designed to provide the benefit of mitigating congestion in the city and better manage tourism visitor flows at attractions. At the start of the initiative, April 2017, supplier participation included ten attractions and then numbers decreased leading to termination in June 2017. This raises the question as to what were the factors that influenced suppliers' engagement but also shows that the success of smart is dependent on engagement by suppliers.

This question of engagement still remains relevant in recent times. In July 2020, Bloomberg hosted an interview with executives from Siemens, Blackberry, Airbus, Privacy International, Mercedes-Benz in Europe to discuss the challenges faced with implementing smart initiatives. The inability to access multiple organisations' infrastructure was impeding connectivity for the development of smart cities. One participant who was assigned to implement smart initiatives stated that their company thought that approaching mayors of

some cities would enable this widespread connectivity to happen but that was not the case as they lacked complete power in the decision-making process (Bloomberg Live, 2020). This suggests that there are other factors beyond city authorities that are necessary for understanding the development of smart. Like the cases of Amsterdam and Copenhagen that existed prior to COVID-19, these supplier views of smart cities also illustrate that there still exists a need for engagement in practice and a better understanding of collaboration.

Although Rifai's plea in 2017 was aimed at embracing smart tourism to better manage urban crowding, it remains relevant today, but the idea has been expanded as a tool for managing various issues. Since March 2020, the plea to embrace destination collaborations moved towards being a necessity in light of COVID-19 pandemic. Acting based on the World Health Organization's (WHO) recommendations, the UNWTO has urged destinations across the globe to implement public health protocols and systems that can detect and track the infection among tourists and workers (UNWTO, 2020). Some of these systems are smart initiatives. For instance, mobile applications (apps) have been created and installed by tourists upon their arrival to destinations across the world such as China's health code app, Italy's Immuni and Jamaica's JamCOVID19. Travelers numbers are being carefully managed via these systems that were developed for contact tracing. The reopening of destinations as well as gaining the interests of tourists is dependent on engagement that occurs at the local destination level, that is, the participation of local establishments that these tourists will visit. Hence, in some countries, hotels and attractions have been embracing more technology-driven and collaborative initiatives such as developing contact tracing applications, self-check-out stations and machines as well as connecting with other organisations to provide their services remotely to tourists.

Despite the introduction of vaccines for combatting the virus, there is still an anticipated rise in the development of smart initiatives as adoption of technologies is slated to continue and dependence on economies and markets within closer proximities. In terms of adoption, it is anticipated that the services offered by businesses may be partially or fully digitised (McKinsey, 2020). It is reasonable to conclude that the degree of supplier engagement might be a major factor in the success of such initiatives, and that an understanding of the collaborative aspects of smart destination initiatives would be of value to the design and implementation process. However, to date, the academic literature on supplier engagement in smart tourism remains limited.

1.3 Research on Smart Tourism and Engagement

While the advancements made in smart tourism research are well-received, there is still room for development as the current literature is not sufficient for understanding the challenges surrounding engagement in smart contexts. There still exists no research on engagement in smart destinations from direct tourism suppliers' perspectives. Ivars-Baidal et al.'s (2017) study remains the only to date that has come close to shedding light on the influences of engagement at the destination level. However, Ivars-Baidal et al. (2017) garnered feedback from members of the academic community rather than actual industry suppliers, lack in-depth details and theoretical underpinning.

An understanding of engagement by active suppliers is needed to provide practical insights for current and prospective practitioners who are challenged with developing smart initiatives (Zuzul, 2019). A focus on suppliers is deemed important as these stakeholders are required to first create smart initiatives through exchange and sharing of resources (Gretzel et al., 2015a). However, smart tourism literature is still dominated by discussions concerning tourists with less attention being placed on suppliers (Ballina et al., 2020; Leung, 2019; Mehraliyev et al., 2020). This has contributed to the lack of understanding of smart destination planning and management (Mehraliyev et al., 2020).

Looking to the wider smart tourism literature, it is dominantly driven by theories and models that emphasise individual technology users or organisations rather than multiple organisations within collaborative settings, which is more representative of actual smart destinations. For instance, technology adoption models, such as technology acceptance model (Davis, 1989), theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 1991), and unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (Venkatesh et al., 2003), assess the willingness of an individual to use an innovation. For firm technology adoption, models include diffusion of innovations theory (Rogers, 1983) and technology, organisation and environment framework (Tornatzky & Fleischer, 1990), which examine a firms' willingness to adopt technology.

In addition to technology adoption models, smart tourism studies apply Vargo, et al.'s (2008) value co-creation and service-dominant logic lens (see Johnson & Neuhofer, 2017; Polese et al., 2018). While the technology models tend to use terms such as ease of use and usefulness (see Davis, 1989; Venkatesh et al., 2003), value co-creation and service-dominant logic speaks about value-in-use (Vargo et al., 2008). Value co-creation lens is centred on the service delivery process to present the claim of value being beneficial for individual end users (Vargo & Lusch, 2008). However, engagement extends beyond the service delivery process and involves other stages such as problem-setting and direction-setting, which draws attention to other dominant players such as suppliers (Jamal & Getz, 1995). Vargo and Lusch (2008) acknowledge that the

interactivity element that accounts for multiple stakeholders was not explicitly dealt with in their explanations of value co-creation.

The widespread introduction of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in the 2000s that connect the physical and virtual environments require not just consideration by individual users but also the multiple suppliers involved in their development, implementation and functioning as seen in the case of smart cities. This calls for understanding engagement not based on a transactional approach but instead a collaborative one. According to Fyall and Garrod (2005), a transactional approach places focus of control on the individual or organisation whereas the entity is seen as independent and concentrates on value and transactions for the benefit of the business. On the other hand, a relational (collaborative) approach indicates that an organisation is a part of wider processes and contexts, dependent on a network of stakeholders and concentrate on collaboration goals.

For over 20 years (Jamal & Getz, 1995; Selin, 1999), engagement in tourism has been generally examined through the lens of tourism collaboration (see Graci, 2013; Presenza et al., 2010; Waligo et al., 2013). Collaboration

“occurs when a group of autonomous stakeholders of a problem domain engage in an interactive process, using shared rules, norms, and structures, to act or decide on issues related to the domain” (Wood & Gray, 1991, p. 146).

However, there is a limitation in drawing on studies related to collaboration in tourism destinations. Destination management and marketing collaborations are mainly dyadic, as observed amongst airline alliances that utilise similar distribution systems as well as hotel consortia that engage in marketing programmes together (Fyall & Garrod, 2005). These dyadic settings and horizontal collaborations differ from smart destinations, which are representative of loose organisational networks that have multiple, interdependent, diverse stakeholders connected to virtual platforms and physical environments (Gretzel et al., 2015a). Furthermore, destination collaborations are usually focused on solving issues related to marketing and sales (Fyall & Garrod, 2005). Smart tourism, on the other hand, is employed to address issues related to sustainability, experiences, and efficiency (Gretzel et al., 2015a). To a wider extent, less attention is placed on theories of power in tourism collaboration research (Aas et al., 2005; Reed, 1997), which is crucial for addressing the challenges within the smart context that are mentioned in Section 1.1.

1.4 Examining Power in Smart Tourism Destinations

Power can be defined as influence through resources, person (Mitchell et al., 1997) as well as multiple mechanisms such as space (Coles & Church, 2007; Foucault, 1980). A relational view of power provided by French philosopher, Michel Foucault, is proposed for exploring individuals as subjects occupying positions in technology context (Matthewman, 2017). Smart cities and the wider technology researchers have started to engage with Foucault's ideas of power to illuminate the complexity of power relations. Studies draw on Foucault's work on discourses (see Haarstad, 2017); governmentality and technologies of power (see Ho, 2016; Lund et al., 2018; Vanolo, 2014); and neoliberalism based on neoliberal governmentality and entrepreneurial subject (see Cardullo & Kitchin, 2019). As a result, Foucault's ideas are particularly relevant to understanding stakeholder engagement in smart tourism contexts. This thesis draws on these Foucauldian ideas to examine the discursive power of smart, governmentality and technologies of power in the context of supplier engagement in a smart tourism destination.

According to Foucault, discourses are “the group of statements that belong to a single system of formation; thus I shall be able to speak of clinical discourse, economic discourse, the discourse of natural history, psychiatric discourse” (Foucault, 1969, p. 121). Discourses represent a form of power that influence how a group of individuals sees the world, which are practices that represent knowledge claims that are deemed as acceptable (Foucault, 1972). Willig (2011) refers to this knowledge as discursive constructions, which are meanings associated with an object. Constructions are ever-changing. Therefore, a fixed idea of an object or subject is limiting since these are shaped by discourses.

Social discourses also include technologies of power, which emerged through Foucault's work on governmentality and disciplinary power. Governmentality is a form of political analysis that questions the how of government (Walters & Haahr, 2004). Foucault defines governmentality as

“the ensemble formed by the institutions, analyses and reflect, the calculations and tactics that allow the exercise of this very specific albeit complex form of power” (Burchell et al., 1991, p. 102).

Rather than there being a sovereign society that is based on a singular form of governance, society functions through multiple forms of governance, which signifies disciplinary power at work governing the conduct of populations (Foucault, 1979a). These forms of governance are also termed technologies of power, which are multiple power mechanisms that shape individuals' bodies and actions to meet the demands of production (Foucault, 1979a; Foucault, 1980). Multiple associated with plurality, which is used by Foucault to pluralise references made to forms of power such as discourses instead of

discourse as well as plurality of resistances rather than simply stating the term resistance (Foucault, 1980; Foucault, 1981).

Foucault also drew attention to neoliberal governmentality. He wanted to emphasise that neoliberalism is a governing rationality, one that alters subjectivities. It is a form of governmentality that results in the creation of the entrepreneurial self, which is the enterprising subject that manifest in every aspect of conduct (Burchell, 1993). Foucault (2008) saw neoliberalism as being centred on a homo *oeconomicus*, who is considered not as a partner of exchange but an entrepreneur of himself who is constructed through practices associated with market values. These ideas can provide an understanding of power in collaboration that will aid in creating smart developments that are beneficial not just for one or few but all.

A number of smart destination studies have accounted for power by identifying how top-down leadership and management dominate smart tourism initiatives (Boes et al., 2016; Zhu et al., 2014); however, a relational perspective of power that goes beyond power as being embedded in a person or resource can allow for a better understanding of the challenges within smart contexts.

Furthermore, Gretzel et al. (2015a, p.186) call for a more critical approach that “scrutinises smart tourism assumptions”, suggesting that there remains much to discover about the various influences on engagement, participation and collaboration as destinations design and develop smart tourism initiatives.

1.5 The Research Context

Studies that focus on smart are mainly technology focus. Most research have been linked to companies that focus on technology namely IBM and Forrester Research (Mora et al., 2017). This follows a similar path of most smart tourism studies. For instance, Songdo in South Korea is based on corporate smart city models that are techno-centric (Hollands, 2015). These models do not represent a holistic interpretation of the concept that is both technological and human-centric. Instead, they account for limited reach and benefits for locals (Hollands, 2015).

This thesis focuses on Ljubljana in Slovenia, a 2019 and 2020 European Capital of Smart Tourism, which is yet to be explored in the smart tourism literature. Like other European smart destinations such as Italy, Spain, France and the United Kingdom (Mehraliyev et al., 2019), Slovenia is considered a developed economy (UN, 2014). However, Slovenia has two major points of differentiation in comparison to its European counterparts and other well-cited smart destinations. First, the country has a low technology adoption, which would be at odds with the dominant technological views taken by smart destinations in the USA and South Korea. Slovenia has a low technology adoption rate for mobile telephone and mobile broadband subscriptions as it

ranks 64 and 67 respectively. Forty-five percent (45%) of its population are internet users based on the Global Competitiveness Report for 2019 (WEF, 2019a).

Additionally, Slovenia has been a young democracy since 1991, signifying that citizenry is promoted through democratic engagement, which contrasts with the approach taken in China, a leading smart destination ((Mehraliyev et al., 2019). China places limits on access to technology and freedom of expression (Chen et al., 2016). A participatory democratic system, as is the case of Slovenia, is fundamental for addressing the challenges mentioned in Section 1.1. In 2020, the H2020 SMARTDEST project, funded by the European Union, was launched to investigate trends of social exclusion in relation to smart initiatives. Cities targeted include Ljubljana in Slovenia, which further suggests that there may be challenges within the destination (EU, 2020).

1.6 Aim and Objectives

The aim of this thesis is to explore tourism suppliers' perspectives on engaging in smart tourism initiatives at the destination level. Five objectives were developed to fulfil the aim and are briefly discussed below.

1.6.1 Objective 1: To Understand the Rationale for Developing a Smart Tourism Destination

The first objective of this thesis is to understand the rationale behind the investment by Ljubljana in pursuing smart tourism. This allows for an investigation of the goals, motivations and drivers of smart development. Smartness can facilitate better governance as is the case in Australia and can increase competitiveness as posited by European destinations (Gretzel et al., 2015a). Competitiveness can be achieved through the use of advanced technologies (Wang et al., 2013). However, there are smart destinations in Europe that lack these technologies (Femenia-Serra et al., 2018; Gajdosik, 2018). Femenia-Serra and Ivars-Baidal (2018) briefly mentions that the pursuit of smart initiatives within destination can be associated with the aim of repositioning a destination's image for achieving competitiveness. This was based on the context of Benidorm, Spain, which has been traditionally perceived as a sun, sea and sand destination, which is unlike Ljubljana, Slovenia.

Through this objective, this thesis contributes to destination and place branding literature by enabling further understanding of the rationale for pursuing smart destination development. Within wider tourism literature, destination brands are perceived as social constructions, portraying images that reflect particular place and societal identities (Light, 2000; Light, 2001; Pritchard & Morgan,

2001). This thesis contributes to smart tourism literature by illustrating that meanings are power-laden and result in objects, namely smart destinations, being representative of political tools for reinforcing identity.

1.6.2 Objective 2: To Examine How Smart Tourism was Developed

The second objective is to explore how the smart development initiative unfolded in order to understand the processes and relationships that led to the creation of Ljubljana as a smart destination. Tourism collaboration frameworks and smart cities collaboration processes are linear (see Lee et al., 2013; Siokas et al., 2021). Bramwell and Cox (2009) suggest the use of path dependence theory with linear models in order to incorporate the historical contexts that can influence tourism collaborative stages. Considering the importance of the interoperability of diverse suppliers and technological components, there is a need to better understand the historical, social and political processes that drive “smartness” (see Zuzul, 2019). While the technological aspects of smart cities and smart tourism destinations have received considerable attention in the literature (Bastidas-Manzano et al., 2020; Mora et al., 2019), focussing on the human dimension, and collaboration specifically, seeks to enrich our understanding of smart tourism destinations.

The collaborative process in smart tourism is necessary to ensure exchange and integration of resources and information for developing solutions to problems (Jovicic, 2017; Polese, et al., 2018). However, little is known of the social processes that drive smart initiatives (Mehraliyev et al., 2020). While some scholars have shed light on the core resources and conditions necessary for achieving smartness (Boes et al., 2016; Lee et al., 2014; Shafiee et al., 2019), only one smart tourism study provides insights on how these components are organised and designed in order for smart solutions to be realised, and this is based in China, which has a distinct political context to most smart tourism destinations including Ljubljana (see Zhu et al., 2014). The difference in governance structure suggests a collaborative approach can provide deeper insights of smart tourism development.

1.6.3 Objective 3: To Explore Suppliers’ Perspectives on the Factors that Influence Engagement in Smart Tourism

The third objective of this thesis is to explore suppliers’ perspectives on the factors that influence engagement in smart initiatives to aid in improving and understanding success factors for smart destination initiatives in the future. With only one study based on the factors influencing smart destination engagement (Ivars-Baidal et al., 2017), this thesis turned to first examining the core understanding of smart tourism. In most recent times, smart tourism has

been associated with being a destination management approach, thereby likening smart initiatives to destination management systems, a research area that falls within collaboration studies (Ivars-Baidal et al., 2019). Upon examining the factors that emerged from most of the destination management systems (DMSs) studies, they have similar constructs to the technology adoption models such as those related to technology, organisation and environment (see Collins & Buhalis, 2003; Wang, 2008). These models emphasise a transactional approach that is centred on the individual user or organisation (Fyall & Garrod, 2005).

Instead, a relational approach is needed to capture the influence of multiple suppliers, recognises benefit for the group and the organisation is considered part of the process rather than the focus. A relational perspective aligns with collaboration research (Fyall & Garrod, 2005). Most collaboration studies concentrate significantly on the factors of legitimacy (Emmoth et al., 2015; Selin & Chavez, 1995) and power (Ford et al., 2012; Reed, 1997); however, these factors are insufficient for understanding supplier engagement and influence since not all will have power and legitimacy (Butterfield et al., 2004; Jamal & Stronza, 2009; Mitchell et al., 1997). De Wit (2017) identifies the relational factors of inter-organisational networks, namely power, legitimacy, urgency and frequency, which are yet to be examined in destination collaboration studies. It includes key factors of tourism collaboration and represents a multi-theoretical framework, which is necessary for examining collaboration (Beritelli, 2011; Fyall et al., 2012; Wondirad et al., 2020). This thesis provides a comprehensive understanding of the influences of supplier engagement in smart destinations while building upon De Wit's (2017) work on inter-organisational collaboration.

1.6.4 Objective 4: To Explain Supplier Engagement in Smart Destination Development through an Analysis of Discourses

This objective examines supplier engagement through an analysis of discourses. Kozinets (2007) recognises that while examining the social context may be a step away from the deterministic view of technology, he urges scholars to also examine discourses and ideologies. He recognised that there was a gap in technology-based studies regarding how conditions are converted into discourses and how these ideologies and discourses influence individual actions. Relatedly, Soares et al. (2020, p.2) suggest technology and tourism studies arise mainly “from a purely rational point of view” and it is recommended that other theories should be incorporated such as institutional theory to account for the social conditions surrounding engagement that can shape one's behaviour. This thesis attends to this call and goes further by examining the discourses that can shape engagement.

Specifically, Gretzel and Murphy (2019) examine involvement in smart tourism contexts through the lens of ideology; however, the study was focused on consumers, robots as smart technology and technology ideology. Smart subjectivities have been linked to technology and sustainability discourses that underpin smart cities (Granath, 2016; Vanolo, 2016). This study draws on Foucault's concept of discourses, which invites critical perspectives into smart tourism research. This study can focus on the level of the individual whose identity is under construction and is shaped by discourses, which in turn can be interpreted to account for various actions (Hanna, 2014). To explain engagement, this thesis unravels the discourses that are employed in smart tourism, how they shape suppliers' positions and identities (subjectivities) and individual actions. The understanding of these social relations gleaned from this research offers considerable value to future smart tourism development and implementation.

1.6.5 To Examine how “Governmentality” Informs (Dis)Engagement among Suppliers in Smart Destination Initiatives

This objective is concerned with applying Foucault's idea of governmentality to examine supplier engagement to improve inclusion and diversity in future smart destination. Studies have mainly identified power as top-down leadership and management, which serves as an influence in smart tourism destinations (Boes et al., 2016; Zhu et al., 2014). However, Gretzel et al. (2015a, p.186) call for a more critical approach, which signifies that is more to unravel about the various factors that influence engagement as destinations design and develop smart tourism systems.

Following other studies of power in smart city contexts, Foucault's conceptualisation of governmentality is applied to analyse suppliers' perspectives on smart tourism initiatives in Slovenia. Vanolo (2014) and Ho (2016) employ this approach to illuminate the complexity of power relations that exist in smart cities. Shelton and Lodato (2019) apply the concept of governmentality to uncover government/local partnerships with citizens and businesses. Findings showcase smart collaborations as being less concerned with active engagement in smart cities, which challenges the underlying assumption of smart destinations as being a space that encourages mutual exchanges and benefits (Buhalis, 2015).

This thesis seeks to uncover the technologies of power that contributed to the development of smart tourism and shaped the actions and attitudes of local tourism businesses in Ljubljana by applying Foucault's idea of governmentality. This objective does not focus on the components of smart city initiatives, as others have done (see Boes et al., 2016), but on the underlying mechanisms that aided the functioning of these components for

smart development to take place. From this, the thesis not only reveals power mechanisms but also sheds light on their influence on supplier engagement in the design process. Smart contributes to shaping individuals and processes, which is further explained based on Foucault's neoliberal governmentality. Findings go beyond Mach and Ponting's (2018) recent application of governmentality to a tourism context to illustrate that power is productive (see Foucault, 1980). This provides insights on the outcomes of collaborating in smart tourism.

This thesis can result in a better understanding of how engagement occurs in smart destinations. It will specifically provide details that can improve the collaborative process. It will also reveal the influences of not only engagement but also disengagement, which can be beneficial to suppliers involved in smart development. This can result in greater diversity, inclusion and benefit for individuals and organisations.

1.7 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is comprised of eight chapters, which are summarised below and presented in Figure 1.7.

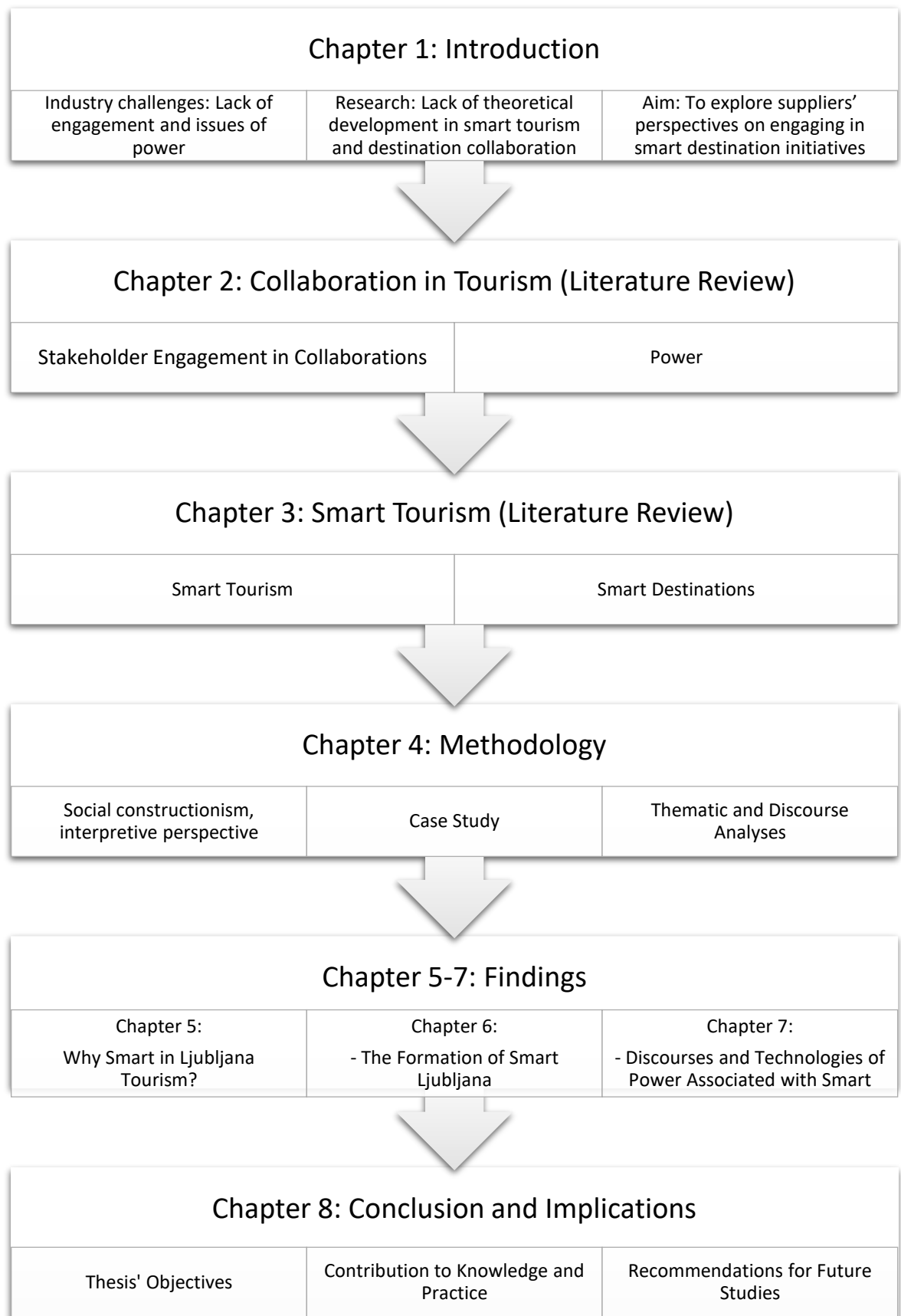


Figure 1.7: Structure of the Thesis

Chapter 1 is the Introduction. It outlines the rationale for the study and provides an overview by presenting the challenges being experienced within industry. Then, it explains the need for further research in smart tourism that has resulted in the aim and objectives that will guide the study.

Chapter 2: There are two literature review chapters. Chapter 2 presents the approach taken for fulfilling the research aim and objectives while Chapter 3 reviews the context of smart tourism. Chapter 2, Collaboration in Tourism, discusses the core concepts of collaboration and their linkage to tourism research. The major frameworks for collaboration and theories for understanding engagement are examined. The chapter continues with a discussion on power, which is less focused on. It continues with further understanding of power before focusing on Foucault's key concepts.

Chapter 3: The second literature review chapter, titled Smart Tourism, defines the concept of smart tourism and examines the perspectives taken within research. Then, it discusses the need for further research on one of smart tourism core concepts- smart destinations. The chapter continues with defining and examining historical development of smart tourism destinations, with particular focus on smart cities. The chapter looks at the current research on smart development, which leads to a need for greater insights into engagement and generally development of these destinations.

Chapter 4: The Methodology explains the need for using qualitative data collection methods, following a discussing on the philosophical assumptions that guide this thesis. The chapter also provides details on how the study was undertaken and findings analysed using thematic and Foucauldian discourse analyses.

Chapter 5: The first findings chapter explores the context of Ljubljana and Slovenia that subsequently gave rise to the need for pursuing smart in the capital city. It focuses on the historical developments that have paved the way for the development of smart Ljubljana and continues into an investigation of the drivers of smart development.

Chapter 6: The second findings chapter is a crucial one as it looks at the process of smart tourism development. It focuses on the suppliers, smart development, and their roles within the collaborative process. It also begins to provide an understanding of the development of smart tourism with attention being placed on the influences of supplier involvement.

Chapter 7: This findings chapter is also fundamental as it focuses on the role of relational forms of power in smart tourism engagement. It first examines the technologies of power in smart tourism and their impact on supplier behaviour and then reflects on smart as a neoliberal power mechanism. The chapter

moves on to explore suppliers' accounts of engagement and then zoom into the discursive constructions of smart tourism and their implications on practice. It examines engagement through an analysis of discourses.

Chapter 8: The conclusion provides a final analysis in accordance with the aim and objectives of the thesis. It reflects on the novel insights that will impact theory and practice before closing with a personal reflection of this doctoral journey.

CHAPTER 2: COLLABORATION IN TOURISM

2.1 Introduction

Studies on engagement in tourism are rooted in the area of tourism collaboration, which is vast and varied as there have been numerous contributions since the early 1990s (notably Jamal & Getz, 1995; Selin & Chavez, 1995). The purpose of this chapter is not to revisit these detailed studies but to provide insight into the core concepts of collaboration that can enable a better understanding of smart destinations.

This section commences with an assessment of the definitions associated with collaboration (Section 2.2), which is followed by details of the approaches for examining collaboration process (Section 2.3). Then, the chapter examines the theories and factors applied to examine engagement in collaborative settings (Section 2.4- 2.5), exposing the areas that require further attention.

The chapter then continues with a critical discussion on power in collaboration, drawing attention to the need for incorporating a relational view (Section 2.6). Then, it provides an overview of collaboration literature that has applied Foucauldian ideas. This is followed by a discussion of the specific Foucauldian concepts that are being applied to this thesis (Section 2.7- 2.9).

2.2 What is a Collaboration?

Since the development of collaboration as a research area in tourism, different terminologies have been used to describe the phenomenon including cooperation, collaboration and interorganisational relations (Fyall & Garrod, 2005). This is because of the concepts and models being interchanged when applied in the literature. For instance, Selin and Beason's (1991) study concerning "interorganisational relations (IOR)" in tourism utilised the definition proposed by Schermerhorn (1975, p.846) for the concept of "interorganisational cooperation". The latter is the "deliberate relations between otherwise autonomous organizations for the joint accomplishment of individual operating goals". In Mwesiumo and Halpern (2019), Selin and Beason (1991) have been acknowledged for their significant contribution to the "interorganisational network (ION)" studies in tourism. According to Mwesiumo and Halpern (2019, p.432), an interorganizational network is

"a set of organizations that are related to one another through common affiliations or through exchange relations".

Whether a collaboration is labelled IOR or ION, the study of this type of relationship across organisations dates to 1980s with Reid and Riegel (1989), which focuses on relationships among organisations and suppliers in the food

service sector. Following this, Selin and Beason (1991) emerge with an understanding of the term, interorganisational relations that resembles Schermerhorn's (1975) work in interorganisational cooperation from management literature.

Though studies had highlighted the necessity of collaboration within tourism planning and policy literature in the 1980s (see Teye, 1988; Zins, 1987), Jamal and Getz (1995) claim that it was a concept that was not sufficiently addressed in terms of definition, theoretical constructs and extension of its applicability to different contexts within destination planning and management. Jamal and Getz (1995) draw upon Gray's (1989) conceptualisation of collaboration from the field of organisational behaviour within management literature and applied it to community-based tourism planning. Within the management field, the concept is commonly referred to as "interorganisational collaboration". Gray (1989, p.227) states that a collaboration is

"a process of joint decision making among key stakeholders of a problem domain about the future of that domain".

Tourism studies have since drawn significantly on Gray's (1989) and Wood and Gray's (1991) conceptualisations from management literature to provide further insights into tourism destination literature (see Caffyn, 2000; Wang & Fesenmaier, 2007).

Wood and Gray (1991) outline six key elements of collaboration: stakeholders of a problem domain; autonomy; interactive process; shared rules, norms and structures; action or decision and domain orientation. Like Schermerhorn (1975), Gray (1989) acknowledges that there is a shared interest among stakeholders as they concentrate on common issues that affect a "domain" such as the tourism industry. Stakeholders, another core element of collaboration, refer to the key individual organisations within a common industry that have an interest in the problem being attended to (Gray, 1989). Autonomy signifies that although stakeholders are a part of a network, they can exercise some degree of independence when they make decisions (Wood & Gray, 1991). Hence, suppliers in collaborative destination marketing exercise independence when making decisions (Wang, 2008). The interactive process refers to there being a form of continuous exchange existing within the network. Shared rules, norms and structures are in place to govern the collaboration and guide the behaviour of stakeholders. Action or decision means that participation in development and joint decision-making is one that is interactive (Wood & Gray, 1991). A joint decision-making process among all stakeholders is vital for collaboration (Wang & Fesenmaier, 2007; Wood & Gray, 1991).

A variety of collaborative contexts have been examined: community-based tourism (Jamal & Getz, 1995); destination marketing (Fyall & Garrod, 2005; Naipaul et al., 2009); visitor attractions (Fyall, 2008); and inter-organisational

information systems in tourism (Sigala, 2013). Collaborative studies pay more attention to community-based policy and planning rather than destination management and marketing, of which smart destinations would fall within the latter (Farsari, 2018). Though destination management is an area that has been long-established since the late 1990s (Laws, 1995), very few studies have been done on destination collaborations inclusive of a technological component or inter-organisational information systems (Estevao et al., 2020; Sigala, 2013). With a general understanding of tourism collaboration, the next section explores the process associated with these networks.

2.3 Tourism Collaboration Process

The process of tourism destination collaboration has been conceptualised mainly using two approaches: path dependence and stages. Path dependence, the less commonly used theoretical approach, is an evolutionary economic perspective that acknowledges the importance of connected and disconnected historical events in explaining the adoption of new processes mainly in instance where there exist more efficient pathways (David, 1985; Puffert, 2002). According to path dependence,

“history matters [...] the respective events represent initial conditions that, by triggering a self-reinforcing process, have an enduring impact upon the course of the path’s future trajectory” (Sydow et al., 2012, p. 157).

This has been applied to tourism collaboration research, illustrating how temporal continuities influence activities within a collaboration (Bramwell & Cox, 2009). By applying path dependence, Bramwell and Cox (2009) find that the establishment of a steering group for a tourism collaboration in the United Kingdom was a historical trend that existed in other countries and the inclusion of multiple suppliers in the process also stemmed from a past culture of consultation.

Unlike the path dependence approach, which highlights activities as temporal continuities, the stage approach is more prominently applied in tourism collaboration studies, as it focuses on internal, sequential processes (Bramwell & Cox, 2009). Stage processes have also been used to examine smart tourism (Zhu et al., 2014) and smart cities development (see Kumar et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2013; Letaifa 2015; Siokas et al., 2021). Gray (1985) formulate a management model with three stages: problem-setting, direction-setting and structuring. Subsequently, Selin and Chavez (1995) built on Gray’s model to emphasise partnerships in tourism, thereby adding the stages of antecedents and outcomes. While there are several other studies that examine the development of collaborations (Caffyn, 2000; Waddock, 1989), it is Wang and Fesenmaier (2007) who present the most detailed framework for examining the

formation of destination collaboration. Table 2.3 provides a summary of models applied to examine tourism collaborations.

Table 2.3: Models Used in Tourism Collaboration Studies

Authors	Field of Study	Context/ Collaboration Type	Stages
Gray (1985)	Management/Human Relations	Three Stage Model	Problem-Setting Direction- Setting Structuring
Selin & Chavez (1995)	Tourism	Partnership Model	Antecedents Problem-Setting Direction-Setting Structuring Outcomes
Caffyn (2000)	Tourism	Tourism Partnership Life Cycle	Pre-partnership Take-off Growth Prime Deceleration Continuation/ after-life options
Wang & Fesenmaier (2007)	Tourism	Process of Collaboration Formation	Assembling Ordering Implementation Evaluation Transformation

This thesis draws on the most recently developed model, Wang and Fesenmaier's (2007) five-stage process of collaboration formation, which is yet to be extended to the smart tourism context. It is a theoretical framework that provides a

“a comprehensive picture of the collaborative process by building upon the interorganisational theories of resource dependency, transaction cost, strategic management and network /relational exchange” (Menon et al., 2017, p.373).

The model is the only one crafted for destination collaborations as others previously mentioned were mainly based on partnerships and community-based collaborations. The process was designed based on responses garnered through interviews with tourism representatives in Elkhart County in Indiana (USA) where success of the destination has been partly due to its collaborative marketing initiatives. The process starts with the assembling stage then ordering, implementation, evaluation and transformation (see Figure 2.3). During the assembling stage, businesses gather to identify the issue and businesses needed for developing the collaboration. The ordering stage is about developing the ideas that have been raised during the assembling stage to understand their appropriateness for solving the problem. The plans that have been discussed are acted upon during the implementation stage. The group takes a more in-depth examination of the costs to be incurred in relation to the benefits to be gained. After implementation, businesses within the collaboration assess whether the goals through the various actions taken during the evaluation stage. Based on feedback from the evaluation stage, plans are put in place to embark on the transformation stage. The stages are also connected, though lacking further explanation as what this signifies as seen in Figure 2.3.

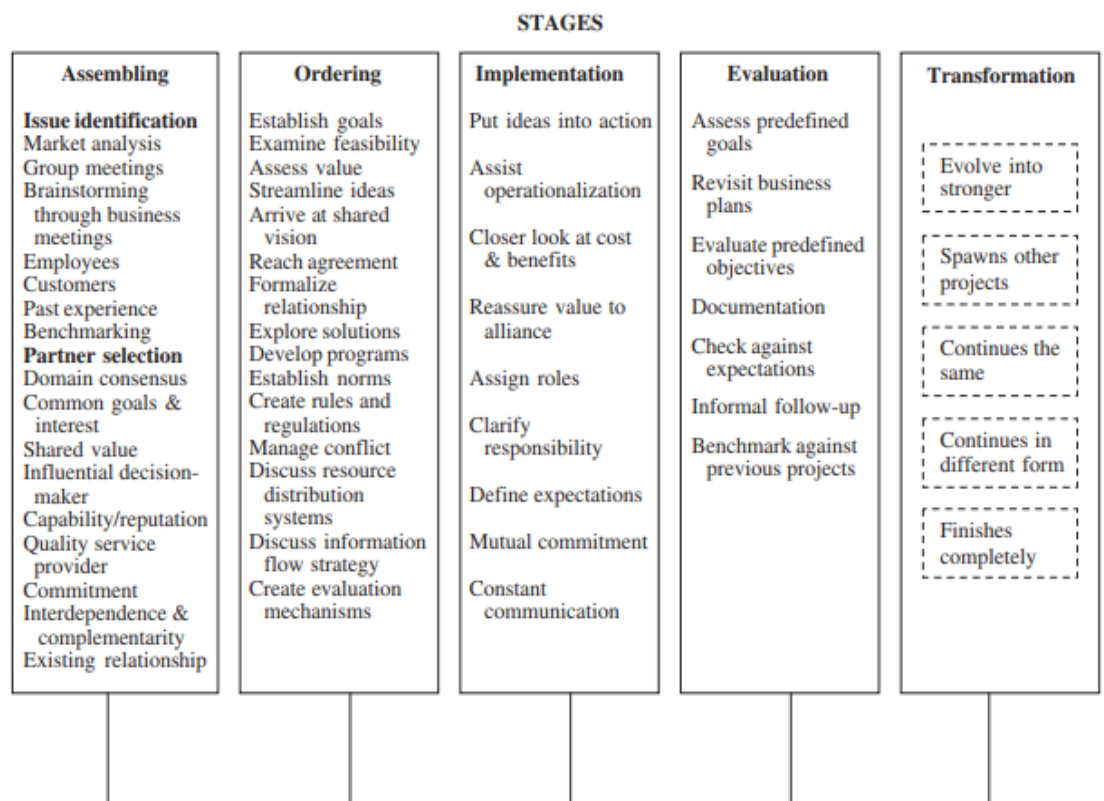


Figure 2.3: Stages of Collaboration Formation Process (Wang & Fesenmaier, 2007, p.867)

One of the model's limitations is that macro environmental factors, which were not specifically identified, are only mentioned as being responsible for setting the preconditions for initiating a collaboration. Environmental conditions are connected to the reason for the formation of the collaboration rather than the rationale for the unfolding of specific activities within the process. By incorporating a path dependence perspective, this thesis can examine the historical conditions that are contingent on how the process unfolds, contributing to a deeper understanding of collaborations in tourism since they mainly apply linear models. Furthermore, this move also addresses Zuzul's (2019) observation of lack in studies on smart city collaboration process and Mehraliyev et al. (2020) call for greater attention to collaboration in smart destinations. The following section will examine the theories and factors that can be used to understand the factors that influence supplier engagement in the collaborative process.

2.4 Theories Underlying Collaboration

It is suggested that tourism collaboration requires the application of a multiple theoretical framework to formulate factors for informing destination collaboration research (Beritelli, 2011; Fyall et al., 2012; Wang & Fesenmaier, 2007; Wang & Xiang, 2007). Fyall et al. (2012) propose the following theories for examining destination collaborations: transaction cost economics, relational exchange, resource dependency and institutional (see Table 2.4). Each will be further explained below.

Table 2.4: Theories Applied to Tourism Collaboration Studies

Theories	Contributor	Emphasis	Limitations
Transaction cost theory	Williamson (1975, 1985)	Promotes cost minimization and opportunism	Focuses on dyadic relationships
Resource dependency theory	Pfeffer & Salancik (1978)	Based on exchange of resources	Concentrates on resources and disregards other forces as being instrumental in enabling behaviour

Relational (or social) exchange theory	Macneil (1980) Thibaut & Kelly (1959)	Focuses on building relationships	Does not recognise opportunism and negative effects of relationship breakdown
Institutional theory	DiMaggio & Powel (1983)	Based on formal structure of organisations	Disregards human agency at the time of institutional changes

Transaction cost economics theory acknowledges that organisations vertically integrate to ensure cost minimisation for production (Beritelli, 2011; Williamson, 1985; Zach & Racherla, 2011). The theory has been used to mainly focus on dyadic relationships, which is a core limitation since collaborations can involve multiple suppliers at various levels (Fyall et al., 2012; Gulati, 1998). Nonetheless, the theory is still fundamental for explaining supplier involvement in destination collaboration. Smart initiatives offer businesses the opportunity to reduce transaction costs for operations through the sharing of goods (Tedjasaputra & Sari, 2016). Businesses may also engage based on environmental uncertainty, which refers to the fluctuations in a business environment as well as frequency of transactions, which speaks to number of times a transaction will recur (Zach & Racherla, 2011). As a result, this theory is linked to factors of frequency and urgency, which will be discussed in Section 2.5.

Resource dependency theory emphasises that collaborations emerge due to suppliers' need for acquiring resources (Fyall et al., 2012; Salancik & Pfeffer 1977; Wang & Xiang, 2007). This need is evident within a business environment of scarce resources. Businesses may lack or be limited in their resources, such as money and expertise, and decide to engage in a destination collaboration (Fyall et al., 2012; Reed, 1997; Zach & Racherla, 2011). Cases of this exist in the hotel and airline sectors where individual businesses partner to take advantage of distribution systems and marketing initiatives, which has resulted in capturing a larger target market (Fyall & Garrod, 2005). The organisation that is benefiting from the resource is at a disadvantage as it does not have the same level of power as the organisation that has the resource (Ford et al., 2012; Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). This is applicable also to smart tourism since suppliers continuously engage in a process of resource exchange (Buhalis, 2015; Gretzel et al., 2015b).

Relational or social exchange theory emphasises relationships (Ahmed et al., 1999; Macneil, 1980; Thibaut & Kelly, 1959). Organisations within marketing and destination collaborations are influenced to participate based on

relationships, norms, shared vision and values that they have with others (Ahmed et al., 1999; Fyall et al., 2012). These collaborations can enable an atmosphere of equity thereby serving suppliers' best interests (Fyall et al., 2012). However, this theory is not sufficient for understanding engagement in European destination as Estevao et al.'s (2020) findings show, there are also institutional factors that can inhibit the implementation of destination management systems (DMSs), thereby giving rise to the importance of institutional theory.

Similar to resource dependency theory, institutional theory expands on power dynamics; however, it adapts a perspective that focuses on how institutions govern suppliers. Institutional theory asserts that organisations engage in formal collaborative efforts to gain legitimacy. There are three ways for a supplier to conform: regulatory, that is, based on laws and rules; normative refers to adherence to morals and norms; and cognitive which speaks to mimicking of action within the social environment (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Studies that apply institutional theory can shed light on engagement in collaborative efforts from the perspective of institutional pressures (Suchman, 1995). Though the theory has not been directly applied in smart tourism, Soares et al. (2020) applies this to examine technologies in hotel and find that hoteliers are less influenced by trade associations or government entities. In the absence of theory, Ivars-Baidal et al. (2017) find that legislation was not a barrier to engagement within smart destinations.

While the above theories may be sufficient for understanding destination collaboration, Mitchell et al. (1997) note that these theories are insufficient for understanding stakeholder involvement in relationships because they emphasise power rather than influence. For instance, transaction cost suggests that stakeholders with bargaining opportunities to negotiate cost will be a source of power (Mitchell et al., 1997; Williamson, 1985). Meanwhile, institutional theory highlights the environmental pressures that can emerge from organisations or individuals (Selznick, 1996). Mitchell et al. (1997) claim that not all stakeholders have power in these forms. This led to scholars providing a more holistic understanding through the development of theory of stakeholder identification, which claims that stakeholders are salient to others once one of the following are perceived: power, legitimacy and urgency. This has been extensively cited across management research but to a lesser extent in tourism (Adongo & Kim, 2018; Jamal & Stronza, 2009).

Mitchell et al.'s (1997) work is categorised under stakeholder theory in tourism collaboration (see Fyall et al., 2012), however, it is important to note that these factors draw on the different theories that they sought to improve; a point which Mitchell et al. (1997) acknowledge. This point has resurfaced in Ahmed et al. (1999) and Medeiros de Araujo and Bramwell's (1999) work, illustrating that each factor draws on the core theories that were previously mentioned in

Section 2.4. For instance, Mitchell et al. (1997) factor of power is based on resource dependency theory, which signifies that organisations with resources will represent a source of power (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). Meanwhile, legitimacy is associated with institutional theory (Medeiros de Araujo & Bramwell, 1999). Mitchell et al. (1997) work can then be considered as a multi-theoretical framework, which is necessary for examining tourism collaboration (Fyall et al., 2012).

Though Mitchell et al.'s (1997) work is limited in tourism collaboration, it is important to highlight for this thesis because the success of tourism networks is largely dependent on a stakeholders' importance, which can determine engagement (Jamal & Stronza, 2009; Saito & Ruhanen, 2017; Sheehan & Ritchie, 2005; Wondirad et al., 2020). Although all aspects of a collaboration are important, the identification of stakeholders is crucial to its formation as stakeholders can influence inter-organisational relationships (Wood & Gray, 1991). By drawing upon Mitchell et al.'s (1997) work, tourism collaboration studies note that a stakeholder will engage if the network or those within the collaboration are perceived to have power, legitimacy and urgency of claims (Butterfield et al., 2004; Jamal & Stronza, 2009; Medeiros de Araujo & Bramwell, 1999). Despite the few studies that exist, Jamal and Stronza (2009) still propose the use of Mitchell et al.'s (1997) factors to further explore tourism collaboration. It is yet to be extended in technology-based collaborations that have emerged since the development of the model. The smart context would also be relevant one to examine since it emphasises and promotes greater bottom-up stakeholder participation (O'Reilly, 2005; Simonofski et al., 2019).

Since Mitchell et al.'s (1997) work, De Wit (2017) also from management literature has improved upon Mitchell et al. (1997) to create the relational factors of inter-organisational collaboration, namely power, legitimacy, urgency and frequency. De Wit (2017) has gone beyond to include the factor of frequency to Mitchell et al.'s (1997) work. Frequency has been noted in tourism collaboration research, however, not in association with power, frequency and urgency (see Beritelli, 2011). These factors are yet to be explored holistically within destination collaboration studies based on the researchers' knowledge and will be discussed below as they form the multi-theoretical framework for examining the influences of supplier engagement.

2.5 De Wit's Relational Factors of Inter-Organisational Collaboration

This thesis applies De Wit's (2017) relational factors of inter-organisational collaboration to understand the influences in smart destinations. Relational factors are aspects that emerge with and affect the network (Ahmed et al., 1999). The factors include legitimacy, urgency, frequency and power. Based

on a review of the tourism collaboration literature, De Wit's (2017) work is in line with common influential factors determining supplier collaboration. These include benefits and resources (Jamal & Getz, 1995; Waddock, 1989; Zemla, 2014); relational ties (Beritelli, 2011; Flyvbjerg, 1998; Jamal & Getz, 1995); legitimacy (Emmoth et al., 2015; Selin & Chavez, 1995), and governance (Dredge, 2006; Jamal & Getz, 1995; Selin & Chavez, 1995; Sigala, 2013). Most tourism collaboration studies concentrate and combine the factors of legitimacy (Emmoth et al., 2015; Selin & Chavez, 1995) and power (Ford et al., 2012; Reed, 1997) more broadly. Power and legitimacy are insufficient for analysing destination collaboration (Jamal & Stronza, 2009) as well as smart tourism. Based on Ivars-Baidal et al.'s (2017) study, evidence suggests that power and legitimacy can only capture the factor related to dominance within the group. The following provides a detailed discussion of each factor, starting with legitimacy.

Legitimacy

Suchman (1997, p.574) defines the legitimacy as “a generalised perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values and beliefs”. This relational factor is represented by norms, values, codes of conduct (De Wit, 2017; Medeiros de Araujo & Bramwell, 1999) or authoritative figures existing within the collaboration (Jamal & Getz, 1995). The latter, sometimes referred to as interpartner legitimacy, is significantly evident in tourism literature (Emmoth et al., 2012; Emmoth et al., 2015; Lemmetyinen & Go, 2009). The leader is seen as being legitimate by suppliers due to personal qualities. The legitimate stakeholder is the authoritative figure that possesses the vision, skills and knowledge for fulfilling projects (Sigala, 2013). These are personal attributes which previous scholars such as Jamal and Getz (1995) and Selin and Chavez (1995) consider as attributes of a leading partner and can affect tourism supplier engagement in inter-organisational networks. The leader, sometimes referred to as a facilitator, is the main contact person that liaises with organisations and leads the project's discussions and initiatives (Aas et al., 2005).

In management studies, two approaches have been applied to examine legitimacy: strategic based on resource dependency theory (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003) as well as institutional theory (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Tyler & Dinan, 2001). Personal legitimacy is observed through the lens of resource dependency theory and codes of conduct are observed based on institutional theory. Although previously highlighted collaborative studies may adopt both approaches, there is more work needed in applying the institutional approach. Furthermore, much of smart tourism research still draw on assumptions that align with resource dependency (Gretzel et al., 2015b).

Urgency

Mitchell et al. (1997, p.867) define urgency as “the degree to which stakeholder claims call for immediate attention”. Urgency is time pressures for the attainment of solutions. This factor represents an influence of stakeholder engagement in relationships (De Wit, 2017; Medeiros de Araujo & Bramwell, 1999). This factor emphasises time pressures and criticality, which is the importance of a problem to the supplier who may have sentiments and expectations regarding the issue. Problems must be of great urgency for collaborations to occur (Thomson & Perry, 2006).

This is a rarely examined relational factor in tourism collaboration studies. Within the literature, it is not used as a single construct to examine a phenomenon. Instead, the construct of urgency is usually examined alongside other relational factors. For instance, Lyon et al. (2017) observe stakeholder participation in sustainability projects in South Africa and findings reveal that urgency play a role in engagement alongside the constructs of legitimacy and power. This is due to urgency being seen primarily as a facilitator of action.

Frequency

Frequency emerges in collaborations that are reliant on information sharing (Hansen et al., 2019), which can be facilitated by smart destinations (Baggio et al., 2020; Del Chiappa and Baggio, 2015). This factor refers to the rate of active communication and interaction among stakeholders in an inter-organisational relationship (De Wit, 2017). On the other hand, other terms are used that signify frequency. For instance, Bramwell and Sharman’s (1999) work referred to intensity of participation by stakeholders, which was representative of frequency. The definition proposed by De Wit (2017) is utilised for this thesis.

Within the tourism collaboration literature, studies refer to frequency based on communication variables (Beritelli, 2011). Selin and Myers (1998) confirm that this was critical for the success of networks focused on destination marketing. Specifically, effective communication was expected of the leader rather than the entire group. Bornhorst (et al., 2010) and Schofield et al. (2018) also support this view of the main convenor being the enabler of effective communication. Beritelli (2011) adds to the discussion by asserting that active communication and information exchange are required not only from the leader but also participating members of the group. Frequency is more evident in informal networks than within groups that have face-to-face interactions. This limits the generalisation of previous tourism collaborative studies on

frequency to smart tourism, which incorporates exchanges within the virtual environment (Baggio et al., 2020; Gretzel et al., 2015b).

Power

Power is a vital factor in tourism development (Coles & Church, 2007). It has been evident in early studies where residents were seen as having control through the creation of strategies to develop tourism, for example, Doxey (1976). While power has no widely accepted definition (Zhao & Timothy, 2015), there are two perspectives that can aid in its understanding. First, power is seen as a possession, something that the facilitator of a collaboration has (see Nunkoo & Smith, 2015; Pechlaner et al., 2012; Ruhanen, 2013; Tiew et al., 2015). There is a focus on binary oppositions. For instance, Mitchell et al. (1997, p. 869) defines power from this perspective as

“a relationship among social actors [stakeholders] in which one social actor [stakeholder], A, can get another social actor [stakeholder], B, to do something that B would not have otherwise done”.

Businesses and government working together illustrate a collaborative effort to governance, which aligns with Ostrom’s (2010) notion of polycentric governance – a form of governance that involves multiple stakeholders at the community level. It takes into consideration stakeholders’ interests that ultimately results in management of resources. Stakeholder involvement can present situations where power differs among individuals (Ostrom, 2010). These findings were based on traditional collaborative settings, which are assumed to be unlike smart destinations since the latter blends both the virtual and physical environment (Baggio et al., 2020; Buhalis, 2019; Gretzel et al., 2015). Technology-based context have been promoted as innovations that afford participation for one and all without conditions or limitations (O’Reilly, 2005; Simonfski et al., 2019).

Participation in collaborative settings has been questioned by a few scholars with some concluding that it signifies the presence of power:

“[participation] is always part of an operation of power, governing people to behave themselves in a particular determined way”
(Quaghebeur et al., 2004, p.154; see also McKay & Garratt, 2013).

However, tourism collaboration researchers embrace this perspective to a lesser extent (Fyall et al., 2012) despite it being able to provide a much-needed critical perspective to tourism collaboration literature (Bramwell, 2011; Xue & Kerstetter, 2018). According to Reed (1997, p. 567),

“while power relations are included within collaborative theory, it is frequently assumed that collaboration can overcome power imbalances

by involving all stakeholders in a process that meets their needs.....this is not to suggest that cooperation and collaboration are impossible to achieve, but that structural as well as procedural conditions, within which community tourism planning is constituted, will act as constraints to collaboration” (see also Aas et al., 2005).

Based on the challenges posed in the Introductory Chapter, these perspectives are necessary for finding solutions to issues of smart engagement. Specifically, philosophers such as Jurgen Habermas and Michel Foucault had a deep concern for participatory processes within modern society, thereby challenging the notion of empowerment and democracy that is presented as citizens’ freedom (Aylett, 2010; Flyvberg, 1998; Winkel, 2012). This reminds us of how innovations are presented today and discussed in Chapter 1.

Habermas proposed the concept of communicative action and communicative rationality, signifying that cooperation is achieved based on argumentation where speakers present and debate their claims publicly. This argument of consensus has been found to be favourable among scholars as it offers freedom to individuals in capitalist societies (Flyvberg, 1998; Matthews, 2012). However, it is this strength that Foucault opposes, resulting in him labelling Habermas as a “utopian” (Foucault, 1988, p.18). Flyvberg (1998) also add that Habermas’ work is context-independent while Foucault’s is context-dependent. These points will be further unravelled in the following section. The important point of departure is that these philosophers were moving away from subject-centred rationality that Marx and other structuralist thinkers focused on.

In summary, the collaborative approach suggested, namely De Wit’s (2017) factors that draw on multi-theoretical framework, enables a holistic exploration of the factors that influence engagement. Suppliers have significant influence in collaborations. It is assumed that power imbalances can be resolved based on collaboration theory since it encourages greater representation from affected stakeholders of a domain (Aas et al., 2005). However, in recent times, scholars argue that individuals in collaborations are not independent entities but instead socially and culturally situated, hence, their actions are tied to social processes, which is a stance taken by this thesis. This move also situates the thesis within critical theory, which emphasises that social, cultural and historical factors affect one’s understanding leading to multiple realities. Critical theory focuses on critique that allows for emancipation and transformation. Though Foucault’s work aligns with this stance, he distanced himself from “critical theory” and noted that his perception of critique meant “an investigative work that consists in suspending as far as possibly the normative system which one refers to to test and evaluate it” (Foucault, 1984 in Lemke, 2012, p.61).

Tourism collaborations are not simply influenced and implemented by individuals and organisations, but these networks can also be influenced by power relations. Hence, it does not assume independent individuals or an

already established development (Sharp & Richardson, 2001). For instance, using discourse analysis to examine power relations, Xue and Kerstetter (2018) demonstrate that while a mediator may be put in place for ensuring an amicable coexistence between the locals and private organisations, stakeholders may only play that role in some rather than all instances based on discourses.

A smart destination then can be confronted with issues surrounding meaning, interpretation and implementation. A socially constructed view is useful for understanding the complex processes involved in collaborative development that can lead to unravelling the challenge of inclusive engagement (Sharp & Richardson, 2001). Against this background, this thesis draws on a relational view of power that will not only provide a novel contribution to collaboration research but aid in understanding the challenges faced that were discussed in Section 1.1. There are many concepts relevant to a relational view of power, which will be examined in the following section.

2.6 Power Relations

Prominent scholars, such as Althusser, Gramsci and Foucault, are among those who conceptualise power beyond a figure of authority or as a resource as seen in Marx's writings (England, 2019). Gramsci and Foucault draw on Machiavelli's idea of relations of force to perceive power as being relational, therefore, it is only exercised rather than being acquired by a sovereign or located within the law. However, Gramsci departed from Foucault and adopted Marx's work, which acknowledged that power existed in points of oppositions: the leader and the follower. This resulted in Gramsci's well-known concept of hegemony. On the other hand, Foucault was influenced by Nietzsche, who viewed power as being omnipresent and operating from many points and discourses (Daldal, 2014). Having witnessed the failure of the 1917 revolution of not being able to diffuse across territories, Althusser concluded that individuals are a product of ideology (England, 2019). Althusser's thoughts aligned more with Foucault than Gramsci who believed that an individual is independent (Daldal, 2014). Both Althusser and Foucault believed that the individual was produced, signifying that,

“modern power creates its subjects, their identity and political freedom. Power maintains itself, while making subjects unable to articulate themselves outside the realm of power that constitutes them” (Zake 2002, p.219).

The difference in Foucault and Althusser can be found in the idea of interpellation:

"for Foucault, the individual does not pre-exist his or her interpellation as a subject but emerges as a result of strategies and practices of individualisation" (Montag, 1995, p.75).

Technology-related studies have since gone on to apply Foucault's work to examine subjects (subjectivities) (Matthewman, 2017). Foucault's ideas of the gaze, space, discourses and governmentality can also be seen in tourism research (Church & Coles, 2007; Mach & Pointing, 2018). Foucault's work on the formation of the medical and penal systems influenced Urry's (1995, 2002) creation of the popular concept, the tourist gaze, which focused on the tourist as being the centre of power relations. The tourist gaze refers to how tourism is ordered based on the gaze. Urry's early conceptualisation of the tourist gaze describes tourism being an experience that tourists consume visually (Urry, 1990). Overtime, the gaze has involved additional gazers thereby becoming more prevalent as more tourists visit countries across various regions. By the 2000s, there was and still is a surveillance gaze likened to a digital panopticon (Morgan & Pritchard, 2005). With the introduction of mobile devices, there are also virtual mobile gazes of videos that "can signify that a particular sight is worth viewing, as it is portrayed to be gazed at by other tourists" (Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2009, p.25).

Tourism studies that apply a Foucauldian lens are scarce (Tribe, 2006). In a search for studies that apply Foucault's theory to smart tourism, results were null except for the recently published paper based on the findings of this thesis (Johnson et al., 2021). However, this is quite the opposite when searching for literature on smart cities or generally digitisation, the internet or social media. These studies fall in the scope of critical debates regarding technology (Vanolo, 2016), exploring topics such as smart city projects and neoliberalism (Hollands, 2008; 2015), smartmentality (Vanolo, 2014), technology as a means of reinforcing racism (Benjamin, 2019) as well as big data and surveillance (Zuboff, 2015).

A further search of general studies regarding tourism technologies and Foucault's theory produced a list of studies, though not as extensive as the work done generally in information technology and smart cities (see Table 2.5a). These studies highlight the disciplinary effects of technologies of power, which renders the subject as passive and powerless (see Feighery, 2009; Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2009). Particularly, Stors (2020) recommends future research on the construction of similar urban contexts to Airbnb sites.

Table 2.5a: Overview of General Studies on Tourism and Technology that Incorporate Foucault's Ideas

Reference	Title	Aspect of Foucault's Theory
Dinhopl & Gretzel (2016)	Selfie-taking as Touristic Looking	The gaze
Feighery (2009)	Tourism, Stock Photography and Surveillance: a Foucauldian Interpretation	Panopticon
Stors (2020)	Constructing New Urban Tourism Space through Airbnb	Discourse
Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier (2009)	Mediating Tourist Experiences- Access to Places via Shared Videos	The gaze

Most scholars focused on tourism collaboration tend to incorporate the meaning that Foucault ascribes to power in their study rather than apply particular concepts as theoretical foundations of the study (see Table 2.5b). For instance, findings from the study by Jamal and Stronza (2009) note that power is ever-present in community-based collaborations rather than apply the idea for an in-depth exploration.

Table 2.5b: Overview of Tourism Collaboration that Apply Foucault's Ideas

Reference	Aim	Aspect of Foucault's Theory
Beritelli & Laesser (2011)	To investigate power in tourism destinations based on network stakeholders' perspectives	Application of meaning of power

Dredge (2006)	To explore the role of networks in partnership building	Application to the methodology: Foucauldian-inspired discourse approach
Fazito et al. (2016)	To unveil aspects of policy making for tourism development	Application to the methodology: Foucauldian discourse analysis
Nunkoo & Gursoy (2016)	To examine power relations at the community level	Application of meaning of power
Nunkoo (2017)	To examine concepts-trust, power and social capital	Application of meaning of power
Simos & de Groot (2015)	To explore power in community-based tourism	Application of meaning of power to explain case
Xue & Kerstetter (2018)	To examine power relations in Chongdu Valley, China	Use of discourse; application to the methodology: highlighted Foucault when explaining discourse analysis

According to Church and Coles (2007, p.271), Foucault's work has

“considerable additional potential...the full richness of Foucault's writings, however, have still to be fully utilised to understand power relations in the context of tourism”.

In addition to Church and Coles' (2007) suggestion, the following reasons highlight the benefits of a Foucauldian perspective to this thesis that focuses on Ljubljana in Slovenia. Since the introduction of democratic societies, Foucault claimed it was not sufficient to assume freedom for individuals but urged scholars to “cut off the King's head” as a leader was not the only influence guiding the behaviour of a population (Foucault, 1979b, p.89). Smart destinations serve multiple suppliers within an ecosystem (Gretzel et al., 2015b), thereby indicating that it can extend beyond organisations to include those within a population. Foucault noted that there were discourses and technologies of power, which he described as “principles of limitation” (Foucault, 1972, p.222). This meant that multiple power mechanisms can

shape one's identity and limit their actions resulting in them being included or excluded from various practices. Foucault's work allows researchers to locate and analyse key moments and competing discourses as well as effects during a collaborative process, which can explain the rationale for various barriers to engagement (Sharp & Richardson, 2001). A Foucauldian perspective emphasises that in tourism collaborations, "power determines the participatory patterns of stakeholders" (Zhao & Timothy, 2015, p.498). Additionally, resistance to power mechanisms is not emancipatory based on Foucault's (1978) idea of discourse, and this has been the case as found in smart cities and technology studies (see Cardullo & Kitchin, 2019; Kozinets, 2007; Zuboff, 2019). These points reinforce the need to apply these ideas within this thesis. Foucault's ideas of discourses and governmentality are further discussed.

2.7 Discourses

Discourses are "practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak. Of course, discourses are composed of signs; but what they do is more than use these signs to designate things" (Foucault, 1972, p.49). Discourse is discussed in one of his earliest books, *Archaeology of Knowledge*, in which he wanted to move beyond continuities to illustrate discontinuities in history (Foucault, 1972). It refers to the production of knowledge and power through social practices (Hall, 1997). For Foucault (1969), no object or subject exist outside of discourses as they produce, control and regulate knowledge. Power then is productive.

Meanings are tied to discursive practices (Foucault, 1972; Pereira, 2009). Individuals interpellate discourses. Discourse serves as a sort of control on individual narratives by limiting and normalising statements. Truth then is a reflection of the discourses that a society accepts. This results in subjects assuming different positions based on discourses, which are shaped by discursive statements (constructions) and technologies of power (Foucault, 1972; Willig, 2011). The latter include tools and tactics, which are examples of systems of control that contribute to producing discourse (Foucault, 1972; Purvis & Hunt, 1993). It separates the concept of discourses from ideologies, which the two terms have been used interchangeably in research. According to Purvis and Hunt (1993), discourses and ideologies can be defined similarly but are based on two different traditions. Ideologies are associated with Marxist tradition that acknowledges consciousness while discourses with Foucault is not based on their being a conscious subject. Foucault also acknowledged that there were discursive concepts that result in a disciplinary society such as observation and apparatuses of control.

Foucault (1972) noted that there were different surfaces of emergence, which are spheres for articulating discourse (example: the family, religious

community). Specifically, in the context of tourism, destinations, museums and heritage sites are examples of surfaces of emergence that reflect and produce national cultures and histories (Wight, 2016). Discourses can differ through points of incompatibility and even change overtime (Foucault, 1972; Foucault, 1981). Individuals can be hindered from understanding another representation of an object due to being bounded by a particular discourse (Foucault, 1981). Foucault (1976, p.95) believed that the individual's resistance was still bounded by power relations through discourses, thereby having multiple possibilities of realities: "where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power". This view separates Foucault from other scholars who focus on discourse such as Norman Fairclough.

This thesis draws on discourses to explore the smart brand, which is necessary for fulfilling Objective 1 as well as constructions of smart tourism, which aligns with Objective 4 (see Section 1.5). The literature related to both areas are further discussed below.

2.7.1 Destination Brand and Discourses

In Hall's (2010) study, New Zealand is highlighted as working to build a desirable destination brand image through its inclusion of smart in its marketing campaign. The destination wanted to be perceived as "clean, green and smart", however, it was not perceived as smart by the international market (Hall, 2010, p.79). There is much left unanswered regarding the type of image that a smart brand may project. While other destinations are yet to be investigated, Gretzel & Collier de Mendonca (2019) draws on semiotic analysis to conclude that smart provides a technotopian brand image that offers a competitive advantage for destinations. These technological images represent universal stereotypes as branding strategies rather than a reflection of idiosyncratic identities (Seraphin et al., 2019). While this may be early times, as Gretzel and Collier de Mendonca (2019) still remain the only study that investigates the smart brand, there is need to acknowledge the political nature of these brands. In fact, Femenia-Serra et al. (2018) suggest that the development of these destinations has less to do with tourist demand that aligns with competitiveness and more so political activities. According to Hannan and Knox (2005, p.26), studies that have used semiotic analysis have been criticised for their lack of recognition of the "power-laden nature of social meanings in society".

The critical destination marketing literature has spoken extensively on the topics of destination branding and power (Light, 2000; Pritchard & Morgan, 2001; Morgan & Pritchard, 2005). Tourism destination scholars have drawn on Foucault's work to examine discourses of difference, which are discourses that

oppose each other such as the self and the other. No destination is a neutral space but is a site of power relations under constant transformation (Pritchard et al., 1998; Pritchard & Morgan, 2001). A destination brand identity is a social construct, which communicates the representations of a destination's social and cultural identities of a place and its people. Meanwhile, a destination image is the complete range of ideas that tourists hold about a destination (Kotler et al., 1993; Palmer, 2005). Tourism is used as a means of reshaping a country's brand identity and showcasing it to tourists (Light, 2000). A destination brand is the product of a collective process (Prideaux & Cooper, 2002).

A socially constructed identity is embedded in power relations. Discourses can serve to establish homogeneity towards a European imagery, suppress nations, erase local culture in favour of a national image or sometimes promote local cultures leading towards nationness (Light, 2000; Palmer, 2005; White et al., 2019). Foucault's examination of discourses has influenced the work of tourism practitioners, for instance, Morgan and Pritchard (1998) and Aitchison (2001). Morgan and Pritchard (1998) apply Foucault's work to explain the rationale for resort development in the different geographical areas in England. Their study examines how the tourism marketing processes reinforce power with the use of particular and most times expected advertisements. Keskitalo and Schilar (2017) examine how DMOs, suppliers and tourism construct the destination and find four representations of Jukkasjarvi in Sweden: a snowy destination, a remote destination, a traditional destination and wilderness destination. The study concludes that there can be varying but overlapping online representations of what is known as the "destination".

Destination brands of past socialist states in Central and Eastern Europe have been associated with Europeanness, which describes the European identity that is in favour of Western and Central Europe rather than Eastern Europe (Hall, 1998). Hall (1998) acknowledged that Europeanness can be identified through associations with Habsburg heritage, Italy and the Alpine. Subsequently, Nelson (2012) focuses on the construction of Slovenia in travel brochures and captures the destination and its association with Europeanness as a geographical location. However, this understanding of Europeanness is limited. Foucault's work enables one to interpret geography as a discourse or site of knowledge and power (Lahdesmaki, 2014; Wodak, 2003, 2007). There are various initiatives by the European Union that have been promoted and set up to ensure the production of a common European identity across member states, producing "top-down-based notions of Europeanness" (Lahdesmaki, 2014, p.2020). This suggests that the Ljubljana's European capital of smart tourism brand can also be political, which will be examined further through Objective 1 of this thesis. The following section will turn to examining the literature associated with discourses that is necessary for fulfilling Objective 4.

2.7.2 *Tourism, Technology and Discourses*

Foucault's idea of discourses can be applied to understand engagement. While no smart tourism studies have done so, technology studies acknowledge that users of innovations can perceive these innovations differently (Siino & Hinds, 2005), which can result in different behaviours (Tu et al., 2011). These actions are as a result of discourses and ideological fields, which give rise to subject positions and varying reactions to technology (Kozinets, 2007). Noble (1984) and Thompson (2004) call for studies that examine discourses on technology consumption. A similar call has surfaced in tourism and technology recently (see Sigala, 2020).

Recent findings from suggest that application of discourses may be useful for understanding engagement in tourism and technology studies. Advanced technologies that have been included in smart development such as sharing economy platforms and robots have been reacted to differently as a result of the meanings individuals assigned to the initiatives. For instance, Phua (2019) finds that different guests treat Airbnb as a sharing economy platform while others saw it as a hotel booking site and as a result took less time to perform an in-depth review of their online transactions. Meanwhile, Tussyadiah et al.'s (2020) conclude that

“consumers who perceive technologies as unbeneficial, dehumanizing, and complex, thus intimidating, will develop less trust toward specific autonomous technology such as self-driving vehicles...these demonstrate how negative sentiment toward innovative technology in society can be a roadblock to adoption of intelligent robotic technologies” (p.11).

Gretzel and Murphy (2019) provide insights with their examination of meanings and technology adoption. The study applies Kozinets' (2007) ideological fields of technology namely techtopian that signifies that technology allows further development; green luddite that means that technology is dehumanizing; work machine, which focuses on technology being work efficiency and exploitation; and techspressive that is based on pleasure. While Gretzel and Murphy (2019) extend Kozinets' (2007) ideologies to include justice and morality, findings are incompatible with the present thesis for the following reasons:

- limited to robots, which represents only one of the core components of smart (Boes et al., 2016);
- focuses on consumers whose views differ from suppliers; and
- its application of the concept, ideology, which differs from discourses (Purvis & Hunt, 1993).

Smart cities studies show that there exists more than one discourse that define smart, namely sustainability and technology automation (Freudendal-Pedersen et al., 2019; Granath, 2016). These discourses produce different versions of smart cities that produce passive individuals who have multiple subject positions (subjectivities). While smart tourism studies are yet to investigate meanings associated with smart, Vanolo (2016) provides an understanding of smart city imaginaries and concludes that there are four representations: smart cities without (or with invisible citizens), totalitarian smartness with the subjugated citizen, smart cities with active citizens and inhabitants as sensors and smart cities that cater to citizens of the future. Based on a review of smart city research (Andreani et al., 2019; Bibri, 2019; Calzada, 2018; Cardullo & Kitchin, 2019; Desdemoustier et al., 2019; Joss et al., 2017; Mohseni, 2020; Shelton & Lodato, 2019; Vanolo, 2016), smart cities can be categorised as one of the following: technological, value co-created or people-driven smart city. A completely technological smart city rests on a technological deterministic view. Initiatives are automatic and dehumanising with the key individuals being computer programmers. Local citizens have no role. In a value co-created smart city, initiatives are still automated, however, they rely on human data that is garnered from human interactions and allows for personalisation of services. Local citizens have a responsibility of participating in the different initiatives. A people-driven smart city is a development that is first focused on solving problems that are shared by members of the population, hence, stakeholders such as citizens are actively involved in the decision-making process.

The ways in which the smart concept is constructed can determine what is possible and how one will act towards the concept. In light of these claims and the need for a greater understanding of power relations in smart contexts, this thesis draws on these discourses to fulfil Objective 4 of this thesis. Having identified the core literature and Foucault's idea of discourses, the following section will examine another key Foucauldian idea that is necessary for this thesis, namely governmentality.

2.8 Governmentality and Technologies of Power

Governmentality refers to the mechanisms that are used to govern the conduct of individuals within a population from a distance. The concept of governmentality emerged during Foucault's later work in which he analysed then modern forms and practices of power. This concept emerged at a time when Foucault realised that sovereignty, specifically the king's physical presence, that was necessary for the functioning of the monarchy in the 17th century was being used alongside tactics that ensured discipline and control of populations. He concluded that concentration on the State can result in one overlooking technologies (or techniques) of power administered within

populations to govern individual behaviour. This, he referred to, as achieving disciplinary power. According to Foucault (1979a, p.215), discipline is

“a type of power, a modality for its exercise, comprising a whole set of instruments, techniques, procedures, levels of application, targets, it is a “physics”, or an “anatomy” of power, a technology”.

Technologies of power are forms of power that inserts itself into individuals' bodies, actions and their discourses. It is exercised within the body. These techniques are made to meet the demands of production (Foucault, 1980). Disciplining of individuals (or conducting the conduct of individuals) starts with the assignment of spaces with associated enclosures – physical or symbolic (Foucault, 1979a). According to Foucault (1982, p.361), “space is fundamental in any exercise of power”, which is a perspective of power not recognised by Marx (Coles & Church, 2007). Spatial arrangements represent power, as this is the setting in which practices occur and shape individuals' actions (Foucault, 1979a). More specifically, space is discourse materialised (Schein, 1997), which results from the disciplined actions and practices better known as zoning and architectural layout, which inspire consumption of particular products and ways of behaving within those respective spaces. Based on Duncan (1990), the landscape can comprise codes and social values that facilitate social interactions. Cheong and Miller's (2000) conceptual study explore power relations in geographical locations and conclude that the design and experiences within the space are political in nature as they influence how stakeholders conduct themselves within the space. Similarly, Edensor (2000) draws the same conclusion as the space dictates what one can and cannot do. For instance, within tourist spaces, practices such as playing music loudly is not allowed and tourists are separated from local communities that may be areas of inappropriate sights and sounds. Through the mapping of space, individuals can also be separated, marked as included or excluded (Foucault, 1979a).

Other technologies of power, such as timetables, rhythms and the gaze, define movements. These programmes do “not need to be explained or formulated; it must trigger off the required behaviour and that is enough” (Foucault, 1979a, p.166). Most notably, Foucault (1979a) drew upon Bentham's concept of the panopticon to illustrate how the architectural layout of the prison made prisoners engage in the act of imprisonment, as the spatial design facilitated continuous surveillance. The layout with its hierarchical observation of a single gaze was a form of power.

“Governable spaces are not fabricated counter to experiences; they make new kinds of experience possible” (Rose, 1999, p.32).

This constant surveillance through hierarchical observation results in subjects who internalise and normalise this form of discipline, resulting in them being docile bodies (Foucault, 1979a).

Societies and social institutions are also sites of governmentality, through people's practices, roles and participation. Governmentality and its associated technologies and spatialities of power have been observed in a number of smart cities. Drawing from Foucault's use of the term, governmentality, the concept of smartmentality was created. Vanolo (2014) who first introduced the concept of smartmentality joined the words government and smart together. Ho (2017) drew on Foucault's work and also joined the terms together like what was done with the concept of governmentality. By extending the term governmentality to the smart contexts, we are provided with the term smartmentality which allows us to realise that instead of there only being a central figure who instructs others to participate, there are mechanisms within smart places by which "citizens are very subtly asked to participate in the construction of smart cities" (Vanolo, 2014, p.893).

Vanolo (2014) finds governance at work in Italian smart cities' implementation of programmes and standardised ratings systems, such as urban charts and benchmarking analysis. While these systems are useful for tracking progress, they can also lead to businesses adjusting their agendas to meet externally driven goals, which were not previous organisational concerns. For example, Madrid has employed sensors for gathering data about residents' sustainability practices and directing more efficient behaviours and resource use, which Gabrys (2014) terms "environmentality" known as governmentality within contexts dealing with the environment. Further, Ho (2016) notes the rise of smartmentalities in Singapore and concludes that mechanisms not only include opportunities for citizen participation but also the installation and use of smart homes and elderly monitoring systems. That these tools both enable citizen involvement and instruct them on the idea of "smartness" signify a smart transformation through governmentality (Ho, 2016).

According to Foucault (1979b), the individual is transformed into a subject through discourses and power mechanisms. Within smart city contexts, governmentality works through a number of technologically driven programmes to influence both individual (Arnold, 2003) and collective practices (Ho, 2016) towards smartmentality. With no current study applying this area in smart tourism, this thesis draws on governmentality to fulfil Objective 5. Foucault's idea of governmentality expanded even further to neoliberal governmentality, which will be explored next and will be useful for understanding the process of smart development and engagement.

2.9 Neoliberalism and Entrepreneurial Self

The concepts, neoliberal governmentality and entrepreneurial self, emerged in Foucault's 1979 lecture at the College de France that is captured by the text, *The Birth of Biopolitics*, where he continues his interest in subjectivity. He explores the era of neoliberalism by drawing on the theory of utility-maximizing subject formulated by Gary Becker. Neoliberalism

“is not a question of freeing an empty space, but of taking the formal principles of a market economy and referring and relating them to, of projecting them to a general art of government” (Foucault, 1979a).

It is defined as “a specific rationality” or a form of governmentality that results in “entrepreneur of self” (Lorenzini, 2018, p.155). Based on Becker's work, employees do not conduct or conform to a cost and benefit analysis of choices made in the context of unstable work conditions but instead proceed confidently in hope of a better for maximising their returns (Christiaens, 2019). The latter Foucault (2008) calls *homo economicus*, the entrepreneurial self, referring to the enterprising subject that can be found in every aspect of conduct (Burchell, 1993). This neoliberal subject is focused on production rather than mutual exchanges (Foucault, 2008). The subject is constantly investing in activities or oneself (Foucault, 2008; Peters, 2001) in order to increase value (Turken et al., 2016). The entrepreneurial subject perceives self as a business (Foucault, 2008) and displays the following behaviours: being constantly active, embracing risk, surviving problems, not showcasing downfalls, competing and improving self, engaging in othering based on the narrative of hardworking and lazy individuals (Scharff, 2016). Neoliberalism emphasises responsibility, ambition and calculation (Rose, 1992).

This neoliberal governmentality is yet to be highlighted in smart tourism; however, smart city and technology researchers see smart as a neoliberal discursive device. They recognise that smart cities operate within a neoliberal context to promote participation and inclusion. However, engagement is usually far from reality, offering little active participation and only benefiting a few (see Cardullo et al., 2018; Cardullo & Kitchin, 2019; Levenda, 2019). Cardullo et al. (2018) argue that a bottom-up approach is favoured by neoliberal agendas that advocate deregulation, marketisation, privatisation and low expenses. They add that,

“the transformation of the city appears alternative since it mobilises mottos like creativity and participation, while hiding a business-as-usual (profit-oriented) approach” (Cardullo et al., 2018, p.46).

Cardullo and Kitchin (2019, p.824) write

"during our fieldwork, we met many young and enthusiast officers, developers, and community engagement advocates who supported the

smart city vision and without doubt are doing their best to slot digital technologies into the everyday life of cities in ways that improve citizens' lives. For us, a key issue is that they work forcibly within a neoliberal framework that underpins their initiatives: through the framework of the EC (European Commission) funding schemes and the process by which projects are conceived, evaluated and delivered, neoliberal ideals are transmitted in detail and modelled on the dogmas of efficiency (saving scarce energy), sustainability (changing policy orientation in the long term), and freedom of choice (although instrumental to market imperatives)".

Neoliberal governmentality has also been raised within specific technology businesses operating in cities. Kaye-Essien (2020) explores how Uber subjectifies the state and its riders in Ghana through different discursive moments. Firstly, it subjectifies the State by signing of regulatory framework that enabled it to make laws that guided the companies' operations in the country and would eventually work in their favour. It promoted itself using attractive phrases such as "smart city of the future, economic opportunities and entrepreneurship", thereby taking advantage of the country's desire for investments (Kaye-Essien, 2020, p.724). Local taxi drivers were subjectified by Uber based on the competitive rates offered by their drivers and feel neglected by the government who may not be able to implement policies to curb the inequality. The government sees them as "not necessarily victims of economic inequality, but rather people who have failed to take advantage of opportunities for self-governance" (Kaye-Essien, 2020, p.726). Uber subjectifies its own drivers by selling them promises of economic opportunities while the company reaps a substantial commission. By positioning within a neoliberal context, Kaye-Essien (2020) labels sharing economy platforms such as Uber as being representative of a neoliberal project. In this age of neoliberalism, the entrepreneurial self has manifested with more persons operating sharing economy platforms and public organisations being operated like a business. Neoliberalism and entrepreneurial self will be useful concepts for better understanding the processes and influences of smart tourism that emerge in Objectives 2 and 4.

2.10 Summary of Chapter

Based on the literature that was examined, which allowed for the extraction of the gaps, a collaborative approach is being proposed to examine smart destinations. This thesis proposes that the theoretical constructs of collaboration be applied to smart tourism destinations, which varies from traditional tourism collaborations and is a context yet to be explored in this research area. Smart tourism by nature is interdependent, however, there is little research that explore the dynamics of collaborative arrangements within

these types of settings, especially within the component- smart destinations. While very few, studies fail to concretely establish that collaboration is vital for smart destinations. A collaborative approach has been proposed for the approach for exploring community-based tourism (Jamal & Getz, 1995) and tourism marketing, specifically to examine contexts such as global airline alliances, hotel consortia and destination collaboration (Fyall & Garrod, 2005). The aim of this thesis is not to discuss previous theories and approaches that have been used but to provide a collaborative approach. This can assist with the advancement of debates on smart tourism. Furthermore, the factors proposed by De Wit (2017) are yet to be applied to tourism collaboration studies, which improves upon Mitchell et al.'s (1997) work that is well-cited in management literature but is still being called upon for application in tourism.

Having examined tourism collaboration studies, there is a gap in studies that utilise theory of power relations. By examining power in smart tourism through a Foucauldian lens, this can result in more perspectives for scholarly discussions and debates not only in smart literature but also in collaboration. This was deemed necessary as engagement in tourism whether as a supplier or consumer is not based on rational decisions but instead “power determines the participatory patterns of stakeholders” (Zhao & Timothy, 2015, p.498). While the central focus on this thesis is on power, it also makes reference to other theories and factors throughout the discussion in order to examine supplier engagement in smart tourism initiatives at the destination level. This is against the background of the view held that one theory is insufficient to examine destination collaborations (Fyall et al., 2012) and are necessary for understanding smart engagement based on the literature review.

Scholars such as Bramwell and Cox (2009) and Bramwell and Lane (2011) have been calling for alternate perspectives in collaboration research such as those associated with power relations, however, these are still few. Hence, this thesis emphasises power relations and path dependence for examining the collaboration process. Furthermore, more recently developed collaborations such as those associated with smart are assumed to facilitate interactive processes that foster inclusion and diversity. These settings are assumed to encourage greater connectivity among individuals based on technology. However, very little exploration has been done in these collaborative contexts to understanding supplier engagement in practice. The following chapter focuses on smart tourism, which provides a relevant context for exploring collaboration and its underlying assumptions.

CHAPTER 3: SMART TOURISM DESTINATIONS

3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on smart tourism destinations. It first examines the overarching concept of smart tourism. The next section discusses definitions to illustrate the core assumptions that have been dominant and those that have not been emphasised for understanding smart (Section 3.2). Then, it discusses the core components of smart tourism in order to highlight the need for greater focus on smart destinations (Section 3.3).

The chapter then provides an understanding of the core concept associated with smart destinations, namely smart cities. It reviews core developments within the research area, from collaborative process to engagement. Then, the chapter continues with examining the research advancements associated with smart destinations before illustrating the need for greater theoretical and empirical insights (Section 3.3.1- 3.3.3).

3.2 Understanding and Unravelling Assumptions Aligned with Smart Tourism

Smart is derived from the German word, *smeortan*, which means to be forceful. Smart was not used as an adjective until the 17th century when it was attached to a different meaning, that of being clever or knowledgeable (Etymonline, 2018). Smart, as it is known today in English, is defined quite similarly. It signifies possessing intelligence for autonomous actions. A closer examination of the word intelligence reveals that it is the ability to embrace and exhibit understanding and skills (Oxford Dictionaries, 2018). Therefore, smart implies that it must be acquired by someone or something. After which, it transforms this being or item into a better version of its original state. Though the understanding of smart may be concise and clear, it has been applied to varying contexts where it has assumed different meanings (Nam & Pardo, 2011). The discussion continues by examining the contexts that have influenced the understanding of smart within the field of tourism, namely technology and marketing.

The field of technology describes smart similar to one of its original meanings. It is the possession of knowledge for independent functioning (Nam & Pardo, 2011). For instance, an item designated to be smart can receive and store data for interpretation and execution of activities (Culshaw, 1992). This results in autonomous responses at the same time of data processing (Doran et al., 2013; Loewy, 1997). Hence, a commodity being described as smart is reliant upon data for automatic functioning. This data may be captured through sensors that act in response to a physical object (Doran et al., 2013). Smart is seen as being

a way to diagnose future problems efficiently and a means of transforming static data to data-driven solutions.

The explanation of smart from a technological point of view is further channelled into tourism. Scholars in tourism such as Buhalis (2015) and Gretzel et al. (2015a) adopt this technological view of smart. While Buhalis (2019) may emphasise that smart is not about technology, Buhalis (2015, n.p.) tends to place the technological perspective at the centre of his understanding by stating that

“smartness takes advantage of interconnectivity and interoperability of integrated technologies to reengineer processes and data in order to produce innovative services, products and procedures towards maximising value for all stakeholders. This reengineering enables shaping products, actions, processes and services in real-time, by engaging different stakeholders simultaneously to optimise the collective performance and competitiveness and generate agile solutions and value for all involved in the value system. Smartness is the glue of interconnected and mutually beneficial systems and stakeholders and provides the infostructure for the value creation for all”.

Buhalis (2015, n.p.) draws on terms that are within the marketing lexicon such as “value creation” and “competitiveness” as well as those associated with computer science such as “real-time” and “optimise”. Buhalis (2015) notes that smart signifies the optimisation of technological networks. Here, smart in tourism resembles its root concept, smart cities, which draws on a technological understanding (Coca- Stefaniak, 2019; Ivars-Baidal et al., 2017). Section 3.3.1 will elaborate further on the smart cities concept. Lee et al., (2020, p. 3) state that the goal of smart city is

“to optimise infrastructures in order to ideally ensure quality of citizens’ life: transportation, water and power supply, waste management, IT (information technology) connectivity, efficient urban mobility, e-governance and citizen participation”.

The term “optimise” is applied in computer science to refer to the subject of mathematical optimisation that teaches computer programmers how to make something the best through maximisation or minimisation techniques (Yang, 2008). Optimisation is not new in the field of tourism marketing as these methods were introduced to the tourism marketing literature by Hurley et al. (1998) in a study regarding applying optimisation techniques for tourism site selection. The concept even existed prior in other fields such as transportation and operations mainly concentrated on the airline context (see Brusco et al., 1995; Teodorovic et al., 1994).

In addition to optimisation, efficiency is notably present in definitions that draw upon the technological perspective of smart to define smart tourism. According to Bibri (2019, p.25), smart technologies are “more focused on optimising the efficiency of solutions”. This is echoed in Gretzel et al.’s (2015a, p.181) definition of smart tourism:

“tourism supported by integrated efforts at a destination to collect and aggregate/harness data derived from physical infrastructure, social connections, government/organizational sources and human bodies/minds in combination with the use of advanced technologies to transform that data into on-site experiences and business value-propositions with a clear focus on efficiency, sustainability and experience enrichment”.

Collaboration is highlighted in both definitions of smart tourism (Buhalis, 2015; Gretzel et al., 2015a). However, the concept of optimisation that is set within these meanings can challenge the notion of smart tourism being capable of delivering “interconnected and mutually beneficial systems and stakeholders” (Buhalis, 2015). Optimisation means that there will be a focus on finding the best resources and design to produce the solution (Yang, 2008). Despite this assumption not being raised in smart tourism literature, it points to the possibility of collaboration not necessarily resulting in equality and inclusion but instead furthers power dynamics.

The deeply rooted connection between smart tourism and technology can result in an overlap with the concept, eTourism. Some scholars differentiate smart tourism from eTourism (Gretzel et al., 2015a). ETourism is based on web-based technologies such as global distribution systems (Inkpen, 1998), property management systems (Peacock, 1995), destination management systems (O'Connor & Rafferty, 1997), websites, online search engines and social media (Buhalis, 2019). While smart tourism is based on sensors and smartphones. Smart tourism

“technology is seen as an infrastructure, rather than as individual information systems, and encompasses a variety of smart computing technologies that integrate hardware, software, and network technologies to provide real-time awareness of the real world and advanced analytics” (Gretzel et al., 2015a, p.182).

Within the literature, there is still commonality as websites such as Facebook, Expedia and Airbnb are acknowledged as examples of smart tourism (Bae et al., 2017; Kim & Canina, 2015; Park et al., 2016).

In addition to the technological perspective, the definitions of smart within the tourism context also draw on marketing terms. These terms are used alongside technological meanings. Terms include “value creation”, “value propositions” and “experiences” (see Buhalis, 2015; Gretzel et al., 2015a), which are known

to services marketing literature. Smart delivers value to users due to the ability of sense and response technology (Buhalis & Amaranggana, 2013). A product or service being described as smart is one that is personalised according to the user who is interacting with it (Marsa-Maestre et al., 2008). Hence, smart is subjective and specific to individuals. For instance, there are mobile phones that are described as being smart. These phones can be customised according to the customer's needs based on tracking usage or choice. Hotels such as Sheraton are embedding smart technology within their hotels to offer personalised services to guests. From the perspective of marketing, smart is the application of data to deliver customised user experiences (Marsa-Maestre et al., 2008).

This understanding of smart through marketing may be linked to the developments of the services marketing concepts in tourism research. Binkhorst and Den Dekker (2008) advocate for an agenda to be set on tourism based on co-created experiences, however, at the time, smart tourism was not a popular topic under consideration (Topsakal et al., 2020). It was not until five years later that the concept, value co-created experiences, emerged in smart tourism literature. Wang et al. (2013) draw on Vargo and Lusch's (2004) value co-creation and service-dominant logic to discuss the results of a smart tourism destination:

“underlying this initiative are the transformation of tourist experience (co-created value), the changes of destination marketing strategy (relationship management), and a different view of destination competitiveness (operant resources, big data)” (Wang et al., 2013, p.60).

Wang et al.'s (2013) study is the third most cited in the field (Topsakal et al., 2020). It advances the view of participants being conceptualised as being passive to active. This perspective is being contested outside the tourism space. For instance, Fuchs (2017) in speaking about digital technologies being beneficial not for everyday users but public relations teams of celebrities, states that,

“although social media has bottom-up production potentials that make their affordances somewhat different from those of broadcasting, the reality is that the vast majority tends to use such media more like a television than a user-generated content platform. Only a minority of users is highly active and creative. Social media is both a tool of consumption and presumption...social media's potentials differ from its actuality, which is an expression of the power asymmetries of time, skills, motivation, money, influence, attention, reputation and visibility in contemporary class societies” (p.38).

Like the technological understanding of smart, the marketing perspective illustrates that while collaboration is encouraged and promoted, there also exists instances of power. Since Wang et al.'s (2013) publication, numerous studies have adapted this marketing lens to examine smart tourism (Ye et al., 2020). As a result, experiences represent the second most studied area during the period of 2013 to 2019, following conceptualisation of smart tourism (Bastidas- Marzano et al., 2020).

The dominant use of marketing and technological theories, which has led to what Gretzel et al. (2020) describe as the lack of creativity within the domain. Gretzel et al. (2018) also conclude that smart tourism has been wrongly conceptualised as technology adoption and should instead be perceived as a means for achieving tourism management. Subsequently, Ivars-Baidal et al. (2019) define smart tourism in destinations as a destination management approach, similar to destination management systems that are based on a multi-supplier perspective. Though being considered a “hot topic” (Ye et al., 2020, p.2), smart tourism still has a long way to go in terms of theoretical and empirical development (Baggio et al., 2020; Mehraliyev et al., 2020).

From the discussion above, smart tourism is in fact a complex topic to examine due to the contradictions that exist and lack of clarity regarding what it is. While it has evolved to take on a more marketing-oriented focus, it still draws on technological perspectives. Hence, Sabou and Miaorescu (2020, p.2) conclude that

“regardless of definitions, one common trait is found: smart tourism is based on digital data about touristic services and destinations useful to their users”.

From technological and marketing perspectives, scholars have mentioned collaboration within smart tourism. For instance, Gretzel et al. (2015a, p. 191) speak of “integrated efforts” and Buhalis (2015, n.p.) states “interconnected and mutually beneficial systems and stakeholders”. Although scholars highlight integration and collaboration from both technological and marketing perspectives, power dynamics that are embedded in these meanings have not been acknowledged. For instance, optimisation from a technological perspective is based on maximisation techniques and resources. This can affect collaborative efforts and question the presence of “mutually beneficial systems and stakeholders” (Buhalis, 2015). The following section will focus on the core components that fall within smart tourism.

3.3 Smart Destinations: The Less Researched Component of Smart Tourism

According to Gretzel et al. (2015a), there are three components of smart tourism namely smart experiences, smart business ecosystems and smart tourism destinations. The dominance of marketing and technological perspectives associated with smart tourism has led to the concentration on a particular component of smart tourism, namely smart experiences. Figure 3.3 illustrates a keyword co-occurrence knowledge development in smart tourism research developed by the researcher. The figure shows that not only is smart experience a central topic for smart tourism scholars, but it highlights the dominance of the co-creation and adoption concepts in research as noted in Johnson and Samakovlis (2019). Aspects such as management and suppliers are paid less attention.

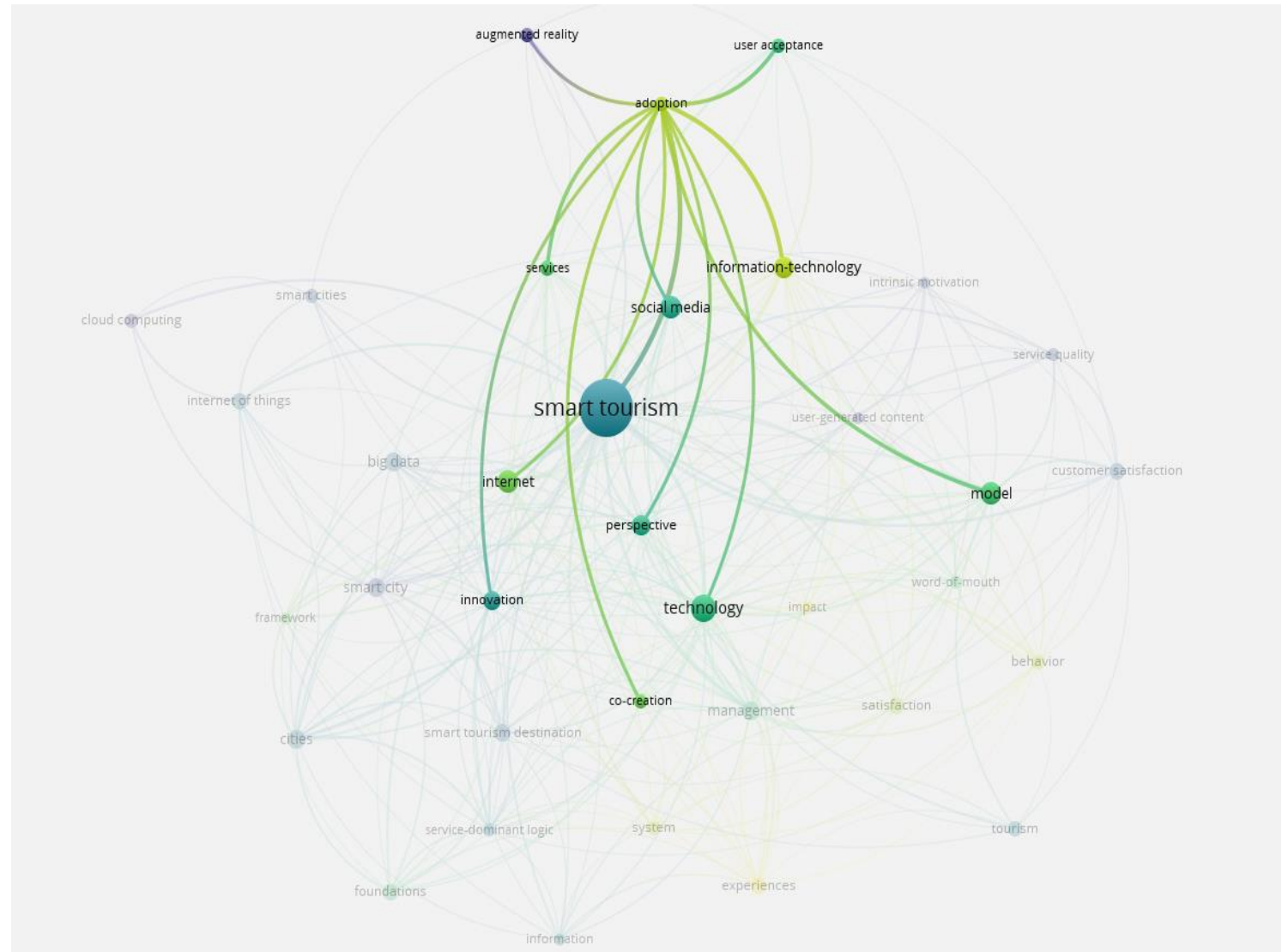


Figure 3.3: Main Topics in Smart Tourism

Smart experiences are technology-enhanced, personalised tourism experiences (Buhalis & Amaranggana, 2013; Neuhofer et al., 2015). Examples of these experiences include those via social media that allows for interaction between DMOs and tourists (Hays et al., 2013) as well as TripAdvisor and WhatsApp that can be used by tourists to receive information in real-time (Jovicic, 2019). Smart experiences include mobile applications, virtual reality, gamification, social networking sites (Briciu et al, 2020; Jovicic, 2019; Shen et al., 2020; Xu et al., 2017). Wireless internet, mobile applications, booking platforms, tourism cards and QR codes have been identified as other examples (Femenia-Serra et al., 2018; Roopchund, 2020). Based on Gajdosik's (2020) study on smart tourists in Slovakia, global distribution systems (GDSs), online travel agencies (OTAs), destination websites as well as sharing economy platforms were identified as smart experiences prior to destination visit. During the destination experience, tourists use destination websites, mobile applications, digitised maps, smart cards and social media pages. However, some scholars such as Buhalis' (2019) view OTAs, social media and websites as eTourism rather than smart tourism.

The development of smart experiences is dependent on businesses, which is conceptualised as another component of smart: smart business ecosystem, which involves tourism suppliers and other suppliers who directly exchange resources for generation of smart experiences (Gretzel et al., 2015a). Ecosystems theory has been used to guide current understanding of defining a smart tourism ecosystem resulting in the conclusion that these contexts include a variety of stakeholders. However, one of the drawbacks of theories such as ecosystem is that it lacks no set definition or limitation to inform those who are designing and implementing programs in industry (Currie et al., 2009). Further, stakeholders, those individuals or organisations that influence or are influenced by the initiative (Freeman, 1984), are not easily identified due to their changing roles as producers and consumers (Werthner et al., 2015). Gretzel et al. (2015b) note that smart involves tourism suppliers and other suppliers who indirectly support the tourism industry. Del Chiappa and Baggio (2015) utilise the lists offered by DMOs to arrive at the stakeholders within smart tourism. These included traditional tourism entities such as accommodation, restaurants, travel agencies. Koo et al. (2017) also identify traditional entities but also included online tourism businesses. While this is an improvement upon previous studies, they are limited to online entities and solely reliant on the DMO's perspective.

There are numerous studies that use the term, smart tourism destination, however, Mehraliyev et al.'s (2020) literature review confirm that researchers more often concentrate on experiences aspect rather than businesses and destinations, which are necessary for planning, development and management of smart experiences. According to Ballina (2020, p.12),

“ST [smart tourism] is not yet adequately developed, as one of its three components [smart business] still lacks real development. Consequently, there is no need to speak of smart tourism destinations either, as the interactive digital technologies are implementing only tourist attractions and public services, and not the existing private tourist services”.

There is a relationship between businesses and the development of a smart destination on a whole, which represents an under researched area. Leung (2019) and Ballina (2020) agree that these components are under investigated. As a result, Mehraliyev et al. (2020) suggest that the following concerns be addressed by future studies:

- overoptimistic view to the effect of smart tourism;
- practical research with limited if any theoretical contributions; and
- lack of any understanding businesses’ perspectives.

In response, this thesis aims to expand on the under researched component-smart destinations by focusing on suppliers’ perspectives and not those of tourists, which have been dominantly focused on (see Johnson & Samakovlis, 2019; Mehraliyev et al., 2020). Furthermore, suppliers are essential for establishment of smart initiatives, which is even prior to contact with tourists (Ivars-Baidal et al., 2017). It incorporates relevant theories including power that can enable a better understanding and challenge views of supplier engagement.

3.3.1 Smart Destination: Meaning and Association with Smart Cities

Current research is yet to present a tourism destination that is entirely smart, instead demonstrating that the use of technologies within a destination can result in it being considered smart (Baggio et al. 2020). Therefore, it is not surprising that a technological perspective underpins definitions of smart destinations. However, they tend to view the concept from a stance of completeness rather than a work in progress. For instance, Lopez de Avila (2015, n.p.) states that a smart destination is

“an innovative tourist destination, built on an infrastructure of state-of-the-art technology guaranteeing the sustainable development of tourist areas, accessible to everyone, which facilitates the visitor’s interaction with and integration into his or her surroundings, increases the quality of the experience at the destination, and improves residents’ quality of life”.

Meanwhile, Buhalis (2015, n.p.), although providing a more in-depth definition, still draws on a technological and marketing perspective:

“based on smart cities research and methodologies, a smart tourism destination successfully implements smartness which is fostered by open innovation, supported by investments in human and social capital, and sustained by participatory governance in order to develop the collective competitiveness of tourism destinations to enhance social, economic and environmental prosperity for all stakeholders. Interoperability and ubiquitous computing ensure that everybody is interconnected and processes are integrated towards generating value, through dynamic co-creation, sustainable resources and dynamic personalisation and adaptation to context. All suppliers and intermediaries, the public sector, as well as consumers and various interested parties are networked, dynamically co-producing value for everybody interconnected in the ecosystem”.

The differentiating factor between a tourism destination and smart destination is centred around technology. Within industry, a similar technological perspective is proposed. For instance, Segittur (2018, n.p.) acknowledges a smart destination as being

“an innovative tourist destination, built on an infrastructure of state-of-the-art technology guaranteeing the sustainable development of the tourist area, accessible to everyone, which facilitates the visitors’ interaction with, and integration into their surroundings, increases the quality of the experience at the destination, while also improving the quality of life of its residents”.

According to European Capital of Smart Tourism (2020, n.p.), this is a

“destination facilitating access to tourism and hospitality products, services, spaces and experiences through ICT-based [Information and Communications Technology-based] tools”.

However, these definitions in research and practice leave much up for interpretation. For instance, Buhalis (2015) notes that “everybody is interconnected”. Segittur (2018) states that this is a destination that is “innovative” and enables access to “everyone” while European Capital of Smart Tourism (2020) has not specified what kind of tools, which could contradict Gretzel et al.’s (2015) proposition of smart if these also include websites. Nonetheless, like the academic definitions, those based in industry highlight collaboration by emphasising the need for technology with references to collective product development.

Conceptualisations of smart destinations vary based on context since places have different development agendas (Ivars-Baidal et al., 2017). Smart developments in Asia, specifically China and South Korea are geared towards the formation of a technological infrastructure for destination management, in which cloud computing, the internet of things and the end-user internet service

systems are essential (Gretzel et al., 2015a; Li et al., 2017; Zhu et al., 2014). While in Europe, the smart agenda is aimed at increasing destination competitiveness through greater connectivity with stakeholders such as multiple sectors (Errichiello & Micera, 2017) and tourists (Neuhofer et al., 2012). Within the smart tourism literature, very little has been said on how smart tourism can result in destination competitiveness. The most acknowledged way to achieve competitiveness as a smart destination is through advanced technological platforms that process data and result in the efficient provision of insights to make informed decisions that are beneficial to suppliers within the tourism industry (Cimbaljevic et al. 2019; Wang et al., 2013). Competitiveness is therefore dependent on advanced technological infrastructure comprising of internet of things, cloud computing and end-user internet service systems (Gretzel et al., 2015). However, Femenia-Serra et al. (2018) find that destinations such as Spain that are known to be smart are less engaged with these advanced technologies. Furthermore, studies mainly examine websites and mobile applications rather than other advanced technologies (see Wang et al., 2016a; Wang et al., 2016b). This suggests that beyond the use of technology, there are other reasons associated with competitiveness, hence, there are other motivations of smart to unravel.

While the concept, smart destination, is linked to smart tourism, its origin and definitions have been associated with an earlier concept, smart cities that is more developed in research. Smart tourism destinations are described as extensions of the smart cities concept to destinations (Ivars-Baidal et al., 2017). They are also known as cities with smartness or the “younger sibling” of smart cities (Coca- Stefaniak, 2019, p.5). Smart cities are still not clearly defined and understood within practice or academic literature (Bibri, 2019) or have an agreed meaning (Briciu et al., 2020; Kumar, 2017). This lack of clarity has even resulted in cities adopting the label of being smart, with different individuals within the same city holding different understandings of the concept (Desdemoustier et al., 2019). As a result, Haarstad (2017, p.424) refers to it as an “empty signifier”. Smart city is sometimes seen as not being a new concept since it resembles other terms used in the past such as intelligent and entrepreneurial city (Hollands, 2008). Smart cities are considered test sites, which are being continuously developed (Buuse & Kolk, 2019). Nonetheless, most scholars present perspectives that align with Caragliu et al.’s (2011, p.70) well-cited view:

“investments in human and social capital and traditional (transport) and modern (ICT) communication infrastructure fuel sustainable economic growth and a high quality of life, with a wise management of natural resources, through participatory governance”.

Recently, there have been calls for a human-centric approach to smart cities. Stakeholder engagement and collaboration has been highlighted as being

necessary for the development of smart city initiatives (Janssen et al., 2019). Cardullo and Kitchin (2019, p.820) apply a critical perspective to find that citizen participation in practice is still present at minimum. Smart initiatives are then seen as a technology of power associated with neoliberalism that furthers the interests of a few businesses at the expense of citizens. This later results in a “technological lock-in” (Russo & Brandais 2021, n.p.).

As the people-centred approaches to smart cities emerge, so too has there been an increase in discussions on sustainable cities, which closely resembles the concept. Sustainable is seen as being more focused on people. Yigitcanlar et al. (2020) conclude that a city cannot be smart without being sustainable. On the other hand, D’Auria et al. (2018, p.12) provide a comparison of smart city and sustainable city and concludes that smart city is based on technology and human participation while a sustainable city emphasises equity.

The diverse meanings of smart cities have resulted in varied representations and understandings of how these places should develop (Zuzul, 2019). A few researchers have formulated smart city development models based on a stage model approach (see Lee et al., 2013; Siokas et al. 2021). Kumar et al. (2020) provide a smart city transformation framework in which a city is said to undergo four stages: planning phase, creation of physical infrastructure, formation of ICT infrastructure and deployment of smart solutions. Noori et al. (2020) create a three-stage model: input resources, throughputs and outputs; however, the role of stakeholders is unclear. Despite the diversity in models, they heavily focus on the technological and urban aspects of smart cities. For instance, Lee et al. (2013) provide a smart city process with a focus on smart technology. As a result, the participants involved in these studies are usually the urban planners and technology experts, representing solely the developers of infrastructure.

Another conceptual development on smart cities includes Giffinger et al.’s (2007) well-cited work, which proposes that a smart city has six characteristics: smart economy, smart people, smart governance, smart mobility, smart environment and smart living. Kumar (2017) recognises the smart economy as a place with businesses that tourists have an interest in visiting. Tourism businesses are therefore recognised as a component on the smart economy. Furthermore, Kumar et al. (2020) highlight smart tourism as one of the outputs of the smart city development process that was planned and implemented by government entities. Tourism suppliers are represented then as beneficiaries rather than engaged stakeholders in smart cities. However, the literature continues to evolve as two separate areas. Smart cities cater to locals while smart tourism destinations expand reach by catering to visitors and connecting them to locals and businesses (Gretzel et al., 2016). Smart destination research is yet to zoom in on engagement as seen in smart cities

research with its collaborative processes and subjectivities. Hence, an exploration of engagement in smart destinations is still necessary.

3.3.2 Smart Destination Engagement and Development

Very little is known about smart tourism engagement (Avelar, 2020; Baggio et al., 2020; Mehraliyev et al., 2020). As noted in the introduction, Ivars-Baidal et al. (2017) is the only study to date that has shed light on the influences of engagement within smart destinations. Though, the study did not entirely concentrate on these factors. The inhibitors that emerged include lack of strategy, limited political terms, inadequate interoperability of the technological system, lack of technological competence, low cooperation between the public and private sector, lack of knowledge and low economic resources. Meanwhile, tourist engagement is a facilitator. These findings were based on feedback from academics, with participants located in Spain, United Kingdom, Australia, Portugal, India, Finland, Poland, the United States, Brazil and Italy (Ivars-Baidal et al., 2017). Furthermore, the study lacked depth and a comprehensive theoretical model for understanding engagement in smart destinations.

To a greater extent, there is still a lack of empirical data on the collaboration process, which is the central premise of smart destinations. Technologies enable connectivity between the physical and digital world, which results in “public-private-consumer collaboration; participatory governance” within smart destinations (Jovicic, 2019, p.280). A smart destination development is as result of collaboration among public and private sector organisations (Cavalheiro et al., 2019; Femenia-Serra & Ivars-Baidal, 2018) including competitors within industries (Buhalis & Amaranggana, 2013). Engagement is often mentioned but never examined from suppliers’ stance. This results in “a very utopian view of happy collaboration among various actors and a self-regulating ecosystem” (Gretzel et al., 2015a, p.185).

In the absence of other studies on engagement, this section will examine smart destination development. A few studies have led the way in providing insights that will be useful to understanding development. These focus on the core resources and conditions necessary for achieving smartness. Boes et al. (2016) reveal the common components of developing smartness in destinations as being technology, leadership, innovation, social and human capital, which includes establishing norms and procedures. Shafiee et al. (2019) identify the key elements for smart tourism development as being causal conditions, context conditions, intervening conditions, interactions and consequences. Surprisingly, the only human element mentioned in Shafiee et al.’s (2019) model for development smart destinations is government support, which is classified as the intervening condition. The intervening conditions are

strategies necessary for development. This is quite the opposite for Cavalheiro et al. (2019) who utilise smart city models as the theoretical framework to develop their smart development model. Cavalheiro et al. (2019) propose that a smart tourism development model is based on three layers: ground layer, which is based on destination resources including individuals, identity, vision and local government support, smart ICT infrastructure layer that enables communication and tourism applications layer for enabling user experiences.

Government leadership is a core component of smart development (Boes et al., 2016; Buhalis, 2019; Cavalheiro et al., 2019; Li et al., 2017; Shafiee et al., 2019). Examples of this still continue in the literature as Choi et al. (2021) conclude that the Korean government was instrumental in ensuring smart destination governance. Arguably, good governance in smart tourism is focused on achieving equity, inclusion and diversity (Gretzel & Jamal, 2020). This study raises the question as to the necessity of a leader and if there are other forms and manifestations of power present in smart tourism. Reflecting on the conceptualisation of smart tourism as an ecosystem (Gretzel et al., 2015b), it can be concluded that a leader may not be essential for the process. According to Reinhold et al. (2015, p.140),

“systems research does alert us to the fact that systems can reach local or even global optima without leadership or the intervention of a guiding hand”.

Meanwhile, Alves et al. (2018) claim that governance mechanisms are needed for controlling ecosystems and positioning them to perform at optimum capacity in order to gain competitive advantage. Wareham et al. (2014, p. 1197) emphasise the importance of governance in ecosystems by stating that

“excessive evolvability without some degree of stability and inertia can render a system fragmented in use, financially unsustainable, and irrelevant in the marketplace. Accordingly, maintaining equilibrium between stability and evolvability is a central challenge to technology ecosystems”.

Hence, one needs to further explore the underlying power mechanisms that can influence engagement in smart tourism.

There has been one study of the smart development process. Zhu et al.’s (2014) examination of smart tourism within the Chinese context provides two stages of smart development in China – designing and operating – which involve government and organisations such as technology and tourism enterprises. Zhu et al. (2014) suggest that various roles should be adopted by different actors at distinct points in smart destinations: during the design stage, government leads, and businesses contribute resources, whereas during the operational phase, government should collect data and monitor the initiatives while businesses provide and maintain the initiatives. These stages are similar

to smart city development models highlighted prior due to their linear processes. Zhu et al.'s (2014) research, though a significant contribution to the smart tourism literature lacks theory, reflects a narrow understanding of the collaborative process and concentrates on the context of China. Following Zhu et al.'s (2014) publication, Femenia-Serra and Ivars-Baidal (2018, p.2) still add that

“smart destinations theoretical propositions and principles need to be specified into concrete, available and valuable solutions for destinations to implement from a public-oriented perspective, this is, smart solutions”.

In light of this, as well as other smart tourism scholars' confirmation that there is still very little written on how to pursue smart tourism development (Avelar, 2020; Baggio et al., 2020; Mehraliyev et al., 2020), this thesis will explore the development of the collaboration process of smart tourism destinations and factors that influence supplier engagement.

3.3.3 Development of Smart Tourism Research

Although smart destination studies are limited, the chapter had to provide a further discussion on the general development of smart tourism research to illustrate the current piecemeal approach. These studies mainly apply technology adoption models, value co-creation or ecosystems theory. However, each provides a narrow perspective on engagement in smart initiatives that is insufficient for addressing lack of supplier engagement being experienced in industry and current concerns within wider society.

Smart tourism studies predominantly utilise technology adoption and acceptance models, which follows the tradition taken by technology-related studies in tourism (Cai et al., 2020; Gretzel et al., 2020). Based on the technology acceptance models used, technology adoption is considered as “the intention to use the technology in the future, and its actual use in the past” (Escobar-Rodriguez & Carvajal-Trujillo, 2014, p.72). These models, applied to smart tourism studies (see Lin, 2017; Wang et al., 2016a), were derived from less advanced technologies than the ones that are incorporated in smart tourism which allow real-time interactions. For instance, the technology-organisation-environment (TOE) framework focused on the adoption of inspection machine for aerospace plug connectors by employees at Hudson and Vassilefsky Electric Company (DePietro et al., 1990 cited in Tornatzky & Fleischer, 1990). An example of these systems at that time was electronic mail (Davis, 1989).

The underlying assumption of these models are based on rationality. Theories based on rational decision-making acknowledge that individuals make choices for their own self- interest. It emphasises the benefit of the initiative to

individual users whose goals are primarily focused on efficiency and does not consider the embeddedness of the organisation or individual within the social context, which is a significant limitation of technology-based models (Soares et al., 2020). Overtime, the use of these models has resulted in smart tourism studies providing “practical research with limited if any theoretical contributions” and continue “testing the adoption of yet another technology” (Mehraliyev et al., 2020, p.85). A similar outcome has been noted generally in information technology and tourism research. Researchers tend to include additional variables to increase predictions, however, based on Pourfakhimi et al. (2019) review of tourism and technology studies find that findings only lead to confirmation of results. Hence, while these models and studies are useful for generating greater findings, overtime, they represent positivist studies that present similar claims. The continued overreliance on these models limits theorisation, which has been emphasised recently by tourism scholars:

“lack of creativity, originality and vision is also not unknown in e-Tourism research, a field that often deliberately self-restricts by primarily focusing on the analysis of existing IT solutions and their adoption and acceptance in tourism” (Gretzel et al., 2020, p.17).

Another perspective being embraced is value co-creation and service-dominant logic lens, which is aligned with the view that “any stakeholder is an actor aiming to interact and exchange resources with other actors for value co-creation” (Gretzel et al., 2015a, p.183). This lens is based on assumptions that individuals and organisations behave rationally and therefore will choose to embrace initiatives based on the benefits it provides (Al-Tarawneh, 2019). Hence, individuals or organisations will engage in order to garner benefits for their organisations. This rationalist assumption emphasises the organisation’s role in choosing to (not) engage while disregarding the firm’s place within wider social and cultural framework. This neglect for the organisations to be located within the wider environment encourages a concentration on goals that are centred on efficiency (Soares et al., 2020). However, there is a discrepancy in behaviour among suppliers as the cases of Amsterdam and Copenhagen has previously shown that choosing to engage may not only be about value. Furthermore, value co-creation and technology adoption models align with this rationalist assumption and form majority of those which exist within the tourism and technology literature (Cai et al., 2020).

Studies have also applied ecosystems theory to understand the extensive structure and functioning of smart tourism as well as the dynamic roles of suppliers (Barile et al., 2017; Gretzel et al., 2015b). Ecosystems theory, founded in natural science, has been used in business and information systems literature as a metaphor to recognise the interconnectedness of organisations with other organisations and environments (Iansiti & Levien, 2002; Moore, 1993). An ecosystem perspective is applied mainly to illustrate how

technology functions. For instance, algorithms function like the evolution process, which is based on ecosystems thinking.

“In nature, each species needs to adapt to a complicated and changing environment in order to maximize the likelihood of its survival. The knowledge that each species gains is encoded in its chromosomes, which undergo transformations when reproduction occurs. Over a period of time, these changes to the chromosomes give rise to species that are more likely to survive, and so have a greater chance of passing on their improved characteristics to future generations” (Hurley et al., 1998, p.501).

This allows us to understand how optimisation occurs based on the technology and leaves the aspect of initial formation and engagement unanswered.

Technology adoption models, value co-creation and service-dominant logic have been applied individually to various cases; however, these lenses cannot sufficiently explain engagement in smart tourism initiatives at the destination level. This is even more obvious when comparing the assumptions to findings from Ivars-Baidal et al.’s (2017) study on influences of engagement at the destination level.

More recently, Ivars-Baidal et al. (2019) conclude that smart destination initiatives can be considered advanced versions of DMSs. These are inter-organisational online information platforms used by destination management organisations, which usually fall within destination collaboration research (Estevao et al., 2020). Frew and Horan (2007, p.8) state that

“destination management systems (DMSs) are systems that consolidate and distribute a comprehensive range of tourism products through a variety of channels and platforms, generally catering for a specific region, and supporting the activities of a destination management organisation (DMO) within that region. DMSs attempt to utilise a customer centric approach in order to manage and market the destination as a holistic entity, typically providing strong destination related information, real-time reservations, destination management tools and paying particular attention to supporting small and independent tourism suppliers”.

DMSs and smart tourism initiatives have common characteristics. For instance, they both incorporate technology and apply a multi-supplier approach (Estevao et al., 2020; Sigala, 2013). A DMS is considered an inter-organisational system since it facilitates knowledge sharing between the DMO and multiple destination businesses (Martins et al., 2020), which the same sharing of value is expected in smart tourism. Sussmann and Baker (1996, p.102) describe a DMS as “essentially a marketing tool promoting tourism products in a particular destination, which might be a nation, region, town or other

recognisable geographical entity”. A similar understanding of smart tourism exists for web-based platforms such as online travel agencies and sharing economy sites (Bae et al., 2017; Kim & Canina, 2015; Koo et al., 2017; Park et al., 2016). While not all smart tourism initiatives may be classified as a DMS, for example: sensors in hotels, this still serves as an appropriate starting point for understanding influences of supplier engagement. Therefore, smart initiatives at the destination level can be classified as interorganisational information systems and hence warrant a multi-stakeholder perspective as Sigala (2013) calls for when examining these systems. Wang (2008), Sigala (2013) and Abidin et al. (2019) all draw on a collaborative approach. Fyall and Garrod (2020, p.167) propose that collaborative destination management scholars explore smart tourism within the domain as it represents one of the few areas that “are likely to flourish” from 2020 to 2095.

Studies on the factors that influence engagement in DMSs are few. Collins and Buhalis (2003) explore the factors for successful DMS implementation. The study reveals that technology, funding availability and demand from consumer and industry practitioners were factors that inhibited adoption. While relying on survey questionnaires like Collins and Buhalis (2003), Wang’s (2008) study produce similar findings. Wang’s (2008) study on web-based marketing systems used by DMOs in Elkhart County, Indiana, in the USA find that factors include financial commitment, technology expertise, creativity and absorptive capacity. The organisation’s marketing strategies, organisational financial resource and its technological environment were found to be barriers to DMS implementation. These findings emerged at a time when web-based technologies had the function of providing information, enabling relationship building and transactions, although considered to be weak in the latter two functions.

Sigala (2013) utilises a multi-stakeholder perspective to examine an inter-organisational information system, namely DMS, to examine adoption. Sigala (2013) also finds that organisational factors play a significant role in determining adoption of DMO’s DMS for small and medium enterprises in Greece. Perceptions of individuals within the firms and resources such as technological, human and financial were barriers to adoption by these organisations. The study also find that organisations lack what is known as organisational readiness. This is quite similar to what has been found in interorganisational studies as a barrier to engagement in interorganisational information systems (Nandy & Seetharaman, 2019). Based on the feedback from the questionnaire and focused group, Sigala (2013) concludes that factors that served as influences were perceptions of the DMO, organisational and managerial, environmental and technological features.

In more recent times, Martins et al.’s (2020) study that combined two conceptual models to investigate implementation of DMS shows results as

being DMO and DMS characteristics and destination context. These studies shared the common constructs of technology, organisation and environment as influences, which are key areas in technology adoption models. Due to the positivist nature of these studies, they were not able to examine further constructs. In more recent times, Estevao et al. (2020) utilised qualitative data collection methods while arguing that there still exists a scarcity of studies on DMO adoption. The study garnered the perspectives of North American (USA and Canada) and European DMO representatives, specifically from the UK, Norway and Sweden, to understand the influences that exist. Most of the factors were at the organisational level. Challenges include limited time available for training staff and effectively managing the system, technical and general knowledge needed for implementing and using systems, and lack of e-readiness, which is infrastructure and skills needed for using technological devices and application softwares.

The dominant use of quantitative methods has raised the following philosophical questions for consideration, which are addressed in the next chapter:

- Do smart initiatives exist in the physical world making them outside of one's control or are they present in the social world thereby resulting from social interactions?
- How can truth be ascertained about smart tourism and factors of smart tourism engagement?

Additionally, the above factors from DMS studies emphasise a transactional approach to collaborative development. This means that it is transaction focus and positions the organisation as the beneficiary and focus of control (Fyall & Garrod, 2005). Technological models are aligned with the transactional approach and ignores the possible relationships that may have developed among suppliers within tourism destinations. Hence, a relational (collaborative) approach is needed (Fyall & Garrod, 2005). The core elements of collaboration are quite evident in smart tourism destinations as seen in Table 3.3.3, which was presented by the researcher in the form of a poster presentation at The Smart Conference held in May 2019 in Orlando, Florida. It illustrates the reconceptualization of smart tourism based on collaboration. Based on the current literature, smart tourism can indeed be classified as a collaboration as all the necessary elements apply.

Table 3.3.3: Elements of Collaboration Applied to Smart Tourism
(Barile et al., 2017; Boes et al., 2016; Del Chiappa & Baggio, 2015;
Gretzel et al., 2015a; Koo et al., 2017; Lopez de Avila, 2015)

Elements of Collaboration	Explanation of The Element	Application to Smart Tourism
Stakeholders of a Problem Domain	Stakeholders have an interest in the problem being attended to.	This refers to the multiple and diverse organisations and human connections that Gretzel et al. (2015b) makes note of in the definition of smart tourism. These can be dynamic, such as hotels, restaurants, sharing economy platforms, as well as stable such as Facebook and Expedia (Koo et al., 2017).
Autonomy	Stakeholders, though being a part of a group, exercise some degree of independence when they make decisions.	Although stakeholders act together, they all have independent interests that guide their behaviour and decisions in the group.
Interactive Process	There is a form of exchange existing within the group.	Smart technologies merge the virtual and physical world, which enables this interaction to occur.
Shared Rules, Norms and Structures	There is a structure in place to govern the collaboration as well as rules and norms that guide the behaviour of stakeholders.	In Barile's et al. (2017) study based on the role of mobile applications in the smart tourism ecosystem, it was revealed that there were three types of institutions: static

		which is prompted by the technology, dynamic which is initiated by the tourism businesses such as signs and dynamic institutions resulting from monitoring the community such as traffic predictions.
Action or Decision	Participation is interactive.	Interactivity is facilitated by the technological component of smart (Boes et al., 2016) as well as affiliations through formal contracts and tourism associations (Del Chiappa & Baggio, 2015).
Domain Orientation	The collaboration is due to a particular problem, which the stakeholders within the ecosystem are focused on.	The UNWTO (2017) proposes smart tourism for destination management amidst the issues of overtourism and using data to drive efficiency and destination competitiveness. According to Gretzel et al. (2015a, p.181), smart tourism allows for “efficiency, sustainability and experience enrichment”.

Having argued for the need to pursue studies focused on engagement in smart destinations, the next section presents the conceptual framework for this thesis.

3.4 Conceptual Framework

Smart tourism destination studies on engagement are lacking. Generally, smart tourism research provides a piecemeal understanding resulting in the belief that participation is influenced by value, mutual benefits and voluntary actions. This thesis draws upon a collaborative approach to provide a broader understanding while also challenging the notion of equality and independence. It goes beyond examining collaboration from a singular lens by applying a multiple theoretical framework. Figure 3.4 showcases the conceptual framework that is used to provide a more holistic understanding of engagement in smart destinations. The framework has three roles: provide a novel lens for understanding smart destinations, position the study within current discussions and identify the gaps to be filled that are necessary for furthering the success of smart initiatives.

Looking towards the conceptual framework, this thesis draws on the research area of inter-organisational collaboration in tourism. This area has been developed using theories that have been applied in the field of organisational behaviour and strategic management (De Wit, 2017; Gray, 1989). These include power, institutional, resource dependency, transaction cost and relational exchange theories. While these lenses are yet to be integrated and examined in smart tourism research, tourism collaboration studies can also benefit from a greater understanding through the application of De Wit's (2017) relational factors of inter-organisational collaboration that have been discussed in the literature review. An examination of each factor in relation to the tourism collaboration studies show that there are gaps that exist, resulting in the research aim- to explore tourism suppliers' perspectives on engaging in smart tourism initiatives at the destination level. Though the study examines relational factors most broadly, it concentrates on the factor of power due to its central role in understanding engagement. This collaboration framework, which emphasises power, is used to understand the collaborative process and influences of supplier engagement to ascertain how to foster involvement in smart development.

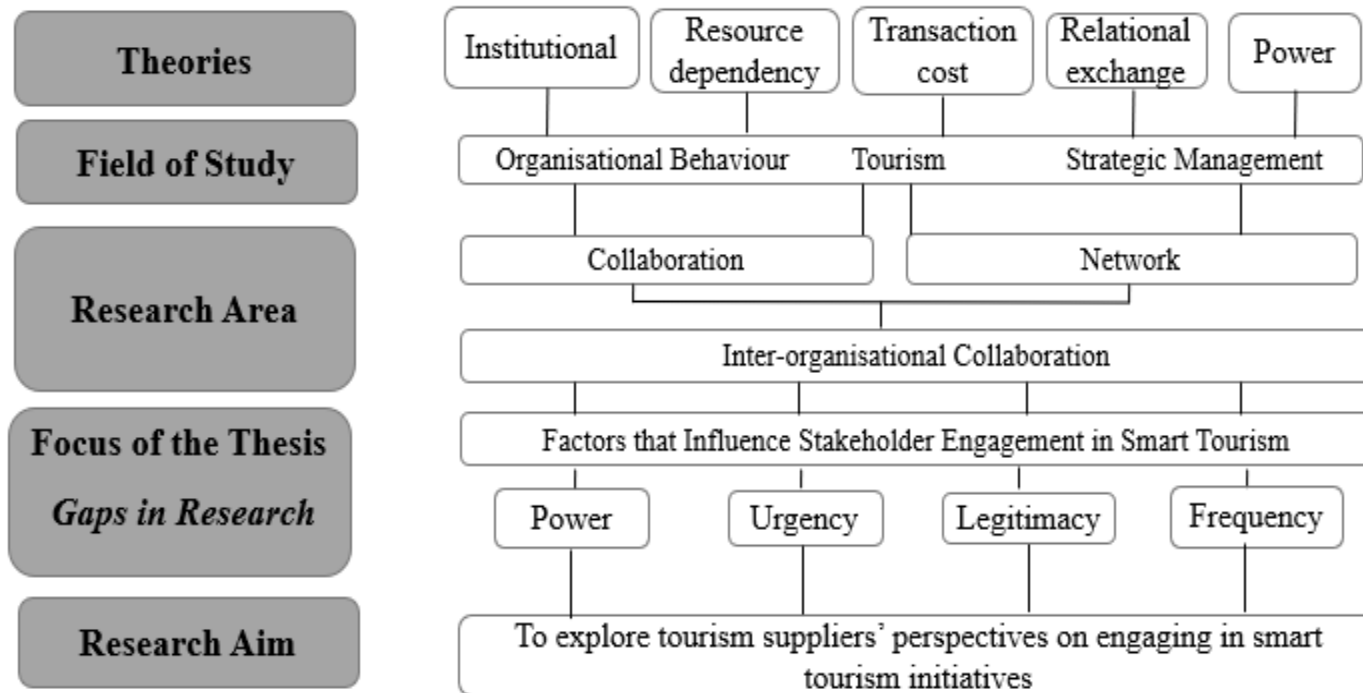


Figure 3.4: Conceptual Framework for this Thesis

3.5 Summary of Chapter

This chapter has presented a review of the main developments in smart tourism research that are necessary for recognising the limitation of understanding smart tourism destination engagement. The chapter first provided the meanings associated with smart, which are based on technological and marketing perspectives. These views have continued to shape knowledge development on smart, however, these are mainly definitions proposed by researchers and regional organisations rather than perspectives shared by local tourism suppliers. While it is evident from the literature review that smart is a contested concept, this thesis acknowledges that the philosophy underpinning smart is collaboration.

As smart tourism discussions develop, there has been core assumptions that dominate the field but are yet to be contested, though this is not the case in wider smart cities and technology research. For instance, smart tourism destinations differ from smart cities (Gretzel et al., 2015). These destinations are seen as enablers of greater benefits, simultaneous, active interactions as well as inclusion and diversity, however, smart cities research demonstrates that the contrary occurs (Cardullo & Kitchin, 2019; Russo & Brandais, 2021; Vanolo, 2014). A deeper understanding of involvement will be provided by this thesis in the following chapters.

This literature review continued with discussions on knowledge development in smart tourism research to illustrate that the rationale for calls on development of research on smart destinations with greater insights on business' perspectives and engagement in smart destinations (Avelar, 2020; Baggio et al., 2020; Mehraliyev et al., 2020). To date, studies concentrate mainly on the resources necessary for development with aspects on planning and development still underresearched. At the same time, most smart destination research remains at the conceptual level, which is insufficient for ensuring development in practice (Mehraliyev et al., 2020). Hence, this thesis turns to providing insights that can aid successful development.

Smart tourism requires alternate approaches in light of the ongoing challenges in industry for the continuance of smart development as cases such as Amsterdam and Barcelona show that engagement goes beyond technology and use (see Chapter 1). Research on smart destination engagement requires an approach that does not concentrate on a single user but instead multiple ones, which results in drawing on a collaborative approach that is presented in Chapter 2. Also, only one study of the smart tourism development process has been developed but it is linear and not generalisable to more holistic smart contexts and democratic societies such as that of Ljubljana. The following chapter will examine how this research was conducted.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This thesis now turns to explain and justify the choice of a qualitative analysis of the case of Ljubljana. The research aim guides the decisions made in this chapter. The aim is to explore suppliers' perspectives on smart tourism destination engagement through the following objectives:

- to understand the rationale for developing a smart tourism destination
- to examine how smart tourism was developed;
- to explore supplier perceptions of the factors that influence engagement in smart tourism;
- to explain supplier engagement in smart destination development through an analysis of discourses; and
- to examine how “governmentality” informs (dis) engagement among suppliers in smart destination initiatives.

To fulfil these objectives, the thesis draws on three research areas: smart tourism destination, collaboration and power. The chapter will begin by explaining the philosophical assumptions applied that impact the methodological decisions made for this thesis (Section 4.2). Then, it will discuss the case study research design that was applied alongside the qualitative data collection methods (Section 4.3- 4.4). The chapter also explores aspects related to fieldwork (Section 4.5-4.6). It ends with a discussion on thematic and discourse analyses (Section 4.7) as well as trustworthiness and reflection (Section 4.8- 4.9).

4.2 Research Philosophy

Having formulated the main aim and research questions, the philosophical assumption, specifically ontology and epistemology that is guiding this thesis is explained. Ontology is concerned with the nature of reality while epistemology refers to how one studies a phenomenon or seeks to gain knowledge about it (Bryman, 2012). Broadly, there are two main philosophical assumptions: positivism and interpretivism (Henderson, 1991; Merriam, 2009). Positivism assumes that there is a single independent reality, thereby associating with a realist ontology (Merriam, 2009). Studies that apply positivism are reliant on a priori knowledge. While previous smart tourism studies have predominantly embraced positivist ontology (Gretzel & Jamal, 2009; Hwang et al., 2015; Spencer, 2015), Higgins- Desbiolles and Whyte (2013) argue “value-free science is only an ideal. It is not a reality. What some people see as value-free is really laden with values” (p.430).

From a positivist perspective, smart destination initiatives are seen as having determinate effects and function independently (Gretzel & Jamal, 2009). However, some scholars such as Cardullo and Kitchin (2019) argue differently highlighting that smart cities are formed as a result of social interactions and processes. These cities are not apolitical, which coincides with Higgins-Desbiolles and Whyte's (2013) view that reality is filled with values. Hence, positivism cannot be used to understand the various situations and relationships involved in smart tourism (Hunter et al., 2015).

Interpretivism is based on reality being a social construct (Merriam, 2009). It lends itself to immersive experiences since findings cannot be known objectively (Delanty & Strydom, 2010). Findings for generating knowledge must be obtained by interpreting human views and behaviour within naturalistic settings. Interpretivism is guided by the assumption that more meanings and interpretations can add to existing knowledge and extend the boundaries of a field (Johnson & Duberley, 2006). According to Denzin and Lincoln (2008, p.31), research is "guided by the researcher's set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood and studied". This view associates with an interpretivism paradigm that is closely related to constructionism. Nonetheless, the assumption of there being no single truth underlies these philosophical paradigms (Burr, 2003). While constructionism is not new to tourism research, Pernecky (2012) argues that very few studies justify and demonstrate how it is utilised. The following will explain its applicability to this research.

This thesis is based on a constructionism, interpretive perspective, which is most appropriate to examine suppliers' perspectives on smart tourism engagement. The paradigm has been chosen for the following reasons. First, Foucault's work on power, which is central to this thesis, is based on the idea of there being multiple meanings as well as social and cultural embeddedness. This aligns with a constructionism stance (Schiffrin et al., 2005). In fact, social constructionism draws on Foucault's work (Gergen & Gergen, 2005). From a socially constructed stance, smart initiatives then are as a result of complex social processes (Gretzel & Jamal, 2009). A second reason for choosing this perspective is that understandings can change rather than remain fixed. Therefore, a person's view of a destination can differ from another since meanings can vary across context and time. For instance, there were different constructions of Ljubljana prior to and post-independence, which relates to Objective 1. Its smart development process was also evolving, which relates to Objective 2. Another rationale for applying this philosophical perspective is that the world is known based on the individual interpretations (Becker, 1970; Johnson & Duberley, 2006), which influence actions and social interactions (Bryman, 2012; Chen et al., 2011). For instance, tourism suppliers' perspectives of the influences differed from each other, which resulted in either engagement or resistance and this speaks to Objectives 3 and 4. Social

constructionism is also based on the view that concepts can associate with a variety of meanings. For example, it can be technological tool, a destination management approach or even an entity as discussed in Chapter 3. This is essential for fulfilling Objectives 4 and 5. Finally, Hunter et al. (2015) advocate for a shift from this deterministic view to embracing naturalistic inquiry in smart tourism. Having identified the philosophy underlying the thesis, the next step is to focus on the research methodology design.

4.3 Research Methodology Design

Research designs that are aligned with interpretivism include hermeneutics, ethnography, participative enquiry, action research, grounded theory and case studies (Collis & Hussey, 2009). This thesis applies case study as an appropriate research design. A case study can provide an in-depth understanding of a contemporary phenomenon that is not known or is under researched, which is the situation regarding supplier engagement in smart destinations. It is also used in instances where a situation is deemed to be distinct (Yin, 2014). Based on the historical context of Slovenia, Ljubljana represents a unique context in comparison to other popularly examined destinations as highlighted in Section 1.2.

Case studies are common in tourism collaboration research. They are used to mainly explore the perceptions of different individuals and organisations regarding the impacts of tourism planning, development and sustainability (see Graci, 2013; Lin & Simmons, 2017; Schofield et al., 2018). Further, case studies provide rich descriptions of smart destinations (see Boes et al., 2016; Polese et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2013). While these case studies are slowly increasing in smart research, they are still limited (Gelter et al., 2020).

Case studies must have details regarding the research question, the unit of analysis and analytic techniques. However, these procedures are not always adhered to in tourism collaboration studies. For instance, Graci (2013) provides details on how the data was collected but does not provide details on what technique was used to analyse the data. Lin and Simmons (2017) also did not specifically state the data analysis method for coding the data. In addition to this, Lin and Simmons (2017) state that the case study research design was used but also note that they followed the process of grounded theory. Unlike Graci (2013) and Lin and Simmons (2017), Schofield et al. (2018) provide details regarding the essential components of a case study. In keeping with case study procedure (Yin, 2014), the following section will provide further details on the rationale for choosing Ljubljana as the case and the units of analysis of the study.

4.3.1 *Choosing Ljubljana as the Case*

The case chosen is most suited for fulfilling the aim of this thesis. The smart tourism destination of Ljubljana in Slovenia is a 2019 and 2020 European Capital of Smart Tourism. Ljubljana is a young democratic society, which provides the context for further examining the influences that facilitate engagement by local suppliers especially through Foucault's ideas of power. The destination has over 45 smart initiatives as indicated by lead of smart initiatives in the city. An official list was requested by the researcher but this was not forthcoming. As a result, the researcher reviewed the list of initiatives that resulted in Ljubljana being designated smart tourism capital, which was obtained via press releases by the destination management organisation (DMO) and travel trade media as well as DMO presentation. The latter was shared prior to fieldwork in 2019 when the researcher was engaged in garnering details about smart destinations for research consideration and building rapport with suppliers within the destination.

In order to make the analysis more manageable, the following was taken into consideration when choosing the smart initiatives. Gretzel et al. (2015a) suggest that smart experiences bridge the gap between the digital and physical environments based on advanced technologies, however, it was not clear as to whether these were embedded in Ljubljana's smart initiatives. Nonetheless, Baggio et al. (2020) notes that the simple use of technologies can result in smart initiatives and destinations. Some initiatives were not included as they lacked the technological aspect. Other research was also drawn on to ensure consistency in examples of smart initiatives (see Briciu et al., 2020; Femenia-Serra et al., 2018; Gajdosik, 2020; Jovicic, 2019; Roopchand, 2020; Shen et al., 2020; Xu et al., 2017). Thus, the following initiatives in Table 4.3.1a were chosen for consideration in the study: green supply chains web platform, Taste Ljubljana, Ljubljana by wheelchair mobile application, multisensory museum guided tours, mobile audio guides, mobile parking, digital city guide, electric car sharing, tourist card Urbana and bike sharing scheme.

Other excluded initiatives could be considered traditional tourism initiatives and lacked commonality to previous examples in smart cities and tourism literature. Those excluded were cultural districts mapping, which was concerned with the development of new cultural districts; Ovirantlon- an awareness-raising triathlon to address inclusiveness of people with disabilities; Hiking as a tourist product for promoting the use of footpaths around Ljubljana.

Table 4.3.1a: Smart Tourism Initiatives in Ljubljana (Web-iv)

Smart Tourism Initiative	Details
Green Supply Chains Web Platform	- An initiative connects local food growers to potential buyers via an online platform. The Green Supply Chains web platform was complemented by Taste Ljubljana initiative, which was designed to spread awareness of authentic local food in hotels and restaurants by offering dishes to tourists. This was further promoted on DMO's website.
Ljubljana by wheelchair mobile application	- Mobile application that provides details of wheelchair-accessible locations.
Multisensory museum guided tours	- An initiative that enables interactive tourist experience through technologies that connect with the environment to enable personalised engagement with users of museums.
Mobile audio guides	- Museums with mobile audio guides.
Mobile parking	- Mobile parking application designed to show availability of parking spaces within the city through the integration of sensors.
Digital city guide	- Mobile application that promotes sightseeing routes.
Electric car sharing	- Initiative that enables access to electric cars when not in use. Availability is detected through technologies that sense environment such as cameras and sensors.
Tourist card Urbana	- City card that gives access to attractions as well as show availability of parking spaces and bicycle sharing.
Bike sharing scheme	- An initiative that enables access to tourists through bicycle sharing, which are accessed within destination at bicycle storage containers that can be located via a mobile application. This application

also illustrates the available bicycles and charging stations for electric bikes.

Fyall et al. (2012) state that one of the main reasons given by researchers for lack of studies focused on tourism collaboration is the difficulty in accessing tourism suppliers and organisations responsible for destination management. Ljubljana provided additional advantages in comparison to other possible destinations that were under consideration. A list of smart tourism destinations was compiled based on personal knowledge, information from the smart tourism literature and the tourism industry conferences since there was no publicly available list of smart tourism destinations at the time. This list was subsequently edited based on the criteria of ease of accessibility to destination businesses and resulted in a list of proposed sites in Table 4.3.1b. Ljubljana is the only European destination from the list that is yet to be examined in the literature.

Table 4.3.1b: Proposed Sites for Thesis

(Boes et al., 2016; Copenhagen Post, 2017; Copenhagen Solutions Lab, 2018; ENTER, 2018; Sloveniatimes, 2016; The Guardian, 2012; Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, 2017; Segittur, 2017; Slovenia, 2018; UNWTO, 2017)

Destination	Details	Pros	Cons
Ljubljana	- Capital of Slovenia - Population: 280,000 persons - Tourist arrivals- average 10% annual increase	- 2020 SMARTDest Project - 2019 and 2020 European Capital of Smart Tourism - 2016 European Green Capital - Over 45 smart city initiative including environmental sensor for	- Not as developed as other smart tourism destinations in Europe

			temperature, noise and air pressure, electric car sharing, mobile applications	
			- Access to residents	
Barcelona	- City in Spain - Population: 1.7 million people (six times larger than Ljubljana)	- Host of 1st Smart City Congress in 2011 - Smartest city globally in 2015 - Smart tourism initiative includes smart bus stopes with multilingual applications	- Study site for numerous academic researchers in the past - Context for two PhD proposals presented at ENTER Conference 2018 - Researcher is not a native Spanish speaker	
Copenhagen	- Capital of Denmark - Population: 549, 050 people - Tourists: 10 million annually with 8.1 % increase during 2009 to 2016	- World Smart Cities Award in 2014 - Smart initiatives include mobile guides, wireless internet, data exchange portal for businesses to collaborate - Not a popular site for smart	- Researcher is not a Danish speaker - Challenge of accessing interview participants	

			tourism research	
Montego Bay and Kingston	-	Capital and second city in Jamaica	- Proposed smart city initiatives	- Smart city development is in initial planning and development stage
	-	Country's population- 3 million persons	include wireless internet, LED	
	-	Country's tourist arrivals- 4 million annually	and street sensor lighting system, smart meters and traffic management system	
			- 15,000 Airbnb hosts	
			- 1 gamification mobile touring application	
			- An established Center of Innovation	
			- Personal contacts for data facilitation	
			- Researcher's country of origin	

Ljubljana presented three advantages, which made the study most feasible in this destination. Firstly, most of its population speak English, which was beneficial for the researcher who is a native English speaker. Furthermore, in comparison to Barcelona and Copenhagen, Ljubljana is smaller in size, thus making organisations more accessible considering the researcher's limited funding and time due to visa and PhD programme constraints. Most tourism businesses that were considered for the study were located within 20-minutes bus ride from the main city centre, the Preseren Square; hence, more than one interview could be scheduled per day. Additionally, the accommodation cost in

Ljubljana was subsidised due to contacts at the University of Ljubljana who were key in making arrangements at the University's Postgraduate Dormitory. This was necessary since the researcher had limited funding for fieldwork. Having established the location for the study, it is important to decided on a sample (Yin, 2014).

4.3.2 Sample: Tourism Businesses

The object to be analysed is Ljubljana's smart tourism destination with particular attention on the tourism businesses and practices of smart tourism engagement within the city's tourism industry. Tourism organisations are comprised of different types of suppliers with contrasting and similar interests that are in some way affiliated with the tourism industry within a destination. To begin, a purposeful interview sampling technique was employed through which a list of potential businesses was developed by reviewing the list of smart initiatives Ljubljana submitted for the European Union smart tourism competition in 2019. This was also in keeping with commonly identified suppliers in smart tourism (see Gretzel et al., 2015b; Koo et al., 2017). A snowball sampling technique was also used to facilitate exposure and connections to other suppliers, as participants identified other relevant members involved in Ljubljana's smart development (Timur & Getz, 2009). This technique did not render much feedback; only two organisations were referred to the researcher during the second phase of data collection.

Connections and referrals were made by the researcher at international travel tradeshow namely World Travel Market held in England in November 2018, which was prior to data collection as well as ITB Berlin held in Germany in March 2019, which was during data collection. From February 1 to May 24, 2019, a total of 61 organisations were contacted via email with follow-up calls and emails being done after sending the invitation for interview by email. Then, another set of calls were done a week after potential participants confirmed receipt. In some instances, these follow-up calls continued for weeks as the relevant person was out of office or still indecisive. For instance, one entity was contacted on February 1, 2019, but did not decide until May 21, 2019. Table 4.3.2a provides details of the outcome, which illustrates that 31 participants accepted the interview request while 16 did not respond and 14 declined.

Table 4.3.2a: Responses by Potential Participants

Response	No response via calls or emails	Decline with reason- no interest	Decline with reason- time constraints	Decline with reason- reference to another organisation	Decline with reason- non-disclosure agreement	Accept
Number	16	7	5	1	1	31

The study's interview participants were from hotels, attractions, destination management organisation, transportation sector, educational institutions, technology company and the municipal government (see Table 4.3.2b). Government was represented by G, tourism supplier S, supplier with expertise/ background relevant to smart and working on government projects SEG, and expertise/ background relevant to smart and working on government projects EG.

Table 4.3.2b: Organisations Interviewed

Business Code in NVivo	Organisation Type	Number
S	Attractions	8
G	Destination Marketing and Services	3
EG	Educational Institutions	2*
S	Lodging Facilities	9
S	Restaurants	4
SEG	Technology Companies	1*
S	Tourism Consulting Services	1
S	Transportation Service Providers	3
	Total	31

*Participants from that business can be categorised as being involved in other types of organisations due to their multiple affiliations

Efforts were made to reach out to those entities that were not listed in smart initiatives to reflect a more holistic picture of the influences of supplier engagement in smart tourism initiatives. According to Waitt (2005), these businesses are useful for providing counter discourses. Responses were futile.

A common feedback was that individuals did not see the need to partake in a study concerning initiatives that they were not participants. Furthermore, based on Foucault (1979), one must focus on authorities of delimitation to gain an understanding of discourses. These are individuals who are key participants and are able to provide accounts of happenings regarding smart tourism in Ljubljana based on their inclusion in the process. Individuals considered for participation were mainly responsible for forging and developing marketing programmes with other businesses, of which engagement in smart tourism was just one aspect. Therefore, representatives within the proposed businesses such as information technology experts at hotels or front office executives were not considered since Ljubljana's smart destination initiatives were not within their scope of responsibilities. During follow-up calls and emails, the researcher clarified with the representatives in dialogue to ensure the correct participant was being reached.

The sample size is based on the research paradigm taken by a study (Boddy, 2016). Social constructionism draws mainly on qualitative data collection methods. Based on the inductive nature of qualitative work, the sample size is smaller than those used in quantitative work as the focus in qualitative research is on details and meanings (Goertz & Mahoney, 2012). According to Starks and Brown Trinidad (2007), each participant can generate rich data, making large samples not a necessity. This type of analysis can utilise a simple individual to understand their reactions to discourses and compare the data to other types of documents. The quantity is not imperative as an individual being subject to a particular discourse means others are also possibly subject to it.

The size can also be influenced by data saturation (Silverman, 2014). Data saturation, defined as generating no new codes (Bragaru et al., 2013), was experienced at the third phase of data collection where it was recognised that individuals repeated similar narratives in the interviews. Nevertheless, the formation of new meanings from the dataset and process for thematic and discourse analysis is always possible. Braun and Clarke (2019) remind us that the process of thematic analysis is dependent on interpretations:

“attempting to predict the point of data saturation cannot be straightforwardly tied to the number of interviews (or focus groups) in which the theme is evident.... coding and deeper analysis do not inevitably reach a fixed end point – instead, the researcher makes a situated, interpretative judgement about when to stop coding and move to theme generation, and when to stop theme generation and mapping thematic relationships to finalise the written report” (Braun & Clarke 2019, p.10).

Braun and Clarke (2019, p.11) continue to say that it is

“a pragmatic exercise – not disconnected from what is acceptable or normative: in the local context; in the discipline; to the reviewers and editor of a particular journal; to a particular funding body; to external examiners for a thesis; within the time or financial constraints of a project; and many other factors separate from research design or analytic method.”

Despite this, they provide researchers with some recommendations since scholars may still be asked to explain data saturation in their future studies. Details consist of understanding the philosophical assumptions as discussed previously and implementing the use of a codebook (see Table 4.7.1a). The actual methods that were used for collecting data from suppliers within the destination will be discussed in Section 4.4.

4.4 Qualitative Data Collection Methods

Detailed analysis of a case study is possible through a variety of data (Yin, 2014). This enables the researcher to capture the multiple representations of a smart destination and perspectives of engagement. This thesis uses qualitative data collection methods that can generate meanings that can contribute to theoretical development (Silverman, 2005), which is in keeping with the aim.

A variety of primary and secondary data collection methods have been linked to smart tourism and collaboration research. Documents and interviews are mainly used within tourism collaboration studies. For instance, Reed (1997) collects information from documents such as newspapers and tourism development plans in order to check for consistency of data garnered using interviews and observations. This ensures that the results are reliable and can be reproduced (Decrop, 1999). Lin and Simmons (2017) also use documents in their study on public participation in Chinese tourism collaborative activities. The newspaper and government policy documents contained information regarding the past and long-term plans for the destination. The data provided background data that informed the interview stage of the research. Lin and Simmons (2017) refer to this as means of improving the credibility of findings.

In comparison to tourism collaboration, very few smart tourism studies were qualitative, which included those associated with DMSs (see Table 4.4a). Martins et al. (2020) most recently note that their use of quantitative data collection methods was as a result of not being able to research tourism suppliers for interviews. Those that were qualitative mainly relied on interviews (see Buonincontri & Micera, 2016; Del Chiappa & Baggio, 2015; Femenia-Serra & Ivars-Baidal et al., 2018; Polese et al., 2018), documents (see Boes et al., 2016; Buonincontri & Micera, 2016; Femenia-Serra & Ivars-Baidal, 2018) and online data (see Boes et al., 2016; Buonincontri & Micera, 2016; Gretzel & Collier de Mendonca, 2019). No studies were found that

focused on smart tourism engagement or meaning of smart tourism from the perspective of suppliers.

Table 4.4a: Studies on the Influences of DMS

Reference	Aim	Data Collection Tool	Factors
Sigala (2013)	To examine the adoption of destination management systems- an inter-organisational information systems approach	Questionnaire And focused group	Perceptions of the DMO, organisational and managerial, environmental, technological features
Cobos et al. (2009)	To assess the factors that affect implementation of Web-based destination marketing activities	Surveys	Organisational size, financial resources and technological expertise
Wang (2008)	To assess the critical factors affecting DMS	Survey questionnaire	Marketing strategies, organisational financial resource, the firm's technology environment
Collins & Buhalis (2003)	To explore the factors for successful DMS implementation	Focus group, qualitative questionnaire and mail survey	Technology and funding availability, Demand from consumer and industry practitioners
Bedard et al. (2008)	To understand the conditions for successful implementation of DMS	Face-to-face and phone interviews	Trust in facilitator, organisational training, technological benefits
Martins et al. (2020)	To ascertain the factors that contribute to the implementation and success of DMS for testing two conceptual models	Questionnaire survey	DMO characteristics of involving stakeholders, destination context and characteristics of the DMS

Multiple qualitative data collection methods are used in this thesis and therefore is considered a multi-method research and not a mixed methods study (Creswell, 2015). More than one method was used for each research

question in order to gather an in-depth understanding of the construct being explored and capture the multiple realities of the suppliers. Like Lin and Simmons (2017), the use of multiple methods is also used as a means for enhancing the trustworthiness of findings in this thesis. The specific methods used will now be discussed. Each data source was aligned with specific objectives being pursued by the study. Table 4.4b provides an example for those specifically related to the factors that influence supplier engagement.

Table 4.4b: Research Objective, Associated Data Collection Methods and Their Application

Research Objective 3	Method	Objective of Using the Method	Specific Tools
To explore suppliers' perspectives of the factors (specifically power) that influence engagement in smart tourism	Documents	To identify the suppliers and the types of power - This allows the researcher to gain an understanding of power within the collaboration	Newspapers, reports and brochures (in print and online)
	Interviews	To understand the relational status of the supplier in the network, their roles, the reasons for involvement and any given designations that identify suppliers as members of the smart tourism ecosystem To explore how smart initiatives aided tourism development	Semi-structured interviews
To explore suppliers' perspectives of the factors (specifically legitimacy) that influence engagement in smart tourism	Documents	To identify the social space in which smart tourism suppliers interact To investigate the ethical and moral perspectives of organisations through their purpose, goals and values	Organisation's mission, objectives, future plans Ljubljana's Strategic Development

			and Marketing Plan
	Interviews	To generate greater insights as to the current beliefs, happenings, rules and culture within the organisation and their influence on smart tourism engagement To explore what are the shared resources To understand the historical context of the shared space	Semi-structured interviews
To explore suppliers' perspectives of the factors (specifically urgency) that influence engagement in smart tourism	Documents	To understand urgency in terms of criticality, that is, the importance of a claim or relationship to an organisation	Organisation's mission, objectives, future plans
	Interviews	To explore urgency in terms of time and a supplier's interest as well as ascertain the reasons for urgency being a facilitator or inhibitor of engagement	Semi-structured interviews
To explore suppliers' perspectives of the factors (specifically frequency) that influence engagement in smart tourism	Review of Online Platforms	To examine the structure of the online aspect of smart tourism ecosystems	Review of mobile applications and websites
	Interviews	To understand communication intensity, ease of contact, and the process for information exchange among suppliers	Semi-structured interviews

The specific qualitative data collection methods used to fulfil the objectives of this thesis are both primary and secondary data, which will be further discussed below.

4.4.1 Primary Data: Semi-structured Interviews

The thesis focuses on garnering suppliers' perspectives; hence, the primary data collection method was semi-structured interviews (Decrop, 1999; Willig, 2011). These interviews provide flexibility using closed questions that require short answers and open questions that encourages discussion according to themes (Wilson, 2010). In comparison to other possible qualitative data collection methods, interviews give researchers the opportunity to observe verbal and non-verbal communication from participants. However, interviews do present disadvantages such as restriction to asking sensitive questions and as well as being timely to prepare and execute (Wilson, 2010). Despite the disadvantages, interviews are commonly used data collection tools in collaboration studies (Medeiros de Araujo & Bramwell, 2002; Reed, 1997; Timur & Getz, 2009; Schofield et al., 2018; Xue & Kerstetter, 2018).

Table 4.4.1a provides a sample of the interview questions along with respective themes such as general details and influences of engagement. An extended interview schedule is presented in Appendix 2. The questions represented a combination of probes that was suitable for gathering relevant and in-depth insights.

Table 4.4.1a: Interview Questions

Theme of Question	Questions for Participants
General Details	1. First, can you introduce yourself? What is your role here and how long have you been affiliated with the business?
General Details	2. Tell me about your business. Why was it established? What is your vision? Who are your customers? What do you offer?
Context of Destination	3. You've been around for (time period- X years/months), can you tell me how has tourism changed in the destination that you operate? Do you think it has changed over the years, for example: more businesses, overcrowding, more

	businesses, different rules for business? What has it changed in the city?
Meaning of Smart Tourism and Rationale for Smart Destination Development	4. What is your understanding of smart or smart tourism? What does smart tourism mean to you? What caused the development of smart tourism initiatives in Ljubljana?
Influences of Engagement	5. Why did you become involved in smart tourism? Did your business' vision coincide with the need to help the destination develop its vision of enhancing experiences and deal with destination management? Did your concern for Ljubljana's growing industry play a role?
Influences of Engagement	6. Being a part of tourism industry and smart tourism in Ljubljana, are there any guidelines you have to abide by? How do you know what they are? How do they work?

The interview questions were guided by the conceptual framework developed in the literature review. The factors were difficult to operationalise into interview questions. At first, the researcher reviewed a variety of studies within tourism collaboration literature that drew on similar factors as previous research could serve as a guide for developing questions for participants. Very few provided examples of the interview questions. Nonetheless, the process resulted in the following draft questions being formulated by the researcher for this thesis:

- Do you feel compelled to engage in smart tourism initiatives in order to contribute to managing the challenges? Is your decision influenced by them, why/why not?
- Have you collaborated with other businesses enrolled on the system and why?
- Do you have shared systems with any of the other suppliers?
- What role does government/DMO play in your business' adoption?
- Were there any established rules or norms of behaviour for participation in this smart initiative? How was this communicated and how do they work?

- What is your perception on engagement? What influenced your participation in the initiative?

These drafted questions were complex as pointed out by the researchers' supervisors. They were practiced out loud by the researcher and tested on colleagues to see responses. Feedback showed that the questions needed to be shorter and with simpler words to make them more conversational. Changes were made, for instance, instead of asking "what is your perception of engagement?", the question was "how do you feel about engagement?". Questions surrounding power were even more difficult to operationalise as tourism collaboration scholars such as Xue and Kerstetter (2017) illustrate in their own examples of questions where you could not directly point out the question related to power. It was concluded that it was important to garner suppliers' feedback about tourism, smart tourism, development and involvement. Since these questions were being crafted for semi-structured interviews, the process would allow for follow-up questions during conversation. Care was taken to ensure that the research exercised flexibility during the interview phase, allowing data to emerge from its natural setting (Yin, 2014).

The first part of the interview was comprised of close-ended questions that can encourage further qualitative inquiry (see Table 4.4.1a), although these types of questions are usually designed for generalisation of findings across populations (Somekh & Lewin, 2011). Questions were geared towards ascertaining organisational information and participant involvement in collaborative initiatives within the destination. The second section included open-ended questions on the specific themes under study to allow probing and discovery of the factors that influence smart tourism supplier engagement. This allowed for exploration and gathering vast amount of data for mapping themes (Collis & Hussey, 2009). It also revealed unanticipated concerns (Somekh & Lewin, 2011).

A total of 24 semi-structured interviews were completed, which represented 31 separate businesses. Among the 24 participants, some managed the marketing and management practices of more than one business. As a result, these individuals were able to provide insights into multiple businesses. Some participants provided further materials regarding their engagement in smart initiatives and Ljubljana's tourism industry, including company documents and promotional material. Most of the interviews were conducted in person in Ljubljana, on the work premises of each participant during office hours. They lasted from 20 minutes to one hour and six minutes and were digitally recorded. During data collection, suppliers were limited with their time since the interviews were held during business hours. One participant who had a scheduled interview was not able to attend the session and asked that the questions be emailed for completion. Table 4.4.1b captures details of the

interviews in terms of the type of establishment, specific location at the organisation, length and date of interview. The interviews were assigned business codes such as G, S, EG and SEG, which were explained in Section 4.3.2.

Table 4.4.1b: Details of Interviews

Business Code	Type of Establishment	Interview Location at Organisation	Participant Code	Period of Interview	Length of Interview (Minutes)
S	Accommodation	Restaurant	1	April 2019	51
S	Accommodation	Outside sitting area	2	April 2019	56
S	Accommodation	Restaurant	3	April 2019	45
S	Accommodation	Restaurant	4	April 2019	45
S	Restaurant	Front of house	5	April 2019	45
G	Attraction	Lobby	6	February 2019	30
S	Accommodation	Lobby	7	April 2019	46
G	Destination marketing and services	Office	8	April 2019	56
S	Restaurant	Front of house	9	April 2019	
S	Restaurant	Front of house	10	February 2019	56
S	Accommodation	Office	11	February 2019	23
S	Attraction	Office	12	February 2019	43
S	Tourism consulting services	Office	13	February 2019	31
S	Accommodation	Lobby	14	April 2019	53
G	Destination marketing and services	Office	15	February 2019	40
S	Attraction	Lobby	16	February 2019	30

G	Destination marketing and services	Meeting room	17	February 2019	40
S	Restaurant	Front of house	18	February 2019	32
S	Attraction	Office	19	February 2019	57
S	Attraction	Office	20	February 2019	57
S	Transportation service provider	Office	21	February 2019	20
S	Transportation service provider	Office	22	February 2019	20
G	Accommodation	Lobby	23	April 2019	59
S	Attraction	Via telephone	24	March 2019	20
S	Attraction	Office	25	March 2019	40
S	Transportation service provider	Office	26	March 2019	30
S	Attraction	Staff communal area	27	February 2019	22
S	Accommodation	-	28	May 2019	-
SEG	Technology company	Via Skype	29	June 2019	51
EG	Educational institution	Via Skype	30	June 2019	60
EG	Educational institution	Via Skype	31	July 2019	66

In addition to the semi-structured interviews, secondary data collection methods were used to fulfil the objectives of this thesis. These methods will be examined below.

4.4.2 Secondary Data: Documents, Websites and Online Information

Data was also gathered via sources that were not directly crafted for this study. The process of collecting data from secondary sources is not novel in tourism collaboration studies. Like Lin and Simmons (2017), this data collection method is used as a means for enhancing the trustworthiness of this thesis. Secondary data consist of documents and online pages (specifically webpages and smart platforms). Documents can provide details for understanding the values and beliefs of businesses and individuals. Data include company's core

beliefs, mission, objectives, plans and location (Silverman, 2005). Online data was also collected. Previous studies on tourism collaboration have utilised online data from websites to investigate collaboration patterns, though to a lesser extent (Ying et al., 2016).

Details regarding the type of documents and online data can be found in Tables 4.4.2a and 4.4.3b. The data was also assigned data source letters such as online platforms OP, on-site documents OD, reports and plans D as well as websites W. The names of documents and websites were further assigned pseudonyms in order to aid anonymity of organisations and individuals as well as ease of identification by researcher in data analysis, for instance, Doc-bc, Doc-ff, Doc-mf, Doc-gs, Doc-gt, Doc-utt, Doc-li, Doc-mf, Doc-pla, Doc-pp, Doc-sccs, Doc-sl, Doc-sr, Doc-ts, Doc-vl, Web-cm, Web-eu, Web-ia, Web-lju, Web-lv, Web-lvi, Web-m, Web-si, Web-stc, Web-ts, Web-twe.

Other source letters include fieldnotes represented by F (see example in Appendix 6) and interview - I. For participants with more than one recording, these were labelled using numbers. The break in recording was sometimes due to internet disconnection, change of location or the participant abruptly continuing to share information after the interview ended when the voice recorder was turned off.

An example of one of the documents is presented in Appendix 5. These were chosen based on their applicability to specific research questions as noted in Table 4.4. Some of the documents collected were duplicates since more than one entity had the same promotional material due to marketing collaborations. Also, some of the information that was presented in company brochures were also on their webpages.

Table 4.4.2a: List of Documents

Document Code	Document Type	Primary Target Audience for Document	Document Name	Year of Document
OD	Conference	Conference attendees- those involved in smart development	Smart Cities Conference Proceedings	2019

D	Planning Documents	Tourism practitioners	Development Plan and Policies of Slovene Tourism	2007
D		Tourism practitioners	Destination Ljubljana Tourism Strategy	2014
D		Tourism practitioners	Strategy for the Sustainable Growth of Slovenian Tourism for 2017- 2021	2017
D	Presentation	Public bodies and citizens in Ljubljana	Mobility Practices in Ljubljana and Surrounding Areas	2016
OD	Promotional Material	Tourists	Tourist Guide and Map of Ljubljana	2015
		Tourists	Ljubljana- European Green Capital Leaflet	2016
OD		Tourists	Tourism Organisations' Brochures	
W	Report	Business executives in Ljubljana	Ljubljana Forum Agenda and Report	2019
W		Tourism practitioners	Slovenia Tourism in Numbers	2017
W	Speech	Tourists, citizens, public and private organisations in Ljubljana	Smart Ljubljana: Are Attractive Smart Cities More Successful?	2018

Table 4.4.2b: Online Pages

Online Pages Code	Page Type	Organisation / Name of Platform	Number
W	Webpage	Attractions	14
		Destination Marketing and Services	16

		Lodging Facilities	2
		Local and National Government	9
		Restaurants	2
		Regional Institution	1
		Transportation Provider	2
OP	Online/ Smart Platform	Bicycle Sharing	11
		Electric Train	1
		Green Scheme	1
		Nexto	2
		Taste Ljubljana	1
		Urbana Card	7
		Wheelchair Application	21
Total		90	

Having established the methods, the researcher had to ensure various measures were taken to successfully execute fieldwork. These activities are examined in the next section.

4.5 Preparation for Data Collection

There are five requirements for preparing to collect data for a case study: the skills, training, protocol, screening cases and a pilot case study (Yin, 2014). First, a researcher should be trained in order to protect the participants. For participant protection, an ethical approval request and participant form were submitted to Nottingham University Business School Research Ethics Committee in December 2018. These included details of the case study protocol: overview of the case, data collection plan and themes of the interview questions. A favourable outcome was given on February 15, 2019. Subsequently, potential participants were invited to partake in the study via a formal email with an attached participant consent form that informed them of their protection and interview procedure (see Appendix 1). For anonymity, a table capturing the name and role of each participant was not included.

Participants' quotes presented in the findings chapters will also not include the organisation or role of the individual. The specific time and date of interviews were not given previously in Table 4.4.1b for same reason.

Researcher training was done in the form of self-training via books such as Yin (2014) that informed the researcher of how to develop a case study design. The researcher participated in central short courses training offered by the University of Nottingham. The courses were Introduction to Qualitative Research, Further Qualitative Research and Research Interview Skills. Using the skills and knowledge gained, an interview schedule was drafted. A researcher should also have the right skills. These include asking the right questions (see Appendix 2), being a good listener, being adaptive to situations, avoiding bias and understanding the issue being researched (Yin, 2014). After every interview, the interviewer reflected on these key skills and made note of the necessary adjustments to be applied for the next interview. The main adjustments were learning to be a good listener and asking the right follow-up questions. Letters of gratitude were also drafted to be sent to participants immediately after each interview was conducted.

Pilot studies were also done for research preparation. Lists of potential destinations and suppliers were published from the United Nations World Tourism Organisation's Smart Tourism Conference and European Union's Competition for Smart Tourism Capital of the Year 2019. Businesses within different smart tourism destinations were contacted for pilot interviews, specifically those from the destination management organisations, as they would have been able to recommend other businesses that could be considered for the study. Five organisations confirmed participation from a list of 21 contacts. Telephone interviews were subsequently arranged with representatives during February and April 2019 (see Table 4.5 below).

Table 4.5: Pilot Interviews

Destination	Participant Code	Period of Interview
Barcelona/Madrid	1	February 2019
Helsinki	2	February 2019
Amsterdam	3	February 2019
Copenhagen	4	April 2019
Copenhagen	5	April 2019

The interview questions proposed were confirmed. The pilot test also gave the interviewer opportunities to practice conducting interviews. Unbeknown of the researcher's intention to focus on Ljubljana, one pilot study participant even

recommended that representatives in Ljubljana be included in the study. One of the drawbacks of the pilot studies was that they were conducted via phone, which would not be the case for the actual interviews in Ljubljana.

Nonetheless, the process yielded useful information. The contrasting results across the pilot cases proved how different Ljubljana was from other smart tourism destinations explored in the pilot study. For instance: one of the pilot cases in Amsterdam placed more emphasis on the relational factor of urgency to solve destination issues as being the reason for engagement in smart destination initiatives. A similar emphasis was not seen in the case of Ljubljana, which will be discussed in Chapter 6.

In addition to the skills necessary (Yin, 2014), the researcher had to apply for a Schengen visa, which allowed access to Slovenia. A 90-day visa was granted for the period of February 15 to May 15, 2019. Then, another application was made in September 2019, however, this was not without challenge. The researcher had to supply additional documents and permission letters from representatives in Ljubljana. While the visa office representatives were not clear as to why this was needed, it may have been associated with one of the following reasons: the researcher's third Slovenian visa application in less than a year and purpose of visa being linked to a conference. A copy of the letter of guarantee needed and subsequently approved for the visa is available in Appendix 4. The visitor visa was granted for one year. The researcher was not able to utilise the visa in its entirety due to limited funds for travelling and the pandemic. A full immersion into the setting with assistance from locals could have provided greater insights. A deeper level of analysis may have been possible in the absence of this limitation. Jamal and Getz (1995) recommend a longitudinal study for examining the collaborative process over a period of time, which can be noted by future researchers. This will also provide the opportunity to pursue other analytic methods based on micro interactions. The following section will reflect further upon the fieldwork.

4.6 Fieldwork

The data was collected in three phases. It was not possible to garner confirmation from all organisations during the same period. Moreover, the breaks between the periods gave the researcher time to transcribe as well as observe preliminary findings. The phases will be examined in Section 4.6.1-4.6.3.

4.6.1 Phase 1

Phase one was the first field visit to Ljubljana (February 2019). The aim of this visit was to garner data from confirmed participants and establish additional

connections with suppliers within the tourism industry who were currently involved in Ljubljana's smart tourism initiatives. The researcher had visited Ljubljana in 2018 for a tourism conference but is not a native of Slovenia or familiar with the tourism businesses in Ljubljana. Hence, this phase one visit was designed to enable familiarity with the site and the participants.

Prior to the first field visit, introductory discussions via telephone and email helped the researcher to locate the key participants within some establishments who agreed to participate in face-to-face interviews. An example of one of the researcher's itinerary is presented in Appendix 3. These sessions lasted for two weeks. Each session began with an introduction of the interviewer, discussing the purpose of the study and format as well as confirming receipt of signed consent form. After the interviews, the researcher was also able to observe the business surroundings, sometimes via guided or unguided tours of the front office area and showcase of product such as rooms and museum displays. At that time, interview participants also shared promotional material regarding the business and those shared with tourists (customers) for promoting the organisation. Two hundred and fifteen photos and videos of Ljubljana were captured too during observation but were not included in data analysis, especially since some images were already online or found in documents. During the first fieldwork, contacts from the University of Ljubljana were also spoken to in order to ascertain whether they had direct contacts with persons from other tourism organisations or who did not respond to the interviewers' request.

Based on findings in phase one, it was observed that the smart tourism initiatives involved were predominantly publicly-owned organisations. As a result, it was concluded that the study should expand to include other tourism businesses that were privately owned. This was done to diversify the sample. The researcher started to make initial contacts to setup interviews while still in Ljubljana, but efforts proved futile. Based on feedback from previously interviewed businesses, the researcher was made aware that some would be attending the world's leading travel show, that is, ITB Berlin. A visit to Berlin in Germany was scheduled for the period of March 8 to 10, 2019. The researcher spoke with five hospitality and tourism executives, of which three were relevant for the study. The researcher also received a comprehensive list of the approved tourism businesses within Ljubljana that was used to further target businesses.

4.6.2 Phase 2

A second field visit was arranged for two weeks (April 16-30, 2019), which represented phase two of the data collection process. Phase two involved garnering data from public and private sector organisations involved in smart

tourism initiatives. An additional question was also added to the interview session regarding the role that social, political and cultural discourses played in influencing supplier engagement. This was one of the themes that came out from the first field visit. The researcher spent time understanding the history and culture of Slovenia through different tours organised by the DMO and private entities. The research also had the opportunity to interview two businesses that were not previously scheduled. Both participants shared their perspectives with the researcher in person in Ljubljana but refused to give consent to be included in the study.

The period chosen for the second field visit negatively impacted the number of participants who were willing to participate in the sessions as some persons took vacation during the period or had shorter work weeks. This was due to the following holiday periods in Slovenia: April 19 to 22 is the Easter period, April 27 is the Day of Uprising Against Occupation and May 1 and 2 are May Day holidays. Against this background, another field visit was arranged, requiring the researcher to submit another Schengen visa application. The next visit had aimed to further explore the perception of technology and sustainability, and how it influenced suppliers' decisions to engage in smart tourism since this was a major point that surfaced during some interviews from the second fieldwork. It was previously noted that data saturation occurred during this phase as most of the data was in fact being repeated. However, it was at this phase that some participants also started to make clear and direct mentions of their disengagement with technology initiatives, which was a new point being raised particularly by non-participants.

4.6.3 Phase 3

During the summer, marked as phase 3, three interviews were scheduled via Skype. This has been noted in the Table 4.4.1b presented previously. It was difficult to contact suppliers since summer was another peak season for Ljubljana's tourism organisations.

Another visit was scheduled for September 15-18, 2019. Scheduling the third visit was also not without difficulty as the Embassy required an official letter from the organisers that were hosting the Smart Conference in Ljubljana. This delayed the process. On that visit, the researcher attended a Smart Conference that allowed for further collection of documents and observations. Observation and interview notes were made during and as soon as the meeting and events were completed (see Appendix 6). This is the time one can most accurately remember details (Wilkinson, 2008). The researcher also had the opportunity to further discuss the study with one possible participant who provided novel insights but declined inclusion in the study.

4.6.4 Treatment of Collected Data

Two databases were established to store and organise the data received from the fieldwork. After the interviews, documents were stored in a folder and stored in a secured bag, which was only accessed by the researcher. The audio files of the tape-recorded interviews were uploaded to a password-protected computer. Upon return to the University of Nottingham, documents were scanned and stored on a password-protected computer. Also, the interviews were transcribed by the researcher in order to record the participants' responses and to gain familiarity with the text prior to data analysis and become efficient in the coding process (Gibbs, 2010). During the transcription process, the names were anonymised by replacing the actual names with pseudonyms first using alternate names and then numbers. By using NVivo, a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software, the name of participants can be converted into codes. This ensures the safety of the participant and researcher (Gibbs, 2010).

Originally, the data was transcribed based on the spoken words only. After the researcher became familiar with the data, notes were made on the end of each transcript summarising the participants' understanding of smart and perspectives on engagement. Notes made include the following that described smart tourism: "technology, experience, promotional tool, information system, collaboration, public business system, project, unsure". It was due to this initial familiarisation stage and based on the advice of supervisors that it was deemed necessary to transcribe the data again using the Jefferson Lite procedure, which could illuminate the aspect power. Jefferson Lite is a popularly applied transcription method used by conversation analyst that was developed by Gail Jefferson (Potter & Hepburn, 2005). It is a transcription method that captures the elements of conversation such as emphasis and pauses. The symbols that were applied with examples from the data are shown in Table 4.6.4. A total word count of the transcriptions reflecting only participants' narratives would be erroneous due to the inclusion of the symbols. This method was not used to support the analysis after further consideration by the researcher as findings did not produce novel and sufficient insights during the data analysis process. Furthermore, Foucault was not interested in micro relations (Burr, 2015), which was previous discussed. The data was divided and sorted according to source after transcription.

Table 4.6.4: Application of Jefferson Lite Transcription Method

Symbol	Name of Symbol	Meaning	Examples
:	Colon	Extended or stretched sound or word	Private entity ? This space __ is a public space. This is actually a property of (.) the (Participant 7)
(.)	Micropause	Brief pause	
.	Period	Falling vocal pitch	I mean uhh (.) we have with 1 who used to work for here: He has his own restaurant. We have alot of things doing together ? (Participant 18)
?	Question mark	Rising vocal pitch	
\$	Dollar sign	Laughing	
_	Underline	Emphasis	The focus is definitely on local (.) the local public (.) the Slovenian public_ But of course? Ljubljana is becoming (.) greatest_ little cities in Europe and of course_ we want to have part of these people in our venues _ (Participant 20)

4.7 Data Analysis

Data analysis was done in two phases: thematic analysis and Foucauldian discourse analysis (FDA). Both were informed by data gathered from the literature review. Thematic analysis allowed the researcher to unravel the main goals, steps and factors that were associated with supplier engagement. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), a thematic analysis conducted beyond positivism needs to move from focusing on the individuals' thoughts to examining the social context. This calls for a latent thematic analysis, which is similar to a discourse analysis. In absence of an official procedure for latent thematic analysis, this thesis applied FDA, which is consistent with the application of Foucauldian ideas that are also examined in this section.

4.7.1 Thematic Analysis

According to Braun and Clarke (2006), a thematic analysis is a method for locating patterns in data. It can be applied to studies that are underpinned by a social constructionist paradigm, thereby confirming its suitability for this research. A social constructionist approach acknowledges that meanings are reproduced resulting in these studies concentrating on the socio-cultural environment that allow individuals to develop experiences and meanings (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

In phase 1, the data was analysed based on thematic analysis to reveal what was happening in smart Ljubljana considering the context dependent nature of smart destinations (Gretzel et al., 2015a) and lack of understanding of smart

development and engagement (Mehraliyev et al., 2020). Thematic analysis also allowed the researcher to retain the suppliers' voices. This entailed fulfilling the objective of understanding the general factors that influence supplier engagement as well as the development process.

Braun and Clarke's (2006) steps are the most common thematic analysis procedure used. It is similar to other techniques such as Attride-Stirling's (2001) thematic networks. These steps developed by Braun and Clarke (2006) were crafted for research in psychology, however, has been applied to tourism collaboration studies. Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis took three forms for coding and theme development: deductive, inductive and latent. The codebook represents a deductive, theory-driven framework, as it was informed by the conceptual model presented in the literature review. There are three steps for the development of a theory-driven codebook: operationalise the concepts, review and revise codes within the context of data and establish trustworthiness (DeCuir-Gunby et al., 2011). First, the codes were developed from De Wit's (2017) relational factors, Wang and Fesenmaier's (2007) steps and smart literature. The second step called for examining the codes and how they applied to the data, which is usually during the actual coding process. To ensure the codes were reliable, the research engaged with the definitions provided by De Wit (2017) and Wang and Fesenmaier (2007) as shown in Table 4.7.1. This coding framework is a representation of how it was operationalised. Once the codebook was developed, the process of thematic analyses commenced, which marked the start of the official coding process. These are discussed below.

Table 4.7.1a: Codebook

	Code	Full Definition	Content Description
Relational Factors	Power	A relationship among suppliers in which one supplier gets another to do something that would not have otherwise been done	Organisations within and external to collaboration
	Legitimacy	Principles set by suppliers that are in line with norms, values and beliefs	Rules within the industry like government regulations, tourism development plans as well as morals in the

			form of business values and strategies
	Urgency	Degree to which suppliers' claims call for immediate attention	Immediate action to solve problems
	Frequency	Rate of active communication and interactions among suppliers as well as expectation of future interactions	Ongoing communication with suppliers; previous affiliations with suppliers
Smart Tourism	Rationale	The reason for embarking on smart tourism	Signs of smart tourism being a means of achieving destination competitiveness
Collaboration Process	Assembling	Potential partner organisations assemble to explore the possibility of a collaboration	Issue identification; partner selection
	Ordering	Align resources for collaboration	Establish goals, plans, formalise relationship and rules
	Implementation	Operationalise plans	Stage where ideas are put into action
	Evaluation	A retrospective process	Assessment of plans and goals
	Transformation	Process that determined the future plans for the collaboration and the resulting initiatives	Evolve, continue or complete collaboration

Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis involved six phases: data familiarity, generating initiatives codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes and producing the report. Data familiarity entailed making notes from initial reading. The process of generating codes involved arranging data based on each code. The phase of searching for themes entailed gathering codes according to themes. Then, the themes were reviewed in relation to each other, which was followed by redefining and repositioning themes. Although the coding framework is based on a deductive, theory-driven framework (Braun & Clarke, 2006), the coding process was not limited to this approach. During the process, the researcher allowed new findings to emerge, which facilitated an inductive approach, for instance, uncertainty, organisational and destination size appeared as factors that influenced engagement. Thematic analysis is also a reflective, iterative process that unravels meanings (Braun & Clarke, 2019), hence, themes changed during the coding process. For instance, legitimacy changed to an organisation factor while external organisations, source of economic value, urgency and destination size were removed as main and sub-themes. An example of themes and sub-themes during the second stage of coding data is presented in Table 4.7.1b.

Table 4.7.1b: Overarching Themes, Themes and Sub-Themes for Supplier Engagement

Codes	Sub-Themes	Themes	Overarching Themes
"we have this Mayor of Ljubljana who revolutinise the city I would say" "we have this Mayor of Ljubljana who revolutinise the city I would say"	Individual	Leadership	Power
"the administration" "the City is the main regulator here"	Municipal Government		
"driven by Ljubljana tourism" "the Tourist Information Centre"	DMO	Management	
"This app was developed by..."	Development and Management	External Organisations	

“... covered all the managing processes”				
“what was normal in maybe another uhhh countries like Netherlands and some where were more advanced in this segment but now this is also very advanced in Ljubljana”	Ideas			
“...financed the mobile application...”	Resources			
“We mainly follow.... guidelines”	Business-Related	Obligations		Legitimacy
“We also get this travel and gold certificate”	Industry- Related			
“My concern is overcrowding and pollution” “we made the pressure on them and then the city is now developing”	City	Development		Urgency
“I still believe that you know growth in tourism is not an enemy.”	Tourism Product			
“we can talk to them” “we call them” “we met here in the same road”	Accessibility/Mode of Interaction	Previous Affiliations		Frequency
“we are closely connected to the public on a national level, the public sector” “we work together good because we used to be colleagues”	Familiarity			
“we are all apart of the Ljubljana tourism product” “really apart of the municipality...do alot of collaborative activities with the municipality”	Similarity			
“Limited staff”	Availability of Resources	Business-Focused		Organisational Factors

“this is a disadvantage of a small family conduction hotel”			
“Our core business is to sell rooms”	Business Goals		
“Everything we do, we have our guests in mind”			
“It’s not full price. 6 euros for every visitor in House”	Economic Value		
“We are happy that stakeholders have this feeling for this”	Business Attitude		
“Really young”	Age of Staff	Staff-Related	
“the local ones know alot of things about that and their knowledge is very good”	Employees’ Skills and Knowledge		
“in Ljubljana, we know everybody”		Size	Destination Factors

The final version of the code map for Objective 1 is presented in Figure 4.7.1a. Meanwhile, the final codes with overarching themes, themes and sub-themes for Objective 2 are featured in Table 4.7.1c.

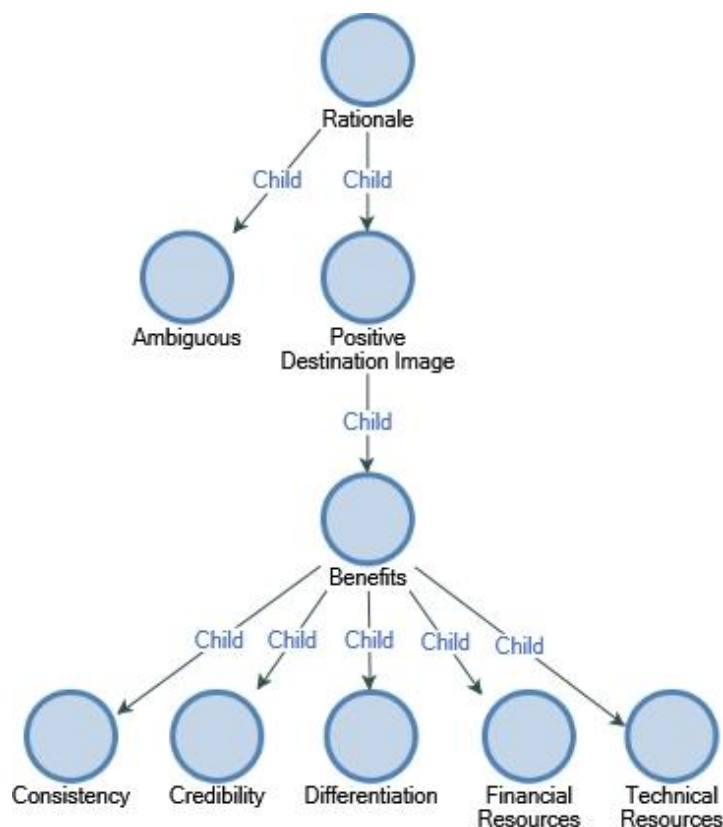


Figure 4.7.1a: NVivo Code Map for Rationale

Table 4.7.1c: Overarching Themes, Themes and Sub-Themes for Smart Development Process

Overarching Themes	Themes	Sub-Themes
Assembling	Resources Prior to Development	Goal
		Ideas
		Infrastructure
	Stakeholder Groups	Means of Contacting Stakeholders
		Participant Affiliation
Ordering	Missing Collaboration Elements	Role
		Designated Roles
		Rules
	Stage Activities	Strategy
		Continued Discussions
		Examination of Ideas
		Initial Development

	Stage Context, Stakeholders, Resources	Context
		Stage Resources
		Stage Stakeholders
	Top-Down Approach	Municipality
		EU
Implementation	Launch	
	Marketing	Growth on Platform
		Smart City
		Smart Tourism
		Marketing collateral
	Stage Context, Stakeholders, Resources	Context
		Stage Resources
		Stage Stakeholders
	Usage	Benefit
		Supplier Engagement
Evaluation and Transformation	Assignment of Roles	
	Evaluation	Maintenance
		Termination
	Transformation	Further Development of Initiative
		Expansion to Other Locations
	Stage Context, Stakeholders, Resources	Context
		Stage Resources
		Stage Stakeholders
	New Processes	

There can be alternate interpretations of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2019) and therefore, this serves as a reflection of the researcher's interpretations. Themes overlapped and pieces of data drew on more than one theory. The following section will examine the process of discourse analysis, which highlights the social constructed nature of the various perceptions associated with smart tourism. Braun and Clarke (2006) note that a thematic analysis within a constructionism paradigm can either draw on latent thematic analysis or discourse analysis, of which the former has not been clearly explained or referenced with examples. Thematic and discourse analyses have been combined and applied in psychology to examine women's experiences of early

menopause (Singer & Hunter, 1999) and understand sado-masochism sexualities and how individuals positioned themselves in relation to various meanings (Taylor & Ussher, 2001). Both analyses are sometimes referred to as thematic discourse analysis to illustrate that the analytic methods are “not mutually exclusive” (Wigginton & Lee, 2014, p.274). Although the applications of the analyses have not been clearly discussed, Taylor and Ussher (2001) conclude that thematic analysis allows one to explore the main themes while discourses analysis facilitate further understanding of the themes based on the constructions of reality. Thematic analysis is first applied to analyse the data and then discourse analysis is used. The researcher has indicated throughout the findings chapter when thematic or discourse analysis was being used.

4.7.2 *Discourse Analysis*

The thematic analysis allowed for understanding the perceptions of reality that existed within Ljubljana regarding smart tourism engagement. At the same time, these perceptions are shaped by social and cultural frameworks. This thesis applies discourse analysis. Discourse analysis provides a critical perspective, acknowledges the socio-cultural context of a subject, recognise that knowledge claims and actions are joint (Burr, 2003). It illuminates how rhetoric can shape practices (Starks & Brown Trinidad, 2007) thereby unravelling subject positions and the reasons for any changes (Fazito, 2016). We have seen in Chapter 1 that complex interactions that occur within smart development and implementation have been challenging. However, Chapter 3 illustrates that engagement and implementation in smart destinations seem unproblematic and linear, therefore, being absent of power struggles that reflect reality. Discourse analysis is applied not to provide truth but discover knowledge claims regarding meaning, implementation, and engagement (Sharp & Richardson, 2001). This type of analysis has proved beneficially, for example, to reveal multiple discourses (see Chapter 5 and 7) and various ways factors are conceptualised in different organisational and collaborative settings (see Chapter 6).

Burr (2003) states that there are two forms of discourse analysis falls within social constructionism, those that are considered to be macro such as those inspired by Foucault. There are others considered to be micro such as those associated with discursive psychology, which is based on ethnomethodology and conversation analysis (Willig, 2011).

Tourism scholars have applied both critical and Foucauldian discourse analyses, which are considered as macro. However, both procedures draw on two different philosophies. In advancing his case for critical discourse analysis, Fairclough (2005, p. 916) states that

“I shall argue instead for a critical realist position which is moderately socially constructivist but rejects the tendency for the study of organization to be reduced to the study of discourse, locating the analysis of discourse instead within an analytically dualist epistemology which gives primacy to researching relations between agency (process, and events) and structure on the basis of a realist social ontology.”

Unlike Fairclough, Foucault believed that individual behaviour whether conformance or resistance is embedded within discourses thereby limiting agency (Curtis, 2014; Schiffrin et al., 2005). Examples of this can also be seen in the findings Chapters 5 (Section 5.2.2), 6 (Section 6.7) and 7 (Section 7.4). Moreover, the discussion earlier on philosophy justified the approach taken, which distances from a realist ontology.

Foucault developed a comprehensive understanding of power and made the following recommendations when exploring the ideas of discourse (Foucault, 1972) and governmentality (Burchell et al., 1991). One should focus on analysing practices not institutions. They should establish the surfaces of emergence, which are the settings that produce discourse. The grids of specifications should be identified, which calls for revealing the differences that exist among varying constructions within discourses. These statements need not be similar but associate with a system. There are also authorities of delimitation and these are figures of authority that shape discourses (Foucault, 1979a).

Foucault (1979a) added that one must analyse the operation of power by examining the social and historical context. There should be an examination of the socio-spatial dynamics of the practice. Specifically, he explained that an architectural apparatus can act as “a machine for creating and sustaining a power relation independent of the person who exercises it” (1979a, p. 201). As such, the architectural layout of the city as well as the boundaries, routes and locations of the smart initiatives were examined as a form of discipline and in relation to governmentality. As a result, maps, both offline in the brochures and online via the platforms, were examined additionally, as they provided a physical context for the smart initiatives.

Foucault’s writings are also absent of a clear method for applying analytic techniques to it. Analysis was informed by Willig’s (2011) steps for conducting Foucauldian discourse analysis (FDA) and following Arribas-Ayllon and Walkderdine’s (2008) guidelines for uncovering governmentality through technologies of power. FDA does not examine how talk is negotiated among participants. Instead, it focuses on the position of participants within power relations since power operates through them. FDA has been applied in a number of fields, including sociology (Kendall & Wickham, 1999), education (Bourke & Lidstone, 2015), politics (Hajer, 2006) and even tourism (Wight,

2018), Willig's (2011) psychologically informed method focuses on connections between the constructions, individuals and behaviours as applied in other tourism contexts (see Hanna et al., 2015; Hanna et al., 2016). It connects technologies of power and discourses to behaviour (Morgan, 2010; Taylor, 2001). This is essential for this thesis as the study examines the role of power in supplier behaviour. Willig (2011) also provides clear step-by-step guidelines on the operationalisation of Foucauldian discourse analysis, unlike other authors such as Kendall and Wickham (1999). These stages were based on Foucauldian ideas of discourse, subjectivity and technologies of power.

Technologies of power, like discursive constructions, operate at a distance (Arribas-Ayllon & Walkerdine, 2008). These mechanisms include "instruments, persons, buildings and spaces [...] act on human conduct from a distance" (Arribas-Ayllon & Walkerdine, 2008, p.116). According to Arribas-Ayllon and Walkerdine (2008), the subject is formed as a result of technologies of power such as knowledge, persons, spaces and instruments. These examples alongside those cited in smart cities literature helped to operationalise Foucault's technologies of power. In order to locate such technologies, one must focus on issues which result in the formation and regulation of the individual, organisation or object. This can be done by examining texts that match one of the following criteria: construct the object, illustrate the object's description or show how the object is regulated. Thus, Arribas-Ayllon and Walkerdine's (2008) recommendation that technologies of power that may exist were taken into account while following the six stages proposed by Willig (2011).

First, one should examine identify the technologies of power and discursive constructions, which meant examining how the research object was constructed. The second stage, discourses requires that the constructions be located within social discourses. The third stage, action orientation, allows the researcher to question why the object is being constructed in a particular way. The four stage, positionings involves identifying the position of persons within discourses. The fifth stage, practice, calls for identifying the practices that are possible due to constructions and positionings. The sixth stage, subjectivity, takes into account how an individual with particular position will view the world.

Discourse analysis calls for greater focus and recording by the researcher to unravel the data. Each transcript was reviewed, and notes were made in a Microsoft Office table (password protected document) to enable familiarisation with data and analysis process. Tabulating the discourse analysis process enables visual representations and clarity of this complex process (Greckhamer & Cilesiz, 2014). Table 4.7.2a provides an example that was done for Objective 4 that required applying Foucault's idea of discourses to explain supplier engagement. The researcher read through the participants' transcripts

while extracting narratives and making notes in accordance with each step. Table 4.7.2b presents the iterative process of Willig’s stage one that was used to explore how smart tourism was constructed. The table captures initial notetaking to second set of coding to final codes. Examples of data extracts with FDA applied can be seen in Figures 4.7.2-4.7.3. Willig (2011) advises that when presenting the data, the headings should reflect what is being investigated, example: repertoires, discourses, technologies of power.

Table 4.7.2a: Tabulating a Participant’s Transcript for Research Object- Smart

Willig’s (2011) FDA		Participant 10
Stage 1	Discursive Constructions	Indecisive, changing views- From unknown to being a not easily defined concept- ‘Smart tourism, ahmm , I don’t know. I always think of you know that everything is less and less individual and personal and more and more you know to be I don’t know itemized’ (l.125) to being about automation and then sustainability’ (l.127- 129)
Stage 1	Technologies of Power	Space: Ownership Limitations with being in the space ‘We were not able to change alot because its somehow protected in this park area.’ (l.10) 1. Dictates action- ‘the hotel. And also the first thing that we offer to guests is electric rent a car ’ (l.200) and promote bicycle sharing and Urbana card- ‘Urbana card. We are selling this’ (l.134) Green Scheme certification Marketing benefits – ‘First this hotel that got this green certificate, 1st in Ljubljana, 1st in Slovenia’ (l.252) Dictates actions, so it’s different from other properties even within its chain of hotels- ‘I would say is very uhhmm I don’t know if I will find the word, different than here. It’s more you know focused really just on bed and breakfast’ (l.252)

Stage 2	Discourses	How is the object spoken about? Constructed as technology and sustainability initiatives that serve the needs of tourists-tourism marketing discourse (product development)- ‘it’s not that you can not have that or that. Again, here it’s good to have some kind of synergy, a bit of that and a little bit of that. Of course we all look also you know ahh not only to have better and better service’ (1.129)
Stage 3	Action Orientation	What is gained from talking in this way? Marketing benefits based on sustainability construction Within marketing discourse, offers value to tourists – ‘offer this to guests...selling this of course to guests’ (1.134) Smart is still really about benefits mainly for tourists and to capture tourists’ attention Before being asked about smart tourism, participant was already talking about sustainability Who is responsible for talking about the object this way? The manager of a private entity that is within a competitive environment
Stage 4	Positionings	What are the subject positions? Positions of: 1. the environmentally-friendly supplier 2. tourism supplier- marketing the business and position it as a brand- no gain from using technology perspective But from sustainability perspective, more attention paid by external stakeholders to the business- ‘we were thinking what to do you know. Not to be just ordinary city hotel. Because just offer rooms and restaurants its not enough’ (1.10) 3. act as an interconnected destination stakeholder by being included in destination happenings- ‘We are included’ (1.218) duty of cooperating with the city due to technologies of power but not an active role in developing smart initiatives- ‘we are always invited and they introduce and then we offer this to guests’ (1.134)

Stage 5	Practice	What are the opportunities available based on the constructions and positionings? What can people do? Focus on marketing (participant was constantly marketing hotel offerings throughout the conversation) Within destination marketing network too, they are expected to assist each other- ‘not only that I am, know that I am not selling maybe Ljubljana, actually we are selling the whole Slovenia ...if some hoteliers step back and there somewhere alone. It's not good ’ (1.99) but can’t make changes
Stage 6	Subjectivity	What can people feel and think based on positions available by discourses? Willig (2011) notes that this is speculative

Table 4.7.2b: Foucauldian Discourse Analysis Applied for Objective 4

	Notetaking and First Time Coding	Second Time Coding	Third Time Coding	Final Time Coding
Discursive Constructions	Technology, Experience, Promotional Tool, Information System, Collaboration, Public business system, Project, Unsure, Tool for Quality Experiences, Buzzword so same as old initiatives, Not hassle free, Fashion	Collaboration Promotion Sustainability Technology	Sameness: buzzwords and fad, collaboration; promotion, sustainability, green Different: management and marketing Sophisticated/newness /improved: tourism experiences, quality of life, efficient, technological Simple, not sophisticated	Technology geared toward improvement, Automatic technology, Dehumanising, Technology for productivity, Technology for tourist pleasure, Initiative that reflects cultural values, Initiative that preserves environment, Collaborative promotion, Tourist experiences, Unknown concept, Continuous state of development

Objectives 4 & 5

KEY: Discursive Object: Smart

Identification of references to Smart (...)

Stage 1: Discursive constructs (...) Technologies of power (...)

Stage 2: Discourses (...)

Stage 3: Action orientation (...)

Stage 4: Positionings (...)

Stage 5: Practice (...)

*Jefferson Lite Symbols deleted for ease of reading

Interviewer: Are you apart of the Taste Ljubljana program [smart initiative] which they have?

Participant 9: No. No (*immediate reaction*). We are not apart (*collective action*) of that (*othering*) because ahmm I don't (*personal decision*) agree with some ahmm what they want to do. Because ah for me traditional means traditional (*original*) and that means ahm Slovenia, 22 this is traditional Slovenian (*nationness*) dish (*product on smart platform*).

Interviewer: What's that?

Participant 9: This (*representation*) is pork roast with mashed potato and onions (*traditional dish*). And always when I remember (*personal memory, experience, values*) you got 2 potatoes, two mashed potatoes and pork roast. It look. When you see that, it looks like it. Alright, I understand kitchen is exactly, uhmm exploding (*changes in culinary*) about the last 5 years, all gastronomy, exploding, alot of ideas changing (*threat to original*) and everything is on the front if you see (*presentation of cultural product*). But if you are traditional, my opinion is that everything (*dish online*) needs to be (*no negotiations or substitutes*) traditional (*represent culture*). Also, on the plate, it needs to be traditional (*presentation in reality, initiative that reflects traditional culture/cultural sustainability: cultural values/satisfaction as a local Slovenian co-opted supplier-local citizen, representative of a group with common beliefs and behaviours*). I understand that we are in the new age and we can improve. Yes but this is not traditional for me. Ahmm I'm looking with my eyes like that.

Interviewer: So what is it that they want you to probably alter?

Participant 9: Ahh I don't know why they ah put out uhmm I try to discuss with them (*exercise agency/co-opted supplier*) but they [DMO] told me nothing but everything (*view is unimportant*) ahmmmm we are not apart of Taste of Ljubljana (*collective resistance-not engaged in smart*).

Interviewer: Did they call you to invite you to the program?

Participant 9: I don't want to do something (personal resistance- not engaged in smart) what they want to do (top-down) because government need to promote (motivation) everyone the same (lack of uniqueness). They told me uhh they have a better reviews on the TripAdvisor (technology of power) and because of that they put them on the Taste (implication) and because of that we are not in (implication-exclusion from smart), I am not sure this is not good (unfairness) because Tripadvisor is the place where everyone can write everything (multiple gazers). This is not a reason why we can't be inside (othering) and when I heard that i thought that ok we are finished (cease negotiation/ passive supplier).

Interviewer: GoOpti, do you work with them?

Participant 9: Of course (positivity), GoOpti, some shuttle (not technology but traditional business). In Ljubljana, everything online and you get a code (automatic/ automatic technology/ technology: something else in charge/ technology expert, passive supplier-invisible supplier) and you open with the code and everything. It's a strange but ok (dehumanizing technology). But tourism is the human (offer in-person experience, interaction/ experience/ marketing offering value, hands-on exchange and delivery of experience/ offer value to clients, maintain standard of hospitality/ co-opted supplier-hospitality professional). I think it's live things. I don't know why they want everything. ahh, changing computer system (technology but different/ resistance to technology in smart). It's ok. I understand technology and everything (aware) but alot of things in the world its something special and you cannot change that (experience resistance).

Figure 4.7.2: FDA Extract for Objectives 4 & 5

Objective 3- Understanding Factor: Legitimacy

KEY: Discursive Object: Management Agreement

Identification of references to Management Agreement (....)

Stage 1: Discursive constructs (...)

Stage 2: Discourses (...)

Stage 3: Action orientation (...)

Stage 4: Positionings (...)

Stage 5: Practice (■)

*Jefferson Lite Symbols deleted for ease of reading

Participant 14: The guidelines (*informal term*) which are accepted on the basis of municipality (*formality*), we are accepting them (*collective action engaged in smart*) by, by, ahhh, we have to do it (*compulsory act*). we have to accept it (*uphold action, definite action legal discourse/legal implications, consequences*) because on one hand there are nothing really very special (*can fulfil obligation*) but on another because we are a part of municipality of Ljubljana (*ownership requirement/management, legal discourse*). The guidelines which are accepted at the municipality of Ljubljana they are automatically transferred to us so we considered apart of the municipality of Ljubljana (*contractual agreement/legal discourse/owner and owned*).

Participant 6: We follow (*conform*) HG's standards (*measurements/ property management agreement/franchise*) and we try to be proactive wherever possible (*flexible reaction*). We (*initiative by the organisation*) built (*accept technology*) first Slovenian Tesla supercharger station in 2014, the vicinity of the highway ensures them to be back on the road quickly and we offer Avant2GO car sharing service (*first movers/private organisation/innovators engaged*). We support electric mobility and try to be innovative. Ljubljana Tourism is very proactive as well and they developed practical and tourism information outlets, digital products, services, spaces and experiences tailored to the needs of consumers, such as mobile audio guides in cultural institutions, a digital city guide, the public transport and tourist card Urbana, etc.

Figure 4.7.3: FDA Extract for Objective 3

Having reviewed thematic and discourse analyses, the following section discusses trustworthiness of the study that was conducted.

4.8 Establishing Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research

Social constructionism, discourse analysis and qualitative methods recognises that there is no one truth but instead many interpretive claims (Nixon & Power, 2007). Triangulation was used in this study and serves as a strategy to improve trustworthiness. This thesis has applied convergent data triangulation since multiple sources of evidence were used to address the same findings. This procedure increases the relevance of findings produced in the thesis (Yin, 2014). It provides more reliable construction of realities (Mathison, 1988). Triangulation has been used in the past for collaboration studies in tourism such as Reed (1997), Medeiros de Araujo and Bramwell (2002) and Xue and Kerstetter (2018).

Within the nursing academic literature, Nixon and Power (2007) provides a rigour framework for ensuring trustworthiness in discourse analysis studies. Table 4.8 illustrates the application of the framework to this study.

Table 4.8: Application of Framework to the Study

Framework Requirements	Application to Thesis
Clear research question: is it appropriate for DA?	See literature review and methodology
Clear definition of discourse and species of DA	See literature review and methodology chapter
Effective use of theoretical framework	See literature review and methodology for parallel perspectives that were drawn on to generate framework and philosophical position
Transparency in analysis methods and application of theory to the analysis	See methodology and findings chapters
Clarity in selection of data	Data align with thesis interest: smart tourism engagement; Data found through sources noted in this findings chapter
Concepts/criteria/strategies to guide analysis	Willig's FDA (2011)

Qualitative research includes interaction within the social context. This interaction facilitates exposure of participants to interviewer's own meanings, ideas and aspects that shape identity. This results in a personal reflection that is presented next.

4.9 Reflection

Upon reflection on the data collection process, the following are aspects that may have impacted participants' perceptions and expressed meanings. During data collection, the author was reminded of her own identity in three ways, which indicated some form of othering. One participant had questioned the need for pursuing Ljubljana as a case in light of the author not being a local or native. The author was neither a Slovenian or tourism supplier based in Ljubljana and had little familiarity with participants, which can affect the level of openness expressed by participants to the researcher. Also, the same participant raised the point of the author being one of the few tourists of a particular background to visit the area but continued by making the point that the destination was becoming more inclusive. The author was also questioned before and after an interview with two participants as to the rationale for a PhD student from the UK to be interested in Slovenia, making note of how financial and time consuming the endeavour may have been. On the other hand, some participants disclosed additional details after the dictaphone was turned off. This could have been the effect of being "gazed" upon. At another point, the researcher felt the position was perceived as being a tourist, resulting in suppliers acting according to their expected role, namely being hospitality sales professionals. For instance, one participant offered a complimentary movie ticket while two offered complimentary lunch.

It was vital that the researcher built rapport to establish trust among participants. During the interviews, participants would mention concepts known to industry practitioners such as online travel agencies and travel tradeshow. These concepts were known to the researcher who garnered over eight years experience in Jamaica's hospitality and tourism industry. Most of that time was spent in sales and marketing in hotels, transportation providers and destination management organisation. Once the researcher acknowledged familiarity with these concepts expressed by the participants, the business representatives seemed to be at ease as greater details were being provided. The research still had to exercise caution in order to maintain role as interviewer to ensure that there was no bias. The trust and rapport that were built also resulted in the researcher being contacted by previous participants to provide insights on future smart initiatives, which has been noted in Section 8.4.

During data collection, transcription and analysis, the following were also areas to be mindful of. Although Ljubljana suppliers spoke English, their conversations were brief. It was noticed that participants had paused seemingly in search of words in some interviews. Hence, the researcher would sometimes try to ease the tension by responding, trying to anticipate what would be said or repeat the question if it seemed to be inaccurately answered. This was unlike the researcher's knowledge and experience with Slovenians in Ljubljana where

Slovenians spoke English with ease. The researcher had visited Ljubljana for a tourism conference in 2018 where she encountered and interacted with Slovenians within and outside of the conference at the airport, hotels, attractions and in transit. In preparing for data collection, a translator was therefore not deemed a necessity. While the brief responses were noticed during fieldwork, the data analysis process, particularly discourse analysis, allowed rich data to emerge. Future research can be pursued to assess whether there are other themes and discourses that can emerge, which are better expressed in Slovene. The collected documents were available in English, therefore, there was no need for translation services.

There was a participant who was also involved who spoke naturally with a high pitch, which influenced the Jefferson Lite transcription. On one of the occasions, two participants were being interviewed in one sitting. From observation, there were facial expressions and tones that seemed to overpower one of the individuals. Even when the individual was given a chance to speak by the interviewer, the participant only spoke very briefly, which was unlike the interaction with the same participant before entering the location of the interview with their colleague. These aspects may have also impacted the study and would have needed to be taken account of especially if a conversation analysis was pursued.

4.10 Summary of Chapter

This chapter has explained the methodology used for data collection and analysis in order to examine suppliers' perspectives on engagement in smart tourism. The thesis is based on a social constructionism, interpretive perspective, which is necessary for understanding the various relationships and processes involved in developing smart tourism (Hunter et al., 2015). It employs a case study approach as engagement in smart tourism is currently under researched and specifically the context of Ljubljana differs in comparison to popularly examined smart destinations in tourism literature as a result of its socio-historical context. Furthermore, there is a need for further case studies in smart tourism (Gelter et al., 2020). This thesis focuses on the single case of smart Ljubljana, which is known as the 2019 and 2020 European Capital of Smart Tourism. From a total of 61 participating tourism suppliers, 31 from 8 organisation types were considered for this study. These business executives are considered key in smart Ljubljana and are consistent with applying a Foucauldian approach since they are considered authorities of limitation (Foucault, 1980).

Qualitative data collection methods are applied, namely semi-structured interviews that enable probing for detecting Foucauldian power as well as documents and online pages that has been gathered from the context of

Ljubljana based on recommendation from Foucault (1980). Interviews were held during the period of February to September 2019. First, the thesis will employ Braun and Clarke (2006) six phases of thematic analysis, which is popularly applied to tourism research. It is used to unravel the themes that can aid in fulfilling the objectives. Then, it applies Willig's (2011) Foucauldian discourse analysis alongside Arribas-Ayllon and Walkerdine (2008) guidelines for technologies of power and Foucault's recommendations. This is done in order to do an examination of the social and cultural contexts that frame perceptions (Pernecky, 2012) as well as unravel power relations for providing a critical perspective (Burr, 2015). The upcoming chapters presents the results from the analysis of data collected during fieldwork and discusses them in relation to the objectives of this thesis.

CHAPTER 5: WHY SMART IN LJUBLJANA TOURISM?

“Ahhm but yes Slovenia will always try to follow the initiatives and jump on the wagons because we know that we are lagging behind”. (Participant 1)

5.1 Introduction

This chapter, representing the first of three findings chapter, is a response to the first objective of this thesis, which is to understand the rationale behind the investment by Ljubljana in pursuing smart tourism. This chapter is focused on answering “why” before proceeding to Chapter 5 that sheds light on “how” smart tourism was undertaken. Thematic analysis was able to uncover valuable insights regarding the rationale; however, discourse analysis allowed for further probing of the social context of the destination. This was necessary having adopted a social constructionist lens that acknowledges the interdependent nature of both the content and the context.

Participant 1’s feedback presented at the start of this chapter is used to set the tone for findings presented here and provide a general feeling amongst the participants. Although Participant 1 did not specifically refer to Ljubljana in the quote above, but rather Slovenia more broadly, the comment was made during an interview about smart tourism development in Ljubljana. Participant 1, while sharing his views regarding Slovenia and specifically Ljubljana’s involvement in smart tourism, noted that the destination had strategically aligned itself with “smart” through the development of smart initiatives. At the time of this study, “smart” was seen as a global trend that Participant 1 thought the destination had recognised the need to be aligned with; in other words, they “jump on the [smart] wagons”. Participation in smart initiatives gave the destination an opportunity to gain global competitive advantage. Also, Participant 1 mentioned that “we are lagging behind”, giving the impression that Slovenia is a lesser developed country. Despite it being in existence for hundreds of years, its admittance into the EU was not until the 21st century and it is therefore seen as a young member. This frames the participant’s response within discourses of Europeanness, which is a topic of concern in the area of destination branding for countries that transitioned to the EU, having previously been a part of Yugoslavia (Galdini, 2018; Majstorovic & Vuckovac, 2016; Viktoria, 2016). Findings reveal that the motivation for engaging in smart tourism at the destination level are to continue reinforcing and promoting the destination’s identity of Europeanness.

The chapter first examines the general rationale for pursuing smart tourism, before turning to the destination brand. While previous destination branding studies have acknowledged the destination’s association with discourses of

Europeanness, this chapter provides new constructions and findings that have not been previously discussed. Unlike Nelson (2012) who refers to Europeanness in terms of geographic space, this chapter illustrates that spatial identity and its various effects (inclusion and exclusion) allow for further association with Europeanness. This draws on Foucault's idea of space as a discourse and technologies of power, of which the latter is yet to be employed in smart literature and destination branding.

5.2 The Rationale and Understanding the Destination's Context

From the thematic analysis, it was not possible to precisely locate the problem that smart initiatives were intended to address in Ljubljana, as the reasons and goals were ambiguous and varied. As observed in one of the documents, an international smart cities expert conducted an interview with the mayor of Ljubljana to understand what it meant to be "smart Ljubljana". The following response from the mayor captured the many problems that were being attended to through implementation of smart initiatives from innovation to managing various industries. The issues identified were vague and seemed to view smart as a cure for many problems in society. This may be based on the view that smart tourism can have an overarching focus and appeal to many different activities from sustainability to experience enhancement (see Gretzel et al., 2015a).

"Under it I understand everything we are doing in the city to raise the quality of life...take care of the environment, health, sports, education, culture, preserve our heritage, build necessary infrastructure in all areas, and at the same time keep pace with the technological development and introduce innovations." (Doc-sl)

Later on, in the interview, the mayor made the connection between pursuing smartness and fulfilling the goal of developing the city's image.

"Together with our residents, diverse experts, non-governmental organisations and the like we create the image of our [smart] city". (Doc-sl)

As Gretzel and Collier de Mendonca (2019, p. 570- 1) note with a European capital of smart destination, a city can "position itself ahead of the pack of other smart destinations." Furthermore, "the European Capital of Smart Tourism initiative...increase the attractiveness of European cities that are awarded the title" (Web-stc). However, it is still not clear how Ljubljana achieves this competitiveness and what kind of image is being created in the destination. Braun and Clarke (2006, p.65) suggest that a study that takes on a social constructionist perspective should acknowledge "the sociocultural contexts, and structural conditions, that enable the individual accounts that are

provided”. The following section reflects on the destination’s past and current constructions to garner further insights.

5.2.1 The Past: Destination Image Concerns and Association with Europeanness

For much of its history, the city and to a wider extent the country of Slovenia was mainly governed by other surrounding countries. Prior to 1918, the country was a part of the Austro-Hungarian empire. In 1941, Slovenia was influenced by Germans and Italians as these two groups of people occupied the country during World War II. By the end of the war, the country was still a part of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which included other countries such as Croatia and Serbia (see Figure 5.2.1). It is important to note that Yugoslavia was first a communist government (Leagues of Communists of Yugoslavia) but transitioned to socialism by the late 1940s.



Figure 5.2.1: Map of the Former Yugoslavia (UN, 2014)

Documents collected noted that during the late 1980s to early 1990s, Yugoslavia’s stability was threatened due to the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe. In 1990, the citizens of Slovenia voted for its freedom as a nation, and it was one of the first countries to do so. That moment meant that

Slovenia's laws superseded Yugoslavia's laws. In 1991, the country gained independence from Yugoslavia. The branding campaign of 1986, "Slovenia-my country" that was designed to raise national awareness may have played a role in the locals' desire for independence (Ruzzier & Petek, 2012).

The period that immediately followed independence brought about concern for economic development. Although Slovenia was able to exist as an independent nation, there were not many infrastructural and business developments afterwards. Tourism had played a role in the restructuring of the destination as a major contributor to its growth. The destination catered to tourists that were interested in a niche tourism product, specifically one located in rural parts of the destination since it was not able to pursue mass tourism due to having a short seashore (Hall, 1998). This was unlike the period of Yugoslavian identity where tourism was based on the coast, the majority of which belonged to neighbouring country, Croatia (Naef & Ploner, 2016).

Though there were developments in rural areas, residents were increasingly concerned about the city's limited social and economic development. Below, Participant 3 described their experience in Ljubljana during the 1990s as being one of few infrastructural developments to aid connectivity and efficiency:

"Before we did not even have a normal highway from M to Ljubljana, it was just a normal regional way. You need to have to come from the Austrian border, G to Ljubljana. You need to have like 2 hours. Now you are here in 1 hour. Roads were built so this crossed over Slovenia north and east, west".

Participant 5 also reflected on happenings within Ljubljana from the perspective of being a resident who was born and grew up in the city. From their recollection, it was clear that the city had little activities that could enhance locals' experiences during the summer period, especially as a youth. Participant 5 shared a similar view to Participant 3 regarding there being limited developments in Ljubljana.

"I was born in Ljubljana. I've been going to school, high school and university...I was an inhabitant of Ljubljana so I really have seen the transformation. So Ljubljana has been empty for the summers. I remember it was like the worse punishment you could experience as a child during the summer holidays. Like a grandmother or grandfather to go for summer holidays elsewhere. You had to stay in Ljubljana because there was nobody in Ljubljana. It was really deserted. From a child perspective. So, the worse punishment was that I did not go out of Ljubljana for the summer." (Participant 5)

In addition to the local concerns, the management of the destination specifically had an issue with how it was being perceived by potential tourists. After gaining independence from Yugoslavia, Slovenia underwent a reimagining

process due to the negative impact that the succession wars had on the former territories including neighbouring countries such as Croatia and Kosovo (Naef & Ploner, 2016). There was complexity and inconsistency in messages and constant changes in Slovenia's branding campaigns. First, it constructed the tagline, "The Sunny Side of the Alps", to demonstrate that it was a destination that was accessible in summer and winter, while also aligning itself geographically with Central, rather than Eastern Europe, but this was unsuccessful (Hall, 2003). In 1996, the destination launched "The Green Piece of Europe", which was its first official campaign to focus on the importance of the environment (Hall, 2000; Hall, 2003) and culture (Hall, 1998). This campaign also explicitly declared Slovenia's "Europeanness".

By 2004, a new branding campaign was launched called "Slovenia invigorates". At this time, Slovenia had joined the European Union. This campaign was not well-received by the public due to the lack of clarity in the message, hence, in 2006, the campaign was terminated. At that time, a new slogan, "Slovenia, a diversity to discover", was introduced in a CNN Europe television advertisement (Ruzzier & Petek, 2012). There was the "I Feel Slovenia" brand campaign launched in 2006. This slogan represented what Foucault calls a technology of power (Burchell et al., 1991), as it urges local and global audiences to embrace the destination as seen in the case of "Live Brand Korea" campaign (Schwak, 2016, p.429). Alongside the campaign, there were articles posted on the country's tourism website that highlighted the term love could be found within the word Slovenia.

"This is a story about Slovenia, the only country with LOVE in its name. Love is a powerful feeling that connects all shades of Slovenian green beauties. With more than half of the country covered with forests, parks and natural reserves, Slovenia charms you with green magic. Every Slovenian, either living in the city or in the suburbs, has his favourite hill only few steps away. Slovenia is green, active and healthy". (Web-si)

This campaign was designed to continue Slovenia's focus on environmental sustainability. Furthermore, it had a simple, clear and consistent message, one that highlighted the destination based on the distinguishing feature of Europeanness. Ljubljana was deemed to be a friendly and loved city in Europe, which automatically disassociated it with the negative Balkan image of being "problematic" (Participant 1), which suggested unrest. Destination brands framed within discourses of Balkanness/Easternness had negative connotations. According to Hall (1998), Balkanness can signify conflict and tension. Majstorovic and Vuckovac (2016, p.154) agree with the term being associated with negative characteristics as they state that

“by belonging to Europe, we become democratic, self-sustaining, and self-confident, while belonging to the Balkans is presented as inherently and essentially bad”.

The destination image continued to be of great concern in 2007. Based on the extract from one of the Slovenia’s tourism plans noted below, the country’s image was perceived negatively by tourists due to its associations with its past as a member of Yugoslavia. This construction was made evident with the use of the phrase “Eastern Europe and the Balkans”.

“In drawing up the promotion and marketing policy of Slovene tourism, the following facts have been taken into account....• low acceptability due to ignorance and stereotypes stemming from Slovenia’s location in Eastern Europe and the Balkans. Furthermore, there is still a tendency to confuse Slovenia with Slovakia. • Consequently, low expectations in terms of quality tourism. • Consequently, expectations for lower prices”. (Doc-pla)

Concerns were raised by Slovenia Tourist Board following the report regarding the brand’s association especially at a time when it was three years into its EU membership. The interest in representation of a destination by tourism practitioners is not new (see Pritchard & Morgan, 2001; Stors, 2020). In 2011, the destination management organisation (DMO) was set up to work on Ljubljana’s place marketing strategy; however, the organisation was officially established from January 2010. The DMO strategically aimed to associate the city’s brand with being “European”, thereby addressing a common issue that was affecting the domain (Gray, 1989), though unlike those mainly focused on in collaborations (see Jamal & Getz, 1995; Selin & Beason, 1991). The following highlights the DMO’s mandate:

“to re-image the city into a lively European capital for tourists. In this way a wide range of tourists from all around the world are attracted all year round, while the global media report on our city as a hidden jewel of Europe...The tourism management field in Ljubljana is one of the most advanced in Europe”. (Web-lv)

There are repeated mentions of Europe, with each focusing on traits that may distance it away from being an unappealing brand. For instance, “lively European capital”, “hidden jewel of Europe” and “most advanced in Europe”. These may also be considered as welcomed traits as destinations globally at that time were trying to create more engaging experiences with the use of technology, hence, the ongoing conversation about smart tourism. As previous studies have noted, countries that were associated with Yugoslavia has since tried to disassociate themselves from this aspect of their past (see Hall 1998, 2000).

5.2.2 *The Present: Continued Reimagining*

According to Nelson (2012), Slovenia seems to be in a state of becoming a European destination. However, as a result of applying discourse analysis, findings show that the country has since cemented its status as an EU member. First, the attention to tradition and culture (example: national dress), which is known to Eastern European destinations (Morgan & Pritchard, 1999) was no longer evident in tourism material during data analysis. Second, on the EU's website, Slovenia had a standardised listing like most members of the EU, which signified completion of membership and inclusion into the union. This is unlike some other listed countries such as Poland that seemed like they were in a transitional state based on the phrase "Poland is currently preparing to adopt the Euro" or Romania that "is currently in the process of joining the Schengen area" (Web-eu). This also revealed the variations in European subjectivities through the application of discourse analysis, hence, there is no singular European subject, thereby associating with pluralised references that Foucault (1980) promotes. Subjectivities can vary based on participation. Slovenia has been excluded to included, but in a state of becoming (Nelson, 2012) to being recognised through participation on different committees and activities. These included EU-funded projects and competing in EU activities such as the "European Food Summit" (Participant 2) and "Green Capital of Europe" (Participant 20).

The maintenance of destination image was still at the top of the agenda in tourism marketing as seen with local resident representation in regional organisations. In 2019, the managing director of Ljubljana DMO was elected as the president of the European Cities Marketing (ECM), which is an association comprising of European DMOs that represent 115 cities and 38 countries. This position was used to further advance Ljubljana as a recognised brand for tourism competitiveness. The managing director also confirmed the move to advance Ljubljana's image by stating the following:

"to be at the forefront of such an association is a great privilege and responsibility at the same time since ECM has an important impact on trends of city tourism. It contributes significantly to my professional life. I first came across the organization in 2004; since then, I have gained valuable experience based on good practices applied in numerous cities, which I share with my team and which can be upgraded in order to further develop the tourism in Ljubljana or we can learn from the challenges of other destinations. We are happy to share our excellent practices since we honestly believe in education by examples in the interests of the common good. At the same time, a membership in such associations also contributes to the promotion, of Ljubljana as a modern and friendly city for both its citizens and visitors". (Web-lv)

This tourism executive associated with the DMO highlights the need for the city to be modern and friendly, which are terms that associate with the European identity (Majstorovic & Vuckovac, 2016). More so, representation is also a technology of power (Burchell et al., 1991), contributing to the shaping of Ljubljana and its people.

Another means of reinforcing identity was through tourism marketing material issued to tourists, which are discussed below. The destination being promoted in these documents reflect national cultural and histories (Wight, 2016), thereby representing what Foucault (1972) described as a surface of emergence as noted in Chapter 2. Europeanness manifests in Ljubljana's tourism marketing material in the form of positioning and the use of terms that are in opposition to what it means to be Balkan, which indicates a form of 'othering'. Power mechanisms that reinforce Europeanness include shared spatial identity based on signs of cooperation such as symbols, flags, currency, programs as well as shared activities; space as a geographical location; and spatial characteristics used to describe the state of the environment. These illustrate how destination Ljubljana can come to be known as a (Western/Central) European destination.

As in the case of previous critical tourism studies on place branding and postcolonial territories (examples: Wight, 2016; Zhang et al., 2015), discourse analysis was applied in order to reveal the overall constructions of Ljubljana and Slovenia in tourism marketing. Ljubljana is referred to as multiple places such as "Roman settlement" (Doc-vl) and "Central European city" (Participant 22). These multiple references resulted in the following discursive constructions: Within Yugoslavia but not completely Slavic, Diverse Destination, Central European, Roman Destination and Global, European Destination.

Roman Destination

Hall (1998) noted that Europeanness in Slovenia can manifest through its associations with Italy. Findings show that while this is still the case for Ljubljana but there is a change in narrative. Ljubljana's association with discourses of Europeanness manifested through references to "Emona" and "Roman":

"Emona, a Roman settlement that stood where the centre of Ljubljana is today, in the shape of a rectangle, and which had twenty-six towers and four main doors". (Doc-vl)

Before Slovenia became a member of Yugoslavia, Ljubljana was considered to be a "Roman" destination that was set within a defined space as noted in the narrative above (Doc-vl). During the period of the 1st to the 5th century C.E.,

Ljubljana was a part of the Roman colony prior to the Slavs. At this time, the Jews also inhabited Slovenia.

This construction as a Roman destination has nothing to do with Balkanness. However, it is important to highlight this construction of Ljubljana that was found in tourism marketing discourses as effort was being made to project the version of Ljubljana during the reign of the Romans to tourists. This extended the existence of the destination prior to the Yugoslavian era. It illustrates that the origins of the destination and its people were before and goes beyond the Balkan period.

Very few pieces of data focused on Roman Ljubljana. Of the few tourism marketing material, they were mostly developed after Slovenia became a member of the EU. Examples of these instances of Roman mention include the celebration of Emona that occurred in 2014, ten years after its EU integration. It involved tourism suppliers such as the attractions and the destination management organisation. Participant 21 made note of this in the following narrative. During the conversation, the participant seemed proud to have been associated with the celebration. Although Participant 21 did not mention or construct the destination in relation to Balkanness, there was a difference in how the subject matters, Emona and Yugoslavia, were approached. The participant was quick to talk about Emona without being questioned about it; however, the interviewer had to make mention of Yugoslavia in order for details to be garnered about that era.

“In 2014, we tried with the first thematic year was Emona. It’s a Roman City which was established. It was 2000 years of the establishment of Emona, so we talked to the tourist board and the municipality a year before or I think 2 years before, 2014 and addressed them and made a proposition that we dedicate 2014 to Emona and they all pitched and were really excited about it. The municipality, I think they picked one person to be the organiser”. (Participant 21)

To commemorate the Emona celebration, a 2-Euro coin was developed in 2015 by the EU. On the inner ring of the coin is the word “EMONA” while outer ring are 12 stars of the EU flag (see Figure 5.2.2a). The question could be raised as to why the flags were needed on the outer ring. However, the position of the flags could signify that Ljubljana/Emona is within, guarded by and belong to the EU. This allows it to distinguish itself from other non-EU countries based on the feature of belonging. Hence, the destination’s identity in the form of othering (us versus them) and shared spatial identity based on signs of cooperation in the form of the coin are representative of Europeaness.



Figure 5.2.2a: Emona Coin (EU, 2020)

Like businesses' brochures, websites of tourism suppliers also serve as examples of material that promoted this Roman destination. Website Web-lv stated much about Ljubljana as a Roman City. There were tours and attractions focused on the Emona narrative that offered tourists a chance to immerse themselves in a historical experience as seen in the following extract from the website:

“During this guided tour of Roman Ljubljana, you will put on Roman attire and get to know the daily life and customs of residents of Emona, who lived on the site of Ljubljana 2,000 years ago.”

The same website Web-lv did not promote specific tours that allowed for exploration of Ljubljana's history as a socialist country but had a webpage with a blog written by a journalist that made mention of socialism. This is unlike the focus that was placed on Emona and was mentioned previously. The website, though not directly designed to promote Ljubljana as a Roman city, is important to note here because it was partially funded by the EU, which is a sign of cooperation and shared spatial identity representative of the country's Europeanness:

“co-funded by the Republic of Slovenia and the European Union from the European Regional Development Fund”. (Web-lv)

Within Yugoslavia but not completely Slavic

Ljubljana was also constructed as a city within Yugoslavia but not completely Slavic. Attractions were used as places to promote a joint cultural heritage to people of Yugoslavia during the reign of Marshal Tito (Goulding & Domic, 2009). Despite this, within tourism marketing discourses, Ljubljana's construction as a city within Yugoslavia was difficult to locate. For instance, while there were references of the Yugoslavia era in different tours, the researcher found only one communist tour (The Communist Tour operated by a private organisation) and one museum (The National Museum of Contemporary History, operating as a public entity) that completely covered the story. This is not to say that other museums did not have pieces of the past, but this was not found to be their main theme. The National Museum of Contemporary History was one of the entities that could be accessed through

one of the smart initiatives, the Urbana card. In the document Doc-gt, it was listed as 7th on the list of museums while in the document Doc-mf, it was the 6th museum on the list of top sights of Ljubljana. Other museums that preceded it were sites of historical significance and highlighted the need for cultural and environmental conservation, which are key areas on the EU and United Nation agendas.

Ljubljana's construction as a city in Yugoslavia was not evident in other aspects of tourism marketing discourses that were considered to be historic such as the "Ljubljana historical city tour". This tour highlighted the period of the 20th century but from the quoted description of the tour noted below there was no reference made to Yugoslavia at that point. Instead, there was mention of a local citizen who played a key role in Ljubljana's architectural documents. The description of Ljubljana acknowledged Europeaness since baroque and art nouveau periods, which represent Italian and Austrian styles (see also Smith & Puczko, 2011) while omitting mention of socialistic designs. As a result, the Ljubljana space re-establishes Europeaness, and this can lead to overlooking the Slavic identity.

"The tour, beginning in front of the Ljubljana Tourist Information Centre (TIC), takes you through the historical city center, whose unique architecture is the legacy of the Baroque and Art Nouveau periods and, most notably, the work of the famous 20th-century architect Jože Plečnik". (Web-lv)

While there were socialistic buildings existing in Ljubljana from the 1940s to 1991, it becomes clear that this was an opportunity to highlight what would be considered as the "other", which is the recognition of local identity rather than a Slavic identity. In Light's (2000) study on post-communist countries, he finds that destinations namely Germany, Hungary and Romania engaged in a process of reconstructing their identities in tourism, distancing themselves away from their communist past. Like Hungary, Slovenia seems to be closing its connection with its Slavic past and embracing its connections with Europe with enthusiasm.

Not all entities covertly acknowledged or tried to disassociate themselves from this Slavic label. Balkanness manifested in the form of language, which is an example of a shared spatial identity. While tours promoted by the DMO to tourists were not offered in the dominant languages of that era, Serbo-Croatian or Slavic, there were individuals within hotels that still spoke the language and found it useful to draw on during their engagement with tourists.

There was resistance, the type that is not external to power relations (Foucault, 1980). The following provides evidence of these power relations based on the positioning between two discourses. One entity seemed to have resisted the discursive construction but at the same time used this as a means to

differentiate their business offerings from those within the destination. document Doc-mf, included an advertisement that was placed by Parma Pizzeria. It stated that it was “the first facility in Yugoslavia where one could get a pizza”. In keeping with Foucault’s (1980) theory, this is evidence of resistance to the discourse of Europeaness that is occurring at a local supplier level. Based on the advertisement, indeed pizza is associated with Italy, which is seen as being Central European (Parati, 2013). In a sense, there is an overlap with other elements that represent discourse of Balkanness in the advertisement. Despite the overlap, Balkan discourse framed the restaurant as a tourism product that should be understood within that socialistic context rather than as a European product (see Figure 5.2.2b). That emphasis gave the entity its competitive advantage.



Figure 5.2.2b: Parma Pizzeria Advert (Doc-mf)

A Diverse Destination

The destination was also constructed as being a place of diversity. This construction of Ljubljana describes a scenario that combines influences after and before independence based on the quote below. Such an understanding moves the destination away from perceived it as a product of a singular influence to recognising that there are a variety of influences in Slovenia.

“Ljubljana, where the old mingles with the new.” (Doc-bc)

This construction emerged after independence at a time when national pride was at a high. Unlike the era of Yugoslavia where there was victimhood and oppression, this period after independence was marked by freedom. While it may have been expected that the destination may strive to take on its own identity, there seemed to be a challenge with deciding what represented Slovenian identity due to the diversity that existed within Slovenia. For instance, Slovenian cuisine not only includes Balkan/Eastern European food but also Mediterranean dishes, which is representative of Central Europe as seen in the following quotes. Balkanness is not exaggerated in the quotes but is placed alongside other influences to illustrate diversity (see also Fuste-Forne, 2019). For instance, the document Doc-li incorporated a section on “Slovenian” food and highlighted the multiple influences in its introduction captured below.

“With sheep and cattle on its mountain pastures providing a rich variety of meat and dairy products, the Mediterranean bursting with fresh seafood and gastronomic influences from the Balkans, Austria and Italy, Slovenian cuisine, which absolutely must be tried when you’re visiting, there’s no such thing as food that could be called truly Slovenian”. (Doc-li)

Another example of the tourism product that combines Balkan and European (Western and Central) European influences is found in the construction of one of its hostels that was involved in smart initiatives. This property was a former prison during the time of the Austro-Hungarian empire and Yugoslavia. The prison cells have been reconstructed as hotel rooms, while still retaining the same design of being a cell. It mainly appealed to budget travellers who were backpackers and adventurers from surrounding European countries. Not only did the property appeal to European travellers but it also implemented environmentally friendly programs on-property.

“Hostel Art is a former prison from 1882, the building is from 1882, and it was like left in the 1990s when Yugoslavia fell apart. This area, the whole area and they decided that Ljubljana also need a hostel because we didn't have it before. It was like a civil initiative.”
(Participant 15)

A Central European Destination

Another discursive construction was that of being a Central European destination, which confirms that the destination continues to align itself with Westernness. Descriptions were found in two of the tourism developments plans for Slovenia that emerged after joining the EU. The narratives, two of

which are noted below, captured the destination being framed and firmly embedded within the Central European physical and economic space.

“A Central European city beside the river”. (Participant 22)

“All destinations within Central Europe, of which Slovenia is part”. (Doc-pp)

“Slovenia is situated in the heart of Central Europe, among neighbouring countries that jointly generate more than EUR 173 million tourist visits and more than EUR 605 million overnight stays, which proves the region’s high tourist attractiveness”. (Doc-gs)

The question arises as to why the need for resorting to a European narrative again after departing from that marketing strategy in 2004. The need for emphasising Europeanness in tourism material can be explained through Foucault’s work on space. Prior to 2004, while Slovenia could have been classified as a European territory based on geographic location, Participant 1’s response below show that the EU played a part in validating its position as such since after 2004 it “started to exist on that European map.”

“I would say this was around until 2005, 2007 when this major change started to happen.... People did not need passports anymore to travel to Slovenia. Slovenia kind of started to exist on that European map. Let's say as a country, not one of just uhh problematic Balkan countries, you know. So, the whole feeling of safety was there which started to attract tourist and also what really bought change was the first EasyJet flight that were started from London and Berlin in that time. It was the first time actually with that connection that Ljubljana started to be considered as a potential tourist destination in Slovenia before we always viewed it as just our capital which has nothing really like interesting to offer so tourist just came for a half day visit on their way to Bled or to the Slovenian coast”. (Participant 1)

There was a separation within the continent of Europe, which highlights that there were discourses of difference that existed. Those who operated in the outgroup (Balkan) were not identified as being European. Participant 1 also gave prominence to the map by basing Slovenia’s existence on it over the actual geographic territory, which seemed to have lost importance. Here, one is reminded of the work of Baudrillard’s (2019, p.498) quote “it is the map that precedes the territory- PRECESSION OF SIMULACRA- it is the map that engenders the territory, and if we were to revive the fable today, it would be the territory whose shreds are slowly rotting across the map”.

Europeanness is aligned with positive meanings such as modernisation and cooperation. In this regard, the EU offered countries not membership but development, collaboration, friendliness and other positive attributes. The

destination, Slovenia, would be perceived differently through these discourses of Europeanness since it signifies improvement or provides opportunities to be better. Reflecting on Participant's 1 response, there were economic and social benefits of being aligned with Europeanness, which was perceived as being in opposition to the other, namely the "problematic".

Comparisons were often made between Slovenia and other destinations in Europe that can be considered to be Western. This was not aimed at differentiating the destinations but to highlight the commonality that existed to illustrate the "regions high tourist attractiveness" (Doc-gs). This is evident in an interview that the head of the national tourism board had with the publication, *The Slovenia Times*. The representative described Slovenia in relation to destinations such as Italy, France and Ireland to position Slovenia amongst the top destinations. The executive stated that

"They [some attractions] are the icons of Slovenian tourism representative of our country much like a visit of St. Mark's Square is of Venice, the view from atop the Eiffel Tower is of Paris and the view of the Cliffs of Moher is of Ireland".

Apparently, this move of representing Slovenia alongside other popular destinations is not new. Morgan and Pritchard (1999) in their account of how Eastern European countries portray themselves note that they draw comparisons between themselves and European destinations that are of different historical backgrounds. The latter destinations such as Paris, Italy and Greece are considered "the powerful within the First World" (p.233).

The website Web-m had a section that highlighted the meaning of the word Ljubljana as being synonymous with love. The site stated that

"According to one of the many etymological explanations, its name is derived from the word 'ljubljen', meaning 'loved'. It is therefore not surprising that Ljubljana is beloved by its citizens and visitors alike".

The disassociation with Balkan characteristics of crime was evident in Participant 23's comment below as he described Ljubljana as a "safe" haven:

"safe city and this is nowadays, really really important. We don't have any underground, which is in my opinion for Ljubljana, very important because we don't have any criminal, not a lot of criminal, not a lot of drugs and such things".

Access to certain opportunities were restricted until Slovenia's enrolment in the EU, when it "started to exist on that European map". With the development of direct flight services from some EU member states, visitors mainly flew into Slovenia's airport in Ljubljana, Joze Pucnik Airport, which is one of the three airports in Slovenia. The others are Aerodrom Portoroz and Aerodrom Maribor-Edvard Rusjan Airport. The changes mentioned by Participant 1 did

contribute to a sharp increase in international arrivals. For instance, international arrivals grew by 0.93% in 2003, then 27.03% in 2004, and 20.14% in 2005. The country has been able to capture a wider target market due to no visa restrictions that was enforced among member states in the EU. Slovenia's borders represent Foucault's disciplinary power (Burchell et al., 1991), regulating movement in and out of the country by allowing more convenient accessibility for those within the EU.

Various activities have been created and international hotel brands have taken interest in Ljubljana as noted in the following quotes:

“We have Union Hotels, 4 of them, then you have Best Western Slon, there is the Plaza, you have Four Points, InterConti and that's it. Not really a lot. There are some projects and new properties will come. But the development of properties or buildings is not that fast”. (Participant 3)

“So from April, starting this week before Easter, like this week or even the whole April because also the busy segment is strong in April until the end of October... actually we are expecting like uhh additional 1000 rooms in the next 2 or 3 years”. (Participant 8)

“So Ljubljana was kind of empty but now when you come to Ljubljana in July or August, you always have something, music playing, some live music playing by the river or something. Always have something. There's always something happening so that's a nice thing”. (Participant 7)

The increase in tourist arrivals had brought on the need to develop various aspects of the tourism product from entertainment facilities to accommodations.

A Global European Destination

The final construction that emerged from the discourse analysis is that of being a global European destination. In instances where suppliers described Ljubljana as such, there was a focus on the value that the destination offered tourists:

“Slovenia has high quality cuisine; we have a five-star culinary chefs with skills, it is luxurious, top quality yet rare and very special. It is rare, because our top chefs use local and seasonal ingredients”. (A tourism association executive in Doc-ts)

“In recent years, Slovenia has made a substantial breakthrough thanks to the many talented master chefs and our exceptional offer of wines. Boosting our recognition were definitely Ana Ros, the best master chef

of 2017 in the world, her restaurant Hisa Franko ranking among The World's 50 Best Restaurants, the now-regular highest Decanter World Wine Awards, the publishing of the established Gault & Millau guide, and the title of European Gastronomic Region 2021. I can say without doubt that we have made significant progress in terms of development and recognition, but there are still many challenges ahead". (A tourism board executive in Doc-ts)

Here, both the discourses of Europeanness and globalisation become evident:

"After all, Slovene tourism is a part of world and European tourism. Consequently, it is also necessary to consider the basic principles and development policies of the tourism industry in the context of the UNWTO and European Union". (Doc-pp)

"Ljubljana Tourism's vision for Ljubljana is that by 2020 it is recognised in the international market as an experience-rich European urban tourism destination, as a city for active and romantic experiences and business meetings throughout the year". (Web-lv)

According to one of the tourism executives at the national tourism board who had an interview with representatives of the company that produce the document Doc-ts, the destination had finally been recognised as a global destination after its sustained marketing efforts:

"Upon gaining independence, Slovenia was a relatively unknown country. When the STB was established 24 years ago (back then, it was known as the Centre for Tourism Promotion of Slovenia), Slovenia was yet to be placed on the world map. A continuous and systematic marketing throughout the years has paid off".

Here, a similar occurrence takes place like that which was discussed in the previous construction as a Central European destination. The map is a power mechanism that is more than a representation (Baudrillard, 2019). It is the basis on which some suppliers have come to establish their understanding of Slovenia as a destination.

Though Slovenia was acknowledged as a global destination, it was importantly placed within a general European narrative. This highlighted that the destination did not exist on its own but operated in collaboration with regional and international stakeholders.

Another insight that emerged were the technologies of power that were in place to control and normalise behaviour (Burchell et al., 1991); specifically, these mechanisms ensured that the destination maintained the destination's global status. These include skills and knowledge training and opportunities for product development.

“Our team at STB monitors global trends by means of regular trainings, cooperation with different field experts, participation in the most important global exchanges and other global tourist offer presentations, active cooperation with organizations such as the European Travel Commission, the World Tourism Organization UNWTO, the Pacific Asia Tourist Association and Green Destination, Virtuoso membership, and more. At the same time, it must be noted that the STB and the Slovenian tourism in general share a widely accepted common vision. I am talking about the vision of a green boutique destination of five-star experiences”. (Doc-ts)

The effects of this normalised behaviour in favour of Europeanness was evident not only in tourism marketing material but through representation as individuals ensured that this was a part of their mandate in the different capacities they served.

The dominant focus on positioning Ljubljana as a Western/Central European city in tourism marketing material does not capture the rich diversity of the city as seen in previous times when it paid more attention to tradition (Morgan & Pritchard, 1999). With the ongoing discussions of inclusion and diversity globally, arguably Easternness as the Other may fade and Ljubljana can then increase confidence in promoting its diverse offerings. This can increase its attractiveness to target markets beyond the European space for it to truly become a global destination. This matters in smart tourism since one of the key aspects of a smart destination is to showcase its rich cultural traditions (Cavalheiro et al., 2019). However, the branding strategy continues to follow a dominant theme, which is continuing as Ljubljana embraces smart tourism.

5.3 Move towards Smart Tourism as a Means of Reinforcing Europeanness

Previous studies have concentrated on tourism marketing material and branding strategies to understand generally Slovenia’s association with Europeanness (see Hall, 1998; Nelson, 2012). However, this section provides insights on one of the initiatives that has been implemented and reinforced top-down understandings of Europeanness. This expands on Ivars-Baidal’s (2018) brief claim that smart is pursued to reposition a destination’s image. Following previous studies that draw on Foucault’s idea of discourse (Lahdesmaki, 2014; Wodak, 2003; 2007) and Foucauldian discourse analysis, Europeanness in smart tourism manifested in the form of geographic space, spatial identity and spatial descriptions. These insights expand understanding of space as discourse in destination branding. Departing from previous studies that examine EU programmes (Lahdesmaki, 2014; Wodak, 2007), this study applies governmentality to reveal how technologies of power associated with space,

spatial identity and spatial descriptions control the conduct of the destination by including and excluding other places.

5.3.1 Geographic Space

Within smart tourism, Europeanness was constructed as a geographic space (Bee, 2008; Tursiu, 2015), referring to the same Western/Central European space that made Slovenia visible on the map since its entrance into the EU. Ljubljana and by extension Slovenia were positioned within a location that united it with other potential and current smart cities in Europe that it could encourage as well as compete with. These countries existed in a common location, which gave them the opportunity to easily engage in collaborations.

“It [Ljubljana] has once again become an inspiration to other tourist destinations across Europe”. (Web-lv)

“Slovenia among the prominent European providers of such solutions”. (Doc-sr)

Ljubljana representatives used the opportunity to cement the destination’s standings within the European space. At the European Capital of Smart Tourism award ceremony held on October 3, 2019, one of the tourism executives noted that smart practices would be shared and formulated with other EU countries rather than with the wider world.

“The next steps are definitely to share our good practices with other cities exchanging all the challenges that we have, not only what we’ve won but the challenges that we have so now we can work together in future on attacking these challenges and since this is an EU initiative it gives us a great opportunity to work on this together”. (Web-twe)

While this may be beneficial for European destinations, it is also at odds with discourses of inclusivity and may be able to partially explain the reason for the digital divide existing globally across destinations. It can be argued that the EU is not responsible for other nations, but it must be acknowledged that it does provide funds for other destinations outside of Europe such as Chile, Costa Rica and Cayman Islands to conduct projects that are related to smart, specifically virtual museums (EULAC Museums, 2020). However, the Capital of Smart Tourism program was not opened to these territories. As to whether it was the same funding agency and networks within the EU that provided funds and assistance for both initiatives, that requires further exploration, which is beyond the scope of this thesis. Nonetheless, there is evidence of technologies of power (Foucault, 1980) at work in the form of partitioning of space that allows for control based on the inclusion and exclusion of individuals and entities, since countries outside of the EU are not included in smart program. The space therefore allows for control (Foucault, 1979a).

Categorisation systems exist within space, serving as a means of regulating subjectivities (Burchell et al., 1991). Destinations being subject to categorisation and rating systems reflects Foucault's disciplinary power. Looking back at Ljubljana, it was never acknowledged as a "European Capital of Smart Tourism" prior to 2019. It could have been noted as a smart destination due to the existence of various initiatives listed in the tourism plan such as Urbana card, however, this was not acknowledged until its designation by the EU. To be counted as a European smart destination, it needed to adhere to the EU guidelines of sustainability, accessibility, digitisation and/or culture. Ljubljana's smartness was based on sustainability and digitisation. As a result, the program represents a technology of power that serves to constrain actions (Johns & Johns, 2000). In this case, the destination is limited to acting within one of the areas noted previously. Ljubljana is included as an EU Capital of Smart Tourism due to its conformance with sustainability and digitisation, which are further discussed below.

The EU has an authority in directing the theme of a destination's smart agenda, however, sustainability has been a part of Ljubljana's agenda even prior to its acceptance into the EU as discussed prior. In reviewing the strategic tourism plans from 2007, the word "smart" first appeared in the Strategy for the Sustainable Growth of Slovenian Tourism for 2017- 2021 under the heading "smart mobility". Sustainability existed on the agenda prior to smart (Yigitcanlar et al., 2020). The document stated that one of its measures for tourism during the four-year period was:

"smart mobility- including public passenger transport in Slovenian tourism, developing urban smart cards, projects for calming traffic in tourist destinations and the development of alternative solutions".

Smart appears to have a supporting role while sustainability has a lead character in the tourism plan. In other words, smart initiatives such as urban smart cards play a practical role for achieving sustainability in Ljubljana. This differed from the way in which smart is outlined by the EU.

Nonetheless, the association of smart and sustainability provided the benefit of continued consistency with promoting the destination's sustainable theme. One of the main competencies of a brand is consistency, that can lead to a strong brand image, which requires greater attention in destination marketing (Moilanen & Rainisto, 2009). The destination also garnered further credibility since smart designation was seen as a stamp of approval. The quote below captures participant 4's response when asked about their understanding of smart tourism:

"It [smart tourism] means, ahhh that we did a lot, good job already. We also, we were Green European Capital 2016 so it's actually a proof that

our past work was good and of course motivation for everything in the future”.

There was a sense of momentum being conveyed by participant 4 in the narrative above, which points to active work and strategic focus by the DMO. This is contrary to the presentation of smart in the tourism development plans that lacked strategy discourse in the form of organisational targets and measurements and moreover, smart is barely mentioned. Here, there are two surfaces of emergences reflecting two contrasting and incompatible discourses (Foucault, 1972). The upcoming chapters will continue to unpack the smart process, which can provide insights regarding the disparity.

It is also salient to highlight that participant 4 also stated that “it’s actually a proof”, drawing attention to the importance of standing out to capture the attention of target markets (Ries, 2001). Ljubljana’s smart destination brand captured the attention of organisations that were able to provide resources for the continuous development of smart initiatives. The offer of technical and financial resources is seen as another benefit of pursuing smart in Ljubljana. Based on feedback from some suppliers, with access to funding being a destination challenge, this gives Ljubljana another reason to develop its destination image regionally and globally as it competes for funding from the European Union (EU). Participant 3, a supplier, stated this when questioned about Ljubljana as a smart tourism destination:

“Slovenia will never be able to give, I don’t know, a billion of Euro for advertisement long-term consistent on a daily basis. We don’t have the money so we need to find other ways”.

Destination branding is usually pursued as a marketing tool due to a myriad of challenges, which includes limited funds (Morgan et al., 2002). The use of marketing tools to advance Slovenia’s marketing strategy and vision in the midst of a limited marketing budget is not new but the use of smart initiatives to do so is (see Konecnik & Go, 2008).

While becoming smart has had its benefits, it can also threaten the consistent branding efforts deployed by the destination throughout the years since it is now on a path to embracing digitisation, which was not a central theme in Ljubljana’s tourism plans. During the last part of data collection, the smart brand was transitioning to also include an association with digitisation. Based on European Capital of Smart Tourism (2020), digitisation refers to the incorporation of digital technologies to aid business development and enhancement of visitor experiences. Seraphin et al. (2019, p.2) would describe this move as an example of “not using any idiosyncratic identity-based strategy but more universal stereotype strategies” to increase appeal for target audiences.

Ljubljana's acknowledgment for digitisation can increase its appeal to individuals who are exposed to advanced technologies in smart tourism such as those in China (Li et al., 2017; Zhu et al., 2014). In 2018, travellers from Asian countries represented the fifth most visited group to Ljubljana at 6.1% of total stopover arrivals while those specifically from China represented number 12 representing 2.9% (Web-lju). However, there is still much development to be done in Ljubljana in comparison to Asian destinations, which have robots such as those seen at the Henn-na Hotel in Japan (Lewis-Kraus, 2016). The destination's less advanced state but status as a smart destination can also lower its appeal to these target markets, which is a possibility that requires further exploration as it is outside of the scope of this thesis. Having highlighted the geographic space as Europeanness, the next section focuses on spatial identity.

5.3.2 *Spatial Identity*

In Lahdesmaki (2014, p. 198), "Europeanness was considered as a spatial identity, which was realized in an organized cooperation between various agents in Europe and in representations of this cooperation". Representations within this space include EU-related symbols, signs, logos, collaborations and performances. These were a part of the spatial identity that represent a sign of cooperation. These convert the space into a site of power that is being controlled (Foucault, 1979a). Tourists are directed to "gaze" (Urry, 1990; 1992) upon multiple images of Ljubljana, of which, Europeanness is present through them. Like individuals gazing upon the "mad" as discussed in Foucault's (1967) book on *Madness and Civilisation*, so too do tourists gaze upon a tourist destination and its offerings (Urry, 1992). A European smart destination should have the symbol in Figure 5.3.2a on display virtually and/or within the destination; this symbol also included a visual representation of the EU flag. In the case of Ljubljana, this was found in a promotional video and on a website, both established by the DMO.



Figure 5.3.2a: European Capital of Smart Tourism (Web-eu)

The YouTube video that was created and posted by the DMO to promote Ljubljana as a smart destination also drew on its association with being involved in the European Green Capital program. During the first quarter of the video, European Green Capital sign was captured after three of the smart initiatives were shown (see Figure 5.3.2b). This highlights the influence of Europeanisation (Lahdesmaki, 2014).



Figure 5.3.2b: European Capital of Smart Tourism Video (Web-eu)

The use of EU-related symbols has also been seen outside of those associated with smart tourism, which serves as an illustration of the destinations' long-standing association with being European. For instance, of the numerous awards that the destination has been granted (see Table 5.3.2), Ljubljana has sought to include mainly those that are affiliated with the European Union in its branding online on its main page (see Figure 5.3.2c). To a greater degree, the EU flag was also commonly seen outside tourism suppliers' properties alongside the Ljubljana and Slovenian flags (see Figure 5.3.2d), which signify that the space has an association with the European community (see also Banjac & Pusnik, 2015).

Table 5.3.2: Ljubljana's Most Notable Tourism Awards (Web-lv)

Period	Award	Awarding Body
September 2012	Ljubljana Card- Third Best Tourist Pass in Europe	Euro test website- German Automobile Association

October 2012	Crystal Triglav- For the Highest Achievements in Slovenian Tourism	FIJET Slovenija- the Association of Slovenian Travel Journalists
November 2012	Netko 2012 Award for Ljubljana's Website as Best Digital Project	
January 2013	Meeting Starr Award	Conventa Trade Show
April 2013	Golden Tourist Heart	Sacen International
January 2014	Digital Tourism Think Tank Award	
May 2014	Third Prize in Promotional Films	Portuguese Finisterra Arrabida Film Art & Tourism Festival
June 2014	Number 2 on Best in Europe 2014	Lonely Planet
December 2014	Sustainable Destinations Global Top 100 List	GreenDestinations.info
April 2015	Tourism for Tomorrow Destination Award	World Travel & Tourism Council
October 2015	Slovenia Green Destination	Slovenian Tourist Board
April 2016	ETIS and Accessible Tourism Joint Award in the category "environment and accessibility as a catalyst for sustainable and responsible growth"	European Commission- European Tourism Indicators System for sustainable destination management
June 2016	Golden Apple Award- excellent achievement in tourism development	World Federation of Travel Journalists and Writers
September 2016	Global Green Destination	Global Green Destinations Day International Conference
September 2017	Global Green Destination	Global Green Destinations Day International Conference

November 2017	WTM Responsible Tourism Award in the category of Best for Communications at WTM London	World Travel Market
January 2018	Best Congress Destination Award	New Europe exhibition for meetings, events and incentives
March 2018	Best Destination of Europe under the Slovenia Green Destination label	ITB Berlin
May 2018	Pink Drago Award	Pink Week- Project for Promotion of Unique Experiences for LGBT guests
June 2018	Emerging Europe Tourism Campaign	
September 2018	European Capital of Smart Tourism 2019 – sustainability	European Commission
December 2018	EasyJet Best Of – Award for Slovenia's Moustache Tour	Easy Jet
March 2019	Locally Grown Food Exchange	ITB Berlin
October 2019	Global TOP 100 Sustainable Destinations list	Green Destinations
October 2019	European Capital of Smart Tourism 2020-digitisation	European Commission
November 2019	Best Food Destination	World Travel Market

The development of this website has been co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund.

Ljubljana Tourism was founded by the City of Ljubljana



Figure 5.3.2c: Snapshot of EU awards included in Branding (Web-lv)

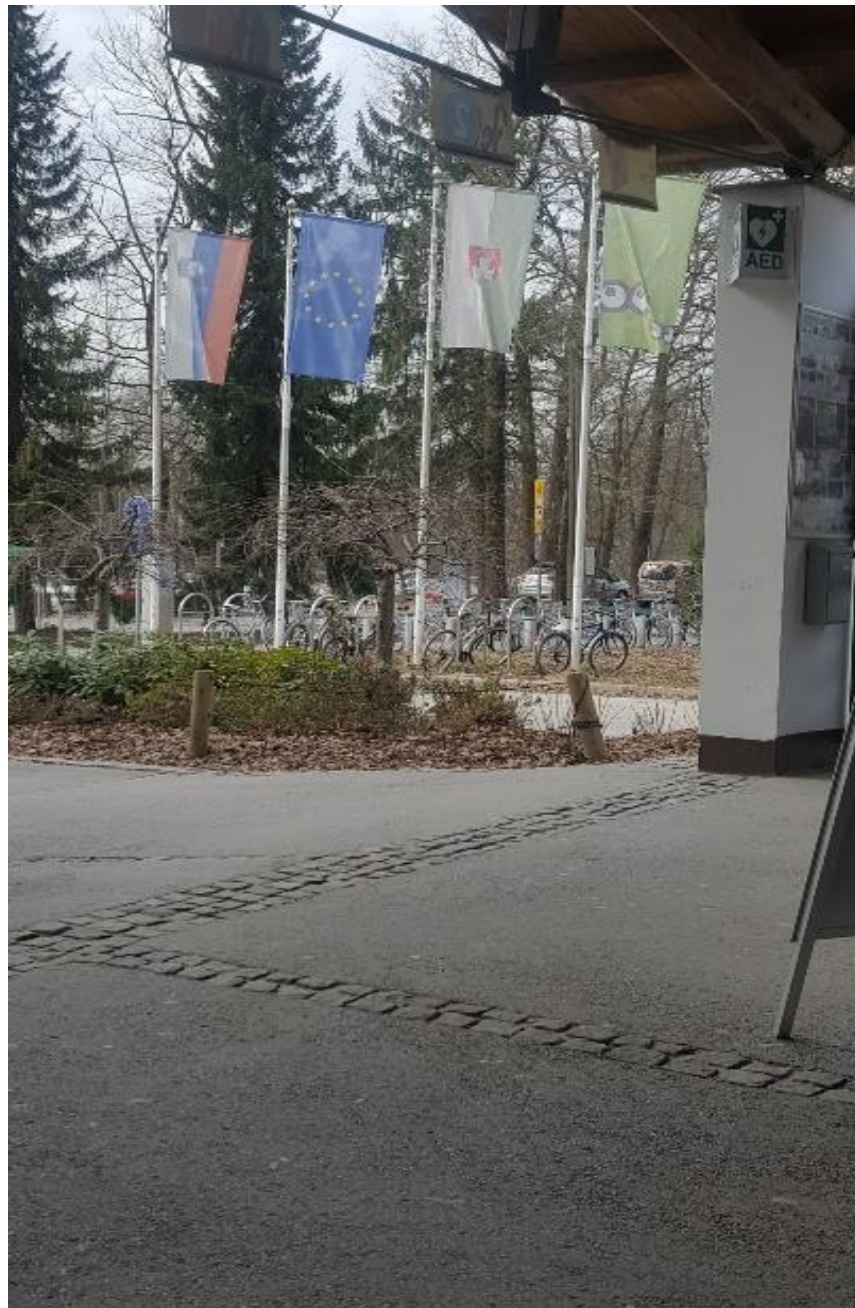


Figure 5.3.2d: Representation of Flag Outside of Tourist Attraction

Together, the flag and other symbols are technologies of power found within discourses of Europeanness that “shape, guide or affect the conduct of some person or persons” (Gordon, 1991, p. 2). They signify that a destination’s identity is associated with a particular group, specifically EU, which represents the ingroup and leads to “claiming identity and drowning out the other” (Staiger, 2005, p. 569). These examples of spatial identity in Ljubljana are representative of allegiance, serving as a unifier since it points out included destinations. Association was made visible through symbols on videos, DMO website and in Ljubljana’s city centre.

5.3.3 Spatial Descriptions

Europeanness can be seen as particular descriptions or materialised qualities of a space (Lahdesmaki, 2014; Lefebvre, 1991). The European space is a city that is modern and developed, free of an uncivilised past. Europeanness manifested as infrastructural and technological developments being done in the actual destination, which is often seen in past socialist countries (Lahdesmaki, 2014). It represents modernisation which contrasts with Balkanness (Galdini, 2018).

“In the case of Europeanness, the experiences of the present seem to form a more important starting point for the meaning making of the common European identity” (Lahdesmaki, 2014, p. 202).

At the smart cities conference, these types of developments were spoken about as being accomplishments as well as prospective plans. Being European was seen as a state to aspire to since it is deemed to be modernised, instead of valuing the environment that was there before the changes. Europe is associated with narratives of transformation of public spaces through modernisation, infrastructural and technological developments being done in the actual destination (Tursie, 2015), which is often seen in past socialist countries (Lahdesmaki, 2014).

“By being awarded the title [European Capital of Smart Tourism], Ljubljana has received the confirmation that within a year it has succeeded in upgrading and improving the city for its citizens and also as a travel destination”. (Web-lv)

“In its explanatory statement the European Commission underlined that Ljubljana made the highest number of changes in the right direction in the shortest period of time”. (Doc-sl)

Although there were transformations that emerged within smart tourism, these followed ongoing changes that have occurred in Slovenia since its admittance to the EU. Previously, Slovenia had to undertake various reforms to move from

being a country to being recognised as an EU member based on the quote below, which is a sign of disciplinary power:

“When it comes to finance and economy, the first years of EU membership for Slovenia were optimistic, although Slovenia was already receiving warnings from Brussels about the need to carry out structural reforms, pension reform in particular”. (Doc-ts)

Foucault suggested that power can result in the formation of objects and subjectivities. The space allows for direct visibility and detailed control, which can result in transformation of those within it and itself (Burchell et al., 1991). This can also be seen as being a part of Slovenia’s process of transformation to becoming European. Reforms are programmes that must be executed for the destination to fulfil its status as an EU member. The introduction of reforms indicated that the Slovenian space was being transformed. Specifically, its economic space was subject to various guidelines that would change it from its *modus operandi* at the time to one that is more in tandem with the European landscape. A destination makes itself more visible to authorities in exchange for privileges (Hannah, 1997).

This transformation is in tandem with Lefebvre’s view the reproduction of the social relations of productions “obeys two tendencies: the dissolution of old relations on the one hand and generation of new relations on the other” (Nicholson-Smith, 1991). The destination, in this instance, can also be considered a space of control similar to the educational space spoken about in Foucault’s (1979) book, *Discipline and Punish*, that are for

“supervising, hierarchizing, rewarding...they are mixed spaces: real because they govern the disposition of buildings, rooms, furniture, but also ideal, because they are projected over this arrangement of characterisations, assessments, hierarchies” (p. 147-148).

In this regard, the reforms in Slovenia serve as technologies of power.

Spatial descriptions act as technologies of power (Burchell et al., 1991). Like Pecs in Hungary that was involved in the EU events (Lahdesmaki, 2014, p.197), Ljubljana also “attempts to reach the so-called European standard”. At the start of this chapter, it was highlighted that Participant 1 described Ljubljana as “lagging behind”, hence the rationale for the destination to become a European capital of smart tourism so it can be counted as a European destination. It is therefore not surprising when one of the participants explained smart tourism in Ljubljana as a means of being friendly towards citizens and tourists, of which friendliness opposes the negative connotations associated with Balkanness, which emerged from early on. The fact that it has re-emerged in smart tourism discussions is an illustration of disciplinary power. Foucault highlighted that subjectivities of disciplinary power internalise ideas and this can result in monitoring their own behaviour (Burchell et al., 1991).

5.4 Summary of Chapter

This chapter has outlined the motivations for Ljubljana's pursuit of smart tourism. Smart initiatives were identified as being solutions to a variety of problems, thereby representing an all-encompassing solution. On the other hand, it has become clear that smart tourism has emerged within a long-standing destination image construction process that has been centre of Slovenia's agenda since its independence. Slovenia's brand has been repositioned through branding campaigns that associate with discourses of Europeanness/Westernness/Western and Central Europe rather than Eastern Europe/Balkanness. Specifically, the city of Ljubljana has been engaged in similar efforts as seen in its tourism marketing material from websites to brochures. Since previous studies have highlighted discourses of differences in Slovenia (Hall, 2003; Hall & Danta, 1996; Nelson, 2012; Stankovic & Zevnik, 2011), other representations have emerged such as its association with being Roman as well as a Global European destination. There are therefore multiple representations of Europeanness rather than mainly binary interpretations that are noted in destination branding literature. Through a Foucauldian perspective, this chapter also illustrates that Europeanness is not only based on the geographic space as is dominantly focused on in tourism literature (Nelson, 2012), however, it emerges as spatial identity and descriptions. The European Capital of Smart Tourism reinforces top-down understandings of Europeanness. The chapter illustrates that these programmes along with other means represent what Foucault calls technologies of power, which shape and guide the conduct of Ljubljana and is yet to be explored in mainstream destination branding literature.

Further inclusion in EU activities presents benefits to Ljubljana as a destination. Arguably, it increases attractiveness to core markets such as Italy and Germany. Additionally, smart allows the destination to maintain its association with sustainability, thereby enabling consistency in branding. Ljubljana has been recognised at numerous conferences and by organisations such as ITB Berlin and Green Destinations. Therefore, these associations and relationships can be maintained as it strives to build a global image. Smart based on digitisation can give Ljubljana the opportunity to increase its appeal to other target market, however, can threaten its consistent branding. The smart brand is not apolitical or only technotopian as was previously conceptualised in smart tourism (Gretzel & Collier de Mendonca, 2019) but associates with meanings that are power-laden. Suppliers within the local destination, especially resistors such as those highlighted in Section 5.2.2, can benefit from these findings as they continue to circumvent discourses of Europeanness. Destination practitioners further afield should be mindful of this as they seek to adopt smart initiatives across destinations. To a greater extent, this chapter

shows that the motivations for embarking on smart developments in Europe goes beyond achieving destination competitiveness through technologies (Wang et al., 2013) but also through branding following the application of a Foucauldian approach. Now that the motivations for pursuing smart tourism have been outlined, the next chapter focuses on the processes of developing smart initiatives.

CHAPTER 6: THE FORMATION OF SMART LJUBLJANA

6.1 Introduction

This findings chapter presents an understanding of the processes and relationships that have resulted in “smart Ljubljana”. First, it presents findings for understanding how smart tourism was developed by applying thematic analysis. Findings provide insights for understanding smart tourism development, resulting in the following insights: historical occurrences affect how stages develop, the cyclical nature of the stages, simultaneous nature and omission of stages as well as the varying levels of interactions for suppliers. These findings highlight the complexity involved in forming a smart destination.

The benefit of mutual exchange and value have been argued to be key influences of engagement in smart initiatives (Buhalis, 2015; Buhalis, 2019); however, it becomes evident that based on the process, mutuality does not exist for tourism suppliers. This raises the question as to why suppliers still chose to engage despite limited participation and exchange of resources. This results in fulfilling the third research objective, which is to explore suppliers’ perceptions of the factors that influence engagement in smart tourism. This was done through the application of thematic analysis, which resulted in another set of novel understandings. Findings illustrate that suppliers’ perspectives can vary based on context and meanings. These insights resulted after drawing on discourse analysis, which is in keeping with the constructionist, interpretive approach taken by this thesis.

The chapter turns to first revealing the suppliers, then the process of smart development and the influences. While previous smart tourism and tourism collaboration studies have examined collaborative processes, this chapter goes beyond by providing a deeper understanding by using a linear model and path dependence perspective. This chapter also provides insights into the influences of smart development by drawing upon a multi-theoretical framework. This improves on the work done in smart tourism literature as currently these empirical findings as well as theoretical-based studies are lacking in smart destination literature. Additionally, collaboration studies that are based on technology context continue to be based on a positivist stance, however, this chapter highlights the importance of understanding the wider social context, which is possible due to Foucauldian discourse analysis.

6.2 Getting to Know the Suppliers in Smart Tourism

Smart tourism suppliers have been discussed within different typologies that aim to identify organisations within the local tourism industry (Del Chiappa &

Baggio 2015; Gretzel et al., 2015b; Koo et al. 2017; Gajdosik, 2018). The case of Ljubljana revealed from the thematic analysis that traditional tourism businesses were involved in smart tourism as is expected; however, findings build upon previous studies to highlight that other entities locally were involved in the process of development. Participants of smart tourism initiatives emerged from two groups: the city's group for urban development that focused on sustainable initiatives and tourism businesses such as hotels and attractions. While diverse suppliers can create challenges in a collaboration (Czernek, 2013), this was not the case in Ljubljana due to the separation between the two groups. The division was evident in the following instances. First, tourism suppliers were listed on the platforms but not seen at the Smart Cities Conference held in September 2019 in Ljubljana. At the conference, participants were mainly from government entities:

“Institute for Corporate Security Studies, Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, Ministry of Public Administration, City of Ljubljana, Ministry of Defence, Association of Urban Municipalities of Slovenia.” (Doc-sccs)

The integration of suppliers in smart tourism is made possible via information and communications technologies (Jovicic, 2019); however, this was not the case in Ljubljana. Instead, the Ljubljana Vision 2025 that was formulated by the municipality office had a wide appeal, which facilitated the inclusion of businesses directly and indirectly associated with the tourism industry. The range of suppliers was captured in the following extract from a smart cities' brochure published by one of the research organisations that was involved in the development of smart Ljubljana:

“SRIP [Strategic Research and Innovation Partnership] Smart Cities and Communities Partnership brings together over 140 companies and research institutions from all over Slovenia..... Strategic Research and Innovation Partnership Smart Cities and Communities covers several research areas and the ICT horizontal providing key technologies. Key areas- energy and utilities, health, mobility, transport, logistics, smart city ecosystem, safety, urban life quality. ICT Technologies- cyber security, digital transformation, GIS-T, HPC and Big data, IOS and IOT”. (Doc-sr)

The vision that guided smart development in Ljubljana did not encourage supplier integration. The vision stated that the focus of Ljubljana was on creating a city that would be considered an ideal, environmentally friendly metropolis:

“Ideal city- preserve the character of an agreeable green city, its dimension and convenient living standards will make it a nice place to live in: environmentally friendly city- considers an option of a direct

access to the open space as well as the integration of the city into the landscape system; little metropolis- grant high living standards, security and tolerance. The city, opened widely for foreign investors and experts, will gradually acquire the cosmopolitan character and image”. (Web-lju)

This had a broad appeal similar to the rationale that was identified in the previous chapter. While tourism networks emerge because of a common appeal (Zach & Racherla, 2011), this was not sufficient to ensure participation by tourism suppliers. Furthermore, a shared understanding among all suppliers did not exist, which Choi et al. (2021) acknowledge as being essential for governance in smart destinations. A domain orientation is a core component of inter-organisational collaborations (Gray, 1989; Wood & Gray, 1991).

Initiatives that were noted by Ljubljana’s representatives at smart conferences were not tourism-related, instead, they were associated with digitisation. For instance, one of the ministry representatives, announced that the destination would be implementing E-Identities and I-Trust in the period of 2020 to 2021. E-Identities referred to digital identities that allowed residents to have virtual passports and credit cards, while I-Trust referred to the safety mechanisms designed for the E-Identities system such as signatures and authentication codes.

Nonetheless, Ljubljana’s smart tourism ecosystem of suppliers was not newly created as observed by Gretzel et al. (2015b). Rather, the city embraced existing businesses to construct its smart ecosystem. This is distinct from other destinations, such as Benidorm, Spain, where collaborations are mainly with private, start-up companies and represent new businesses (Femenia-Serra & Ivars-Baidal, 2018). Departing from previous empirical studies on smart tourism suppliers, findings indicate that there were other participants involved in smart development that were further afield. This is not usually the case of destination collaborations since they mainly consist of local community suppliers (Beritelli et al., 2013). The development of smart initiatives was influenced by regional countries and entities. In this instance, the European Union (EU) can be considered as an example of what Gretzel et al. (2015b, p.561) calls “other suppliers”, as it influenced the city’s smart ecosystem, but was not directly involved in its operation.

Additionally, municipality representatives in Ljubljana observed the development of smart initiatives in Vienna, the capital city of Austria, which served as inspiration for Ljubljana’s smart development. Previously, the municipality had invited representatives from Vienna to discussions in Ljubljana to share insights based on Vienna’s smart city development. While the city may be seen as an external influencer, it also shares a historical relationship and regional proximity to Ljubljana:

“actually, our biggest influence is Vienna [...] Vienna is like something modern. We are actually historically connected to Vienna. Slovenia has been apart of this Empire many, many years so this is connecting with Vienna. And Vienna loves us because we are kind of the younger brother or sister”. (Participant 17)

Despite the numerous suppliers that a smart ecosystem can facilitate (Gretzel et al., 2015b), participants were not the same across the initiatives. For instance, one of the participating organisations that was engaged in the bicycle sharing scheme was not involved in the car sharing system. For the most part, tourism businesses such as hotels and attractions were found to be involved in a minimum of two smart initiatives. Further details on the role of the suppliers are provided in the following section that elaborates on the process of development. However, this section improves upon previous understanding by identifying stakeholders in smart development. This results in providing a practical understanding which is a limitation of the ecosystem lens being used to describe smart that is based on broad classification rather than specific stakeholder identification (Currie et al., 2009).

6.3 The Stages of Smart Development

Wang and Fesenmaier's (2007) stages of destination collaboration provided a sequential explanation of Ljubljana's smart development but required adaptation to account for these findings that emerged through thematic analysis. The stages were extended to demonstrate the interconnectedness and cyclical nature of smart development as well as the needed resources and stakeholders. Path dependence theory enhanced Wang and Fesenmaier's stages, illustrating the importance of the historical context in shaping occurrences within smart development such as the omission of formalisation and rules of engagement.

6.3.1 *Assembling Stage*

The first stage, assembling stage, involves the process of gathering individuals and ideas for creating a vision, which resembles the starting phase of most smart city models (Kumar et al., 2020; Letaifa, 2015; Wang & Fesenmaier, 2007). While different visions were identified that guided formation of smart development, they were not directly crafted within smart collaborations or for the development of Ljubljana's smart destination. In fact, the destination did not start off with the goal of constructing a smart destination or city as seen in other locations (see Zuzul, 2019). Instead, there were many different initiatives that contributed to it eventually becoming a smart destination. This is similar

to Masdar, which started with the intention of building an eco-centred project (Noori et al., 2020).

Keeping in mind the implementation of sustainability strategies over the years, there have been a variety of groups that have been working on these initiatives, but the joint deliberations mainly took place between the DMO and municipality lead rather than the entire group of stakeholders. Tourism industry practitioners were invited to participate via meetings, emails and telephone calls. While meetings were designed to encourage dialogue, one stakeholder lamented that it was a less accommodating space for entertaining supplier feedback, as has been similarly seen in smart cities participation (Engelbert et al., 2019). Meanwhile, at the time of taking office, the mayor requested ideas from the residents. Locals were encouraged to submit their feedback, which was how the wheelchair application, considered a smart idea, was incorporated, illustrating participatory and polycentric governance (Ostrom, 2010).

In Ljubljana, ideas were not only generated from organisations within the city as found in other smart cities (see Zuzul, 2019), but also externally from Vienna and the EU. Representatives from the Ljubljana municipality reviewed various smart city bids by the EU and then submitted their own application, which is the case for many European smart cities (Perboli & Rosano, 2020). Thus, this thesis supports Zhu's et al. (2014) view that government and tourism suppliers participate in smart tourism design and development. However, upon further examination, the focus on stages of development reveals that the agenda was influenced less by the local community and more by top-down leadership and influences further afield who were outside of the city. This illustrates that shared power does not always equate to equal power (Cox et al., 2010; Ostrom, 2010).

6.3.2 Ordering Stage

The smart initiative ideas were further examined and developed alongside plans, representing Wang and Fesenmaier's (2007) ordering stage. Unlike the assembling stage where participation included residents, suppliers and municipality representatives, the ordering stage in Ljubljana adopted more of a top-down approach, similar to smart destinations such as China (Zhu et al., 2014) and Barcelona (Boes et al., 2016). For bids submitted to the EU, screening was conducted by EU representatives. These EU initiatives were not deliberated on within collaboration; hence, this ordering stage is not necessary for explaining those specific initiatives as they proceeded to the implementation phase.

According to Wang and Fesenmaier (2007), strategies, rules and roles are developed during the ordering stage to guide the behaviour of stakeholders

within the group and throughout the initiatives. As there was also no smart strategy in Ljubljana, smart development drew upon already existing tourism plans and Vision 2025. Ideas and details needed to be aligned with the vision as well as the theme of sustainability, which illustrates the role of path dependence. The sustainability path gave rise to infrastructure, which is unlike some smart development where the infrastructure was newly developed for smartness (see Zuzul, 2019). For instance, the smart space that accommodates Ljubljana's electric vehicles and sharing systems was formed in 2007, which was 10 years before the term smart appeared in their tourism plans. Much of the planning, idea development and execution of activities were associated with the municipality representatives rather than tourism suppliers, making Ljubljana more aligned with smart cities than smart destinations.

There were no rules or processes to guide tourism suppliers' engagement in the initiatives. Activities followed the same path of occurrences within other tourism destination collaborations. For instance, marketing collaborations such as World Travel Market and ITB did not require the establishment of rules for participation with the DMO. During these initiatives, tourism suppliers took on a more laissez-faire approach to participation while the DMO led, facilitated plans, engagement and execution. According to participant 22, a tourism supplier,

“We just provide them with our material and they do the communication there. It's that kind of collaboration”.

The same was being witnessed in Ljubljana's smart development and contributed to the top-down orientation. Some suppliers regarded smart initiatives as another collaborative destination initiative, which closely aligns with Ivars-Baidal et al.'s (2019) interpretation of smart being a destination management approach.

6.3.3 Implementation Stage

Wang and Fesenmaier (2007) recognise the implementation stage as the point in which ideas are put into action. Tourism suppliers were more evident during the promotion of smart initiatives and delivery of smart experiences. In Ljubljana, the creation of online and offline smart platforms was dependent on the supply of information provided by the tourism suppliers. Information was gathered through site visitations and email requests. The DMO promoted Ljubljana as a smart destination, and this could have been expected as it is mainly responsible for the management and marketing of destination activities (Volgger & Pechlaner, 2014). This is unlike the case of smart cities where promotion usually resides with real estate and technology developers (Zuzul, 2019).

Promotion of smart initiatives occurred online via websites and social media pages for the DMO as well as offline in the visitor offices, brochures and tradeshow (see Figure 6.3.3). The organisation did not create new marketing campaigns but instead utilised existing promotional programmes. Tourism suppliers also promoted, sold the products and provided the experience at their establishments, which is in keeping with Gretzel et al.'s (2015) stance that suppliers have dynamic roles. Suppliers were not just beneficiaries of smart initiatives, as Kumar et al.'s (2020) smart city model suggests, but in Ljubljana there were suppliers who contributed to the process. However, this was not ongoing participation as Ortega et al. (2020) propose for tourism suppliers in smart destination.



Figure 6.3.3: Promotion of Urbana Card

The municipality was instrumental in endorsing smart cities conferences where knowledge sharing was encouraged. Although, municipality representatives were evident in photos, such as those taken at the European Capital of Smart Tourism presentation, they were representatives rather than spokespersons for the city. The mayor was seen as being vocal in promoting these initiatives. The promotional narratives of the mayor, though different from the DMO, promoted the same initiatives. For instance, in an interview with a smart cities' expert, the mayor explained that a smart day entailed local residents utilising electric vehicles and bicycle sharing, which were initiatives that led to the city's designation as a smart tourism destination. It was found that the narratives were tailored to suit either the local citizens or tourists depending on the marketing medium. Smart city Ljubljana therefore appears to be the same as smart destination Ljubljana, which opposes Gretzel et al.'s (2015a) study that makes a distinction between smart cities and smart tourism with the latter catering to tourists and former accommodating residents. The focus of smart destination is on supporting tourists (Koo et al., 2017). However, both tourists and citizens were being targeted in Ljubljana. Only three initiatives could be identified as being specifically for visitors, namely the electric train, Taste Ljubljana tour and the DMO website. The other initiatives, which included wi-fi, mobile applications, bicycle and car sharing systems, could be used by both locals and visitors and have also been referenced by other smart city studies as examples of initiatives (see Araral, 2020). This finding is a novel insight in smart research where distinctions continue to be made.

After the implementation of numerous smart initiatives aligned with sustainability, the focus of smartness in Ljubljana had changed to digitisation, having been awarded for this in October 2019 in the European Capital of Smart Tourism programme. Based on Wang and Fesenmaier's (2007) model, the focus would have been initially set during the assembling stage; however, this arose during the promotion of other smart initiatives such as Urbana card and Taste Ljubljana. This highlights the cyclical nature of the process. Most smart cities initially concentrate on digitisation (Yigitcanlar et al., 2019), but this was not the case of Ljubljana. The city was recognised as 2020 European Capital of Smart Tourism for digitisation, but this had followed its recognition for smart tourism with focus on sustainability from the previous year. The destination was tied to its long-held path of sustainability rather than embracing digitisation through advanced technological initiatives such as big data platforms (Noori et al., 2020). The sustainability context has determined the type of initiatives that the destination was able to embrace. Indeed, the notion that the past conditions the direction of new pathways is evident here (David, 1985; Sydow et al., 2012).

6.3.4 Evaluation and Transformation Stage

The developed and promoted initiatives were at this stage evaluated. The DMO was one entity involved in this evaluation stage. The representatives monitored data received prior and after implementation of the smart tourism initiatives. Participant 12 stated that their role was:

“To provide the KPI [Key Performance Indicators], so the key performance indicators, for my co-workers so they can develop or promote the right directions”.

Participant 12 garnered feedback on tourist arrivals, visitor spend, destination growth percentages and attitudes of citizens towards tourism. Data collection relied on traditional methods such as surveys rather than taking advantage of the data received through smart platforms as Li et al. (2017) recommend. This highlights the underutilised state of smart initiatives within Ljubljana's tourism industry.

Evaluation resulted in one of the following actions taking place: continued existence, further development, extension of the initiative or termination. This stage is not evident in previous smart city models (see Lee et al., 2013; Letaifa, 2015; Siokas et al., 2021). Regarding continued existence, the wheelchair application fell within this category. The application was still being promoted to tourists while garnering further interests by tourism suppliers, which has led to an increase in the number of suppliers on the platform. Taste Ljubljana was one of the initiatives that was further developed. It was reviewed by the DMO and plans were put in place to develop it as a larger programme, still focused on the culinary aspect of Ljubljana but including local events that would be developed throughout the year. Then, some initiatives were also extended to other surrounding areas, resulting in the creation of smart communities and towns. While all initiatives continued to develop and redevelop in Ljubljana, some suppliers noted that they may in fact be terminated due to lack of resources needed for sustenance, namely availability of finance, technical skills and knowledge.

Additionally, activities that were expected during the early stages were observed during the later stages of collaboration. For instance, the formalisation of roles and duties that should have occurred during ordering manifested after implementation. For instance, one of the participants was officially given title to lead smart city initiatives in 2018, which according to Wang and Fesenmaier's (2007) model should have happened at the start of implementation or during the planning stage of smart cities (see Lee et al., 2013). This finding illustrates the cyclical nature of smart development. Therefore, not all the expected collaborative activities were established during early stages.

Tourism industry practitioners should be mindful of the cyclical nature of the smart process since it is not established with a clear focus and teams like usual destination collaborations. Furthermore, the process is not time-bound, which is prudent to note for destination practitioners who craft tourism development plans for short-term periods such as four years as seen in the case of Ljubljana.

The development processes of smart cities are usually critiqued for serving the state and corporations more than citizens (Greenfield, 2013; Kitchin, 2014) but evidently local tourism businesses too have not played a continuously active role in decision-making process that led to the recognition of Ljubljana as a capital of smart tourism. Nonetheless, tourism suppliers engaged in smart initiatives despite not garnering mutual value and exchanges. The following section will examine these suppliers' perceptions of the factors that influenced their decision to participate.

6.4 To Engage or Not Engage- Suppliers' Perspectives on the Factors that Influence Engagement in Smart Tourism

In absence of studies that provide a deep understanding of factors that influence supplier engagement (see Ivars-Baidal et al., 2017), this section presents insights from the perspectives of tourism businesses in Ljubljana. De Wit's (2017) relational factors of inter-organisational collaboration aid in understanding engagement; however, they needed to be adjusted to account for the findings from the thematic analysis. First, organisational factors emerged, legitimacy was no longer associated with being a relational factor and urgency was not deemed important for understanding supplier engagement. The latter change will be explained below while the former two will be examined within the rest of the chapter discussion.

It was stated in the Introductory Chapter that there was an urgent call by UNWTO (2017) for practitioners to address destination management issues using smart initiatives. However, business' decision to engage in smart tourism was not associated with this or any form of urgency despite the importance of the factor in tourism collaboration (Jamal & Stronza, 2009). Instead, Ljubljana suppliers shared their concerns regarding destination management issues while others dismissed them:

“At the moment, if you walk through Ljubljana you cannot say it's crowded and also I don't really support this, this, I don't know, usually media going against tourism in that way and even in peak periods you can do a lot with management”. (Participant 7)

“It's too many people. It's difficult to walk through the city centre. It's difficult to get a drink or go on the road to eat something. Too many people, so I don't like it”. (Participant 15)

Local suppliers noted that they had an urgent desire of wanting to witness the transformation of their city as seen in participant's 20 quote below. Still, this desire was not found to be a factor that influenced supplier engagement:

“I mean, we [local residents and suppliers] made the pressure on them [government] and then like I don't know, the city is now developing”.
(Participant 20)

Participant 20 distanced themselves from being involved in the city's development, perceiving it as a duty solely for the municipality. Their role as a local resident was to demand actions and hold the government accountable for carrying out these tasks. While they were uncertain as to whether residents' actions led to the current development, they were satisfied with the outcome.

Together, the relational and organisational factors provide insights to smart destination literature (see Figure 6.4 for comparison to Ivars-Baidal et al.'s (2017) findings). A constructionist, interpretive perspective provided further depth in findings, illustrating that suppliers' views were not fixed but instead varied across individuals and based on context. The following discussion will first examine the factors associated with power then, frequency of interactions as well as those associated with the organisation.

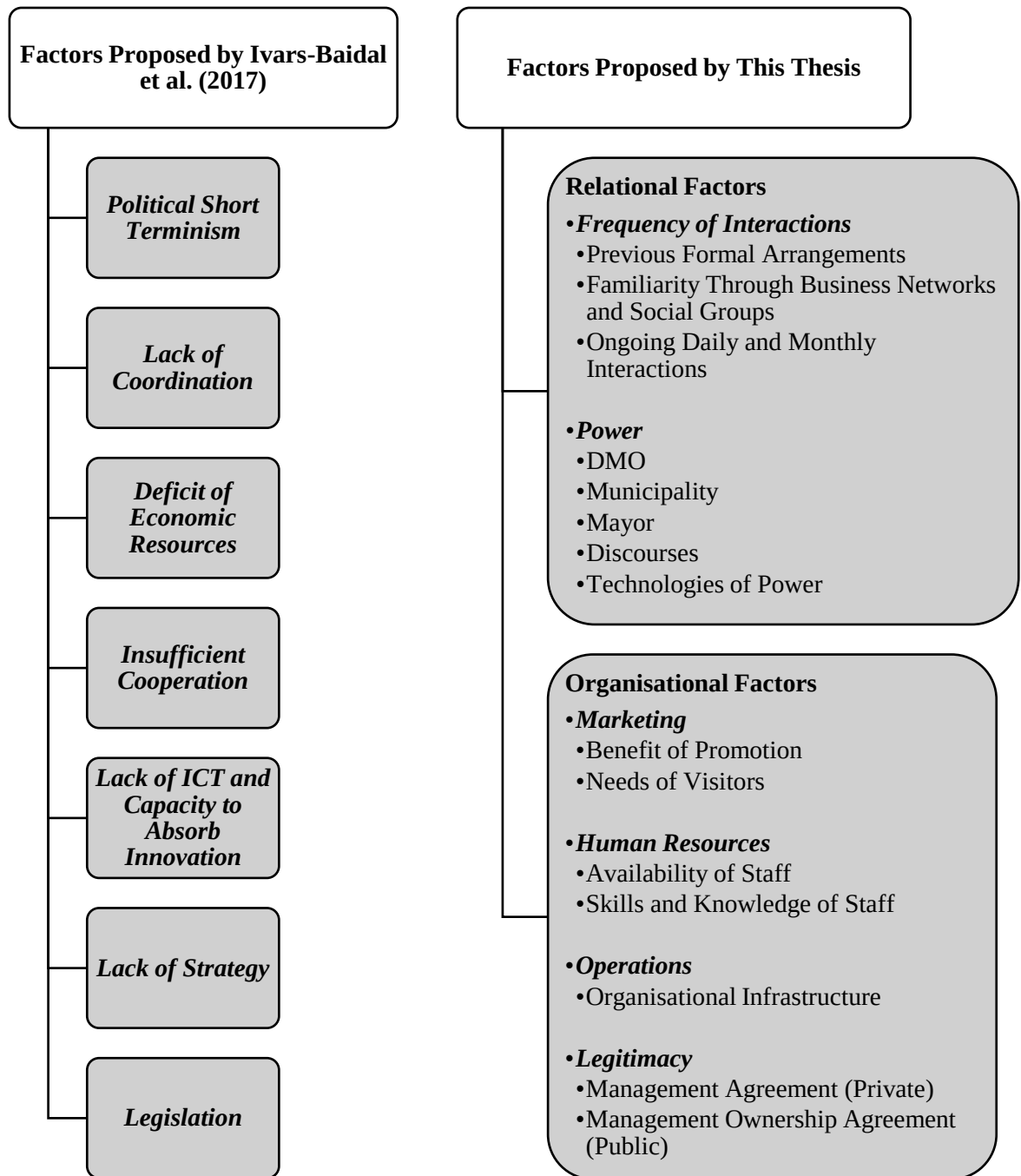


Figure 6.4: Factors Proposed by Ivars-Baidal et al. (2017) and Those Emerging from This Thesis

6.5 Power

Individuals and organisations have control over suppliers within a tourism collaboration process by influencing their decisions to participate and engage in activities (Jamal & Getz, 1995). Similar to inter-organisational networks

(Butterfield et al., 2004; De Wit, 2017; Kaur & Lodhia, 2018), there were figures of power who controlled and influenced tourism suppliers based on their resources and associations. Power was evident in the form of the destination management organisation (DMO), municipality as well as external influencers. The former two were acknowledged as being essential to local tourism suppliers' decision and will be discussed.

6.5.1 The DMO

Like destination collaborations (Pike, 2012; Pike & Page, 2014; Sigala, 2013; Volgger & Pechlaner, 2014; Wang & Fesenmaier, 2000; Wang & Pizam, 2011), the DMO was recognised as a key influencer by suppliers in smart tourism. The view of the DMO being lead in smart tourism was dominant in the interviews and is quite familiar destination collaboration (Aas et al., 2005; Saito & Ruhanen, 2017):

“Ljubljana has its own touristic institution, DMO, which is developing the strategies.” (Participant 12)

“The app [mobile application] was developed by DMO.” (Participant 6)

Tourism businesses' executives described the DMO as the entity that developed plans and smart initiatives, engage with tourism suppliers and promote the platforms. This expands on Jovicic's (2019) conceptualisation of the DMO's role in a smart destination as Jovicic (2019) notes that the DMO is required to engage in two-way, real-time communication with tourists to promote destination offerings. In the case of Ljubljana, the role is perceived as being centred on the development of the plans and platforms rather than exchanges with tourists online. Nonetheless, the DMO's position was portrayed by suppliers as one with significant responsibilities in smart development. Based on Cardullo and Kitchen (2019), the organisation would be considered as co-creators, which is the highest level of participation in smart cities.

However, the DMO's account of its role as influencer varied from those of suppliers, which resulted in representatives disassociating the organisation from such titles during the interviews. Instead, DMO executives labelled the organisation as “an active partner” (Participant 8) working alongside municipality representatives who were directly connected to the mayor. The municipality, which established and funded the DMO was perceived as the key influencer of smart development in Ljubljana. Based on the perspectives of DMO representatives, the smart destination context would therefore differ from other destination collaboration where the leadership is shared at the local level (Beritelli, 2014; Zehrer et al., 2014). Participant 8 further unpacks the

role of an active partner by shedding light on some of their duties within past and present events:

“We are organising an event where local food makers, they meet, restaurants, managers, and staff, so they can provide a fresh and local to the restaurants...actually we were partners. We didn’t develop it [mobile application]”.

Following discourse analysis, findings revealed that these views still were not shared by suppliers who even saw the municipal government as having less importance in smart development. The connection between the municipality and DMO was evident in the public space. For instance, individuals that represented both entities were present at the 2019 awards ceremony for the European Capital of Smart Tourism. Participants acknowledged the mayor as influencer rather than the municipality only because he engaged directly with the local populace and not directly with the tourism practitioners.

A difference in views among individuals can emerge based on the context of their understanding of an object, according to Foucault (1972). Tourism suppliers understanding of smart tourism differed since they were not exposed to the entire smart development process based on the findings in Section 5.3. Hence, they were only able to provide an assessment based on their sole interactions, which was mainly via the DMO. The organisation had developed relationships with tourism businesses through previous industry collaborations and had the role of maintaining tourism networks for furthering destination promotion, which is associated with relational exchange theory. The theory assumes that businesses participate with others because of past relationships (Fyall et al., 2012; Macneil, 1980).

Departing from tourism collaboration studies, the DMO’s power to influence suppliers was based on its resources due to a unique occurrence in Ljubljana. Some local tourism operators were not able to fund and attend regional and global travel tradeshow to further promote their organisations and have since chose to continue their engagement with the DMO. Their confidence in the DMO to ensure successful initiatives is unlike the case of businesses in other European destinations such as Greece and Spain that view DMO as being inefficient in collaborations (Martins et al., 2020; Sigala, 2013). This shows the importance of the DMO to tourism suppliers in Ljubljana despite the lack of recognition or emphasis by some smart tourism studies such as Zhu et al. (2014).

While smart initiatives were not tradeshow, the details of these initiatives were promoted by the DMO in the form of marketing collateral at these events, which gave local suppliers added exposure. Suppliers were denied of the networking opportunities that these events provided, which is identified as one of main factors that influence suppliers’ participation in destination

collaborations for events (Menon et al., 2017). However, Ljubljana's suppliers were more interested in driving awareness for their business. Based on this, the DMO provided them with the exposure and expertise, which are resources, hence can be explained through resource dependency theory (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1977). It emphasises that suppliers collaborate based on their need for resources whether in a destination collaboration (Wang & Xiang, 2007) or smart tourism (Gretzel et al., 2015b). Nonetheless, it is important to note here that this scenario differs from the type of resource that smart tourism is acknowledged for, namely data sharing (Baggio et al., 2020). In Ljubljana, businesses are provided with marketing opportunity through exposure and organisational knowledge.

The DMO's move to enable exposure for business facilitated inclusion of suppliers, which is core principle for achieving justice in smart destinations (Choi et al., 2021). The DMO was aware of tourism suppliers' needs and had a desire to make it easier for these organisations to attain success:

“We [DMO] want to develop our big partners with projects like this [smart initiatives] and yeah. We think that everybody [tourism businesses] deserves to see things as easy as possible”.

This illustrated their commitment to tourism practitioners as seen in previous tourism collaborations (Pansiri, 2013; Waddock, 1989). Future studies would be required to determine if this consideration by the DMO of including certain “big partners” would overtime contribute to unequal representation on the smart platforms. The following section will further examine the municipal government that was highlighted as a key influencer by the DMO and other stakeholders.

6.5.2 *Municipal Government*

The municipal government was identified as key stakeholder in smart development, but it was the mayor who was popularly referenced. In Ljubljana, the post of mayor was elected through a democratic process every four years. The mayor to whom smart initiatives were credited had garnered success at the electoral polls five times, according to document Doc-vl. Meanwhile, participant 15 claimed that it had been three times:

“This mayor is like third time so it's like 12 years in Ljubljana and he really organised and work and he has a vision to make like Ljubljana, the most beautiful city in the world”.

Nonetheless, it was clear that he had established his position within the governance structure and minds of individuals through common reference as “the mayor”. His name became synonymous with efforts that were being developed by the municipality and was recognised as the main voice of smart

development process. He can be partially considered as what is known as the convenor of tourism collaboration (Fyall et al., 2000). While he did not handle all activities related to convenorship, such as contacting suppliers and collecting resources, he was considered by suppliers as the convenor since he was acknowledged as the one who crafted the vision and promoted the cause to residents.

The mayor's leadership style was based on traits that associated with both transformational and autocratic leaders. The overlap in leadership styles differ from previous studies, which identify transformational leaders as been essential in the development of tourism contexts related to technology (Spencer et al., 2012). The transformational leadership style was evident in the mayor's ability to communicate and inspire the local populace. However, in contrast to Spencer et al. (2012), the autocratic traits were mainly emphasised by suppliers. Participant 17 briefly stated that suppliers who chose not to cooperate would be brought to the attention of the mayor who would later ensure that the situation was rectified.

All decisions had to be examined, finalised and approved by the mayor. Participant 17 communicated their dislike for this process of continuous consultation with the mayor in the following extract:

“Actually this is the template for anything. We should ask mayor. Really, I don't like to ask him. Just leave me and I will do my job and I will show my result but I really don't want to ask him”.

The participant preferred autonomy in carrying out duties but this was not possible while working under the direction of the mayor who was responsible for giving the final approval. Based on the participant, the mayor also had to be consulted on all matters. Their feedback that “we should ask mayor” brings into question whether inclusion and two-way communication existed among those who were located at the centre of smart development decision-making in Ljubljana. While the collaboration could be described as municipality-led (Medeiros de Araujo & Bramwell, 1999), decisions were centrally in the hands on the mayor rather than based on a full consultation with municipality representatives.

The mayor's attitude and ability to influence were shaped by past and present situations in Ljubljana, which became evident following discourse analysis. First, there was a continued state of dependence and authority that had existed prior to the mayor's time and was discussed in Chapter 5. Participant 3 confirmed that the mayor had an influence on local engagement with there being no obvious resistance. The participant did not find this to be surprising based on the hierarchical framework that had underpinned Slovenia for decades prior to its independence:

“I’m not sure if you were able to travel also to other republics of former Yugoslavia, ahm and see the differences. The main difference why Slovenia was able to go, follow this sustainability route so quickly is also about this culture and this discipline about the fact that Slovenia was under all the time, under this Austro-Hungarian, part of Italians”.
(Participant 3)

Lack of autonomy equates to control, which represents a form of “discipline” for residents, according to participant 3. Concepts such as discipline and normalisation associate with Foucault’s work on governmentality and emphasises control of subjectivities (Burchell et al., 1991). Discipline is also a way to maintain the practices of a society (Foucault, 1973). Submission to autocratic leadership has overtime been normalised in Ljubljana, which results in residents being easily influenced by the mayor to participate in smart initiatives. Conformance to a figure of authority is tied to past occurrences. Slovenia is currently an independent country allowing for a more interactive process for residents, but this active citizenry seemed to be lacking and was voiced by some suppliers.

Smart tourism (see Boes et al., 2016; Spencer et al., 2012) and tourism collaboration studies (Jamal & Getz, 1995) tend to point to stakeholders such as the government or private sector leaders as facilitators of engagement. On the other hand, the case of Ljubljana illustrates that an individual public figure can be a key influencer in the process. Furthermore, the identification of an individual or organisation as a source of power vary based on suppliers’ accounts due to participants being exposed to different aspects of smart development. Not only were there influences of power but also frequency was found to be a factor that affected engagement and will be examined below.

6.6 Frequency of Interactions

Suppliers are influenced based on their frequency of interactions with others who are based in inter-organisational networks (De Wit, 2017). This was the case of Ljubljana as suppliers chose to engage with suppliers who they had ongoing exchanges with, which opposes Beritelli’s (2011) finding that suppliers chose to collaborate irrespective of interactions.

Unlike Ivars-Baidal et al. (2017) and Gajdosik’s (2018) research where insufficient cooperation among tourism businesses was found to be a concern in smart destinations, this was not the case of Ljubljana due to its geographical and close-knit social structure. As of the 2019 figures provided by the local municipality, the city of Ljubljana was home to about 300,000 residents. It is therefore small in comparison to its neighbouring smart city, Vienna, with a population of about 1.9 million. The size of Ljubljana was acknowledged by participants as one of the reasons for suppliers’ continuous engagement:

“I mean maybe this is the benefit because we are so small, it’s not a partnership of 100 companies but at the end, 20 companies, there are like 10 hotels, 2 or 3 transport companies, 4, 5 agencies, PCOs and one or two, three catering companies, that’s it.” (Participant 1)

While studies have acknowledged that engagement in destination collaborations have been influenced by previous industry interactions (Wang & Fesenmaier, 2007), this thesis further shows that frequency of interactions were linked to Ljubljana’s previous and present political contexts. Participant 3 noted that Slovenians were continuously subject to practices that fostered inclusion, and this shaped their behaviour:

“Always having to obey something and people were just, people are trained to obey certain rules or certain quotes. In the villages, there are these codes of conduct that people are just following, everybody”.

According to Foucault (1999, p.131 in Winkel, 2012, p.82), “every society has...type of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true”. The understanding of unity and brotherhood had been normalised from practices stemming from the Yugoslavia era (Bakic-Hayden & Hayden, 1992; Zimmermann, 1995). These practices of unity were accepted by those within the Yugoslavia era as their manner of operating. Findings from Foucauldian discourse analysis shows that they were enforced through what Foucault (2003) called disciplinary power, namely technologies of power that regulated individuals’ behaviour (Burchell et al., 1991), such as everyday interactions, pledge of allegiance and pupil’s oath, which the latter is presented below:

“Today, as I become a pioneer, I give my pioneer’s word of honour, to study and work diligently and to be a good comrade, to love our self-managed homeland, The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, to spread brotherhood and unity, and the principles for which Tito fought, to value all peoples of the world that wish for freedom and peace”.

One participant even demonstrated the citing of the pupil’s oath during one of the interviews without being asked by the researcher. Evidently, the ideas still live on for some individuals even though independence occurred over 30 years ago.

While the times of Yugoslavia greatly influenced the residents’ attitudes, there has been a change in behaviour with the introduction of a neoliberal society. The following is an extract of one participant’s feedback:

“So, the neighbour's garden should not be more beautiful than ours. And so, everybody is trying to get its own garden the best. And this attitude is I think very strong reason why people would rather do somethings on their own or with their friends or for their people, not together and for a general cause and for a greater cause. And, I think to

change this attitude and to change this mentality uhhh, it takes alot of things”.

The conflicting values contributed to the non-participation in collaboration by some suppliers who preferred to embark on their own endeavours. Participant 12 referred to this state as a “mentality”, which is in tandem with Foucault’s (2008) understanding of neoliberalism as governmentality. In line with Foucault’s work, the conduct of individuals was controlled to produce their entrepreneurial selves (Lorenzini, 2018). This became evident in Participant 23’s response when a follow-up question was asked regarding their reason for choosing to engage with others who they frequently engaged with:

“I think it has to do with the personality. If blood is running through veins, it’s like uhh an entrepreneur blood that is running... Ahh mean, yea. I will say that only first place counts, second place is for the first loser so this is how it is in business, if you are in the sport or whatever. If you are first, you are first, if you are second, you are second, first loser so...Capitalism is like this, if you work you earn you live. If you don’t work, you don’t earn and you cannot live...The good ones are climbing up, up, up and the bad ones are climbing down, down, down and this is how it can work and this is how it works”.

Participant 23 continued to explain that it required time to re-establish relationships and formalise agreements in a business environment that requires efficiency and performance; hence, they resorted to engaging with individuals who he had previous associations with, namely “the good ones”. According to Tyler and Dinan (2001), collaborating with favoured businesses saves time in comparison to consulting with every supplier. However, in the case of Ljubljana, it is the competitive economic context that has influenced this behaviour.

Participant 23 also established clear discourses of difference by categorising those who submit to this neoliberal governmentality as those who are “the bad ones”, “climbing down” and “first loser”. Meanwhile, individuals with contrasting behaviour like themselves as “entrepreneur” and “the good ones”. They also mentioned it as being a part of their “personality”, which illustrates that this mentality is deeply engrained in them. They are considered winners due to their conformance to ensuring increased productivity, competitiveness and efficiency, which signifies neoliberalism values (Bal & Doci, 2018), which will be further discussed in Chapter 7.

The physical and social structure of the Ljubljana provided suppliers with the ease of interacting frequently with other tourism suppliers who continue to engage based on established social exchanges (Ahmed et al., 1999; Macneil, 1980). At the centre of these engagements was the continuous acknowledgement of the DMO. Nonetheless, there were other stakeholders

who were deemed necessary for technical support in the development of smart initiatives. Based on transaction cost economics theory, frequency of interactions represents a means by which stakeholders can form collaborations over long periods of time (Ahmed et al., 1999; Williamson, 1985). These organisations were chosen based on interactions through previous formal agreements, social groups and daily interactions, which are discussed below. These three aspects accounted for the main ways in which “frequency” of interactions was perceived by suppliers, hence, the number of exchanges were not fixed.

6.6.1 Previous Formal Arrangements

In Ljubljana, some tourism suppliers confirmed that they engaged in collaborations with the same suppliers that were involved in formal agreements whether as a past employee or supplier and has been evident in tourism collaboration:

“I know the director very well and we work together good because we used to be colleagues and so it’s a bit easier”. (Participant 7)

As a past employee at one of the entities that was key in smart development, participant 7 had no reservation in engaging in smart initiatives due to having prior positive working experiences with this supplier. Engagement based on previous business interactions resonated with the findings of other cases on tourism collaboration (Beritelli, 2011; Cehan et al., 2021; Selin & Myers, 1998). The same principle applied to suppliers in Ljubljana who were not directly associated with the tourism industry. For instance, participant 17 spoke about the arrangements that their company had with businesses that provided technical expertise for smart initiatives. According to the participant, they anticipated further involvement over a long period of time with the same supplier on other smart initiatives based on the quote below:

“If you ask me, what will be after this 10 year, we [tourism business] will have another contract with the same company [not a traditional tourism business].” (Participant 17)

Long-term engagement was tied to contractual agreements. These arrangements were done after public entities issued requests for proposals via national tender and interested suppliers would respond to. For instance, an invitation to tender was sent out by the government to solicit technical expertise for one of the smart initiatives. A contract was signed in the case of the bicycle sharing scheme between one of the current suppliers and the municipality “for 15 years” (Participant 20). Arguably, this is beneficial to those within the network. Continuous collaboration with the same supplier results in equity of value based on relational exchange perspective (Fyall et al.,

2012; Macneil, 1980). However, these exchanges did not result in equal consideration for those outside the network since the same supplier may be chosen due to favouritism. This situation indicates the exercise of power as suppliers are chosen based on preference by those in authority:

“I mean of course there were some smaller problems in regards to that [favouritism] but still again we always like uhh make an agreement and mostly all of the major players are part of the most of this partnership which I told you before”.

There was little regard for the issue of favouritism despite its negative effects such as exclusion of suppliers. Arguably, while a legally binding agreement can speak to the requirements for the process, clear regulations for smart development were still missing in Ljubljana. A process of accountability may aid improvement through fair and transparent engagement, leading to the reduction of nepotism, nonetheless, this is a possible area for future research.

6.6.2 *Familiarity through Business Networks and Social Groups*

Suppliers will choose to do business with those who they have personal relationships with rather than based on the nature of transactions (Fyall et al., 2012), which was the case in Ljubljana. As a small destination, suppliers were familiar with each other through tourism networks and choose to engage with the same businesses, which is the underlying assumption of relational exchange theory (Fyall et al., 2012; Macneil, 1980):

“In Ljubljana, we know everybody. I think it’s easier for us. You always know somebody from that organisation”. (Participant 5)

This case of familiarity can also be examined through the lens of power. For instance, familiarity among suppliers allowed for acts of nepotism, which requires the use of power to advance interactions with those who are favoured by the one who is in the position of authority. Participant 17 recalled that the destination was considered for smart initiatives due to one of its nationals being employed to the EU:

“The last initiative which I am presenting maybe one month ago which is from the EU Commissioner, she’s from Slovenia and she’s responsible from the infrastructure. She’s responsible, I think, for the traffic and the infrastructure in the European community and from her cabinet they send me initiative”.

Participants also preferred engagement in collaborative initiatives with those who were not only from the same region but also from similar social and political groups:

“In Slovenia, first of all, you only collaborate with people you know. Second of all, you only collaborate with people of your social class. Third of all, you only collaborate with people who vote the same political option, so these are all elements that are kind of play a role in collaboration and I mean in prohibiting proper collaboration”.

(Participant 13)

Again, there was no regard for the transaction but instead the focus continued to be on relationships in determining suppliers’ engagement decision, which is the underlying assumption of relational exchange theory (Fyall et al, 2012). A similar sentiment to participant 13 was shared by participant 23 who noted that their business decisions were also influenced and conducted in social settings:

“If there is an important football match going on, you are going to have all the important CEOs at the Lounge or wherever and if you are there, you see the match, you have a beer, discuss with them and this is how you do easily business plus you combine fun with pleasure with business”.

The arrangements between suppliers took the form of informal agreements rather than signed contracts. This is in keeping with relational exchange theory as engagements in collaborations are social (Fyall et al., 2012; Macneil, 1980). The participant declared that frequent interactions with the same individual through informal arrangements was a necessity for future collaborations. Engaging in smart initiatives at the destination level did not require formal arrangements from their organisation and was therefore favourable. Informal relations are not new to tourism collaborations (Beritelli, 2011; Wondirad et al., 2020) but enhances De Wit’s (2017) work to illustrate that there is a linkage between the frequency as well as mode of interactions.

At times, individuals changed jobs, however, participant 1 stated that in these situations, it was the frequency of interactions with the organisation that determined the business’ decision to engage in collaboration:

“Uhhh there were some changes also in the last 22, 3 years, lot of people has changed, so there are new people so this could be also a bigger challenge for us but in the end this hotels or other companies stayed in the partnership”.

Engagement with those from familiar social groups may have led to exclusion of some suppliers but this requires further investigation. Nevertheless, suppliers sought to engage with other business representatives that were involved in similar social groups. Members of these groups have similar norms, values and personal relationships, which is the basis of relational exchange theory (Macneil, 1980).

6.6.3 Ongoing and Regular Interactions

Ljubljana suppliers interacted with neighbouring businesses regularly, which led to sharing of resources from staff to parking facilities and rooms needed to accommodate hotel room group blocks and instances of overbooking. These situations were ongoing occurrences but were mainly linked to frequently held conferences in the city. The Ljubljana Exhibition and Convention Centre, renovated between 2001 and 2008 with a new entrance hall in 2012, has 20 rooms that can host from 15 to 6,000 participants. Since 2020, conference facilities have attracted “about 500,000 visitors per year and is annually hosting over 200 national and international events” (Web-iv). This has resulted in “events between 500- 1500 people” (Participant 1). The highest room capacity for one hotel is 214 rooms, therefore, a block of rooms provided by multiple hotels was usually needed to successfully host large event groups in the city, which offered a total of 2,975 hotel rooms that were within walking distance from the city centre or five kilometres from it.

Hotel partners from these conference collaborations would be contacted in situations of overbookings too when businesses relied on each other for resources such as staff and accommodation, signifying resource dependence (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). However, participant 9 recalled that this was not always possible during peak seasons. This was not the only case in which suppliers were unable to collaborate with those whom they had regular contact with. It was also evident in smart tourism as some of the suppliers mentioned that they were not aware of who the other participants were. This was often followed- up with a question by the researcher regarding meeting attendance. Many of the responses often found suppliers responding in the negative or disassociating from the process. For instance, participant 2 who was active in Taste Ljubljana stated the following:

“I wouldn’t know. Maybe our F & B [Food and Beverage] manager has to go but uhmm no. Not. That was the project and the plan was done at that time”.

The previous discussion illustrated that suppliers’ perceptions of frequency of interactions influenced their engagement in smart initiatives at the destination level. Their assessment of this frequency varied from daily to occasionally through political and social groups. Interactions among individuals in Ljubljana were deeply rooted and tied to the destination’s geographical and political contexts, both past and present. Arguably, collaboration in Ljubljana will continue this path of engaging with those who are known from previous interactions, but this can also exclude others in the future considering that the destination is hoping to continue attracting foreign investments in the tourism industry. This is an area that will be considered for future research.

6.7 Organisational Factors

Organisational factors are those that entities have the capability to directly control and change. From the thematic analysis, these were classified as marketing, operations, human resources and legitimacy. The discussion first starts with examining operations.

6.7.1 Operations- Organisational Infrastructure

Leung (2019) stated that a lack of infrastructure for information systems was a barrier to hotels for implementing smart systems. However, in the case of Ljubljana, the lack of infrastructure was not related to the installation of the technology. In fact, no supplier spoke about there being a lack in technological infrastructure, which is a core component of smart (Boes et al., 2016). Moreover, not all smart initiatives needed technological devices. Entities that participated in the Urbana smart initiative needed a special technology device to scan the smart cards, and this was provided by the DMO. This is in keeping with Del Chiappa and Baggio's (2015) view that systems should be provided to facilitate involvement in smart destination initiatives. However, these devices were not sufficient to guarantee engagement.

Suppliers indicated that the physical infrastructure of their businesses played a role in their decision to engage in Ljubljana's smart tourism. For instance, one of the requirements for participating in the wheelchair application was the installation of the appropriate facilities to accommodate wheelchair users. Some businesses had been in existence before the 1990s and had not refurbished their facilities. Therefore, they were not equipped with the necessary resources:

“Because it's a very old building and there are, it's very complicated. Unfortunately. We would be glad to be a part of this project”.
(Participant 4)

However, a lack of infrastructure was not a sufficient response for non-participation. Some attraction executives were not able to resist as in the case of participant 4. They noted that their actions to “upgrade” were influenced by the DMO as seen in participant 12's feedback:

“They [the DMO] came here. They also made a list of everything we had. They gave us list of recommendations and based on this list of recommendations, we in the next year put in the yearly plan, the upgrades. So our hall is upgraded for hearing, I mean, the equipment for hearing disabled people and so on and so on.”

Here, power is evident since the DMO exercised its authority by instructing participant 12's establishment to make necessary changes to accommodate smart initiatives. Stakeholders found imposing will on another is well-noted in the literature (Graci, 2013; Jamal & Getz, 1995; Medeiros de Araujo & Bramwell, 1999; Nunkoo & Smith, 2015; Pechlaner et al., 2012; West, 1994). It is salient to add that participant 12 represented an entity that was mainly publicly funded and was not as financially independent as other entirely privately-owned tourism businesses such as participant 4. However, there was still need to ensure their participation, which will be further explained in Chapter 7 as it relates to technologies of power.

While some entities had to make changes, some did not as their establishment was based in a location that had the necessary facilities in place. For instance, participant 2 recalled that their business' decision to be involved in the wheelchair application was associated with its proximity to the elevator. The building was located at a building in the city centre:

“The business is really nearby the elevator which can be used by wheelchair users”. (Participant 2)

This resulted in there being no development cost to the organisation. Here, engagement by participant 2 was tied to the efforts of suppliers who can neither be classified using previous smart tourism roles, namely tourism suppliers or other suppliers (Gretzel et al., 2015b). Those previous classifications were related to tourism suppliers who were traditionally focused on in tourism such as hotels while other being financial institutions and technology companies. Participant 2 was dependent on the building owner to keep and continue maintaining the elevator, which guaranteed their business' participation in the wheelchair application.

Participant 2 also represented another organisation, which was involved in Ljubljana's smart initiatives. The second business, which was located away from the city centre, was not fully wheelchair accessible though listed on wheelchair application. Based on observation, the event space on the lower floor was wheelchair accessible, but this was not the case for those on the upper floor, which appeared to only have stair access. This point was not specified on the mobile application and can affect visitor experiences in the future due to insufficient information on the smart platform. In addition to organisation factors, there existed those associated with human resources, which are discussed in the following section.

6.7.2 Human Resources- Availability of Staff

Most entities within Ljubljana can be classified as small to medium-sized operations. Those who shared a concern about human resources were mainly

small, locally owned property executives. These participants lacked the available staff to participate in smart initiatives. The challenge of time has been acknowledged by a few studies on DMSs. However, the issue of time is usually an issue raised by DMOs as seen in Sigala (2013) and Estevao et al. (2020). Based on participant 17's response, staff availability was linked to individual time constraints:

“We are four people working here. So, we are a small staff. Limited staff, we are a small property, so we have too many things at the same time”.

Participant 17 noted that their organisation of 17 rooms had depended on a staff of 4. The participant was assigned front office, concierge and marketing duties. Since participant's 17 acknowledgment of their limitation, the participant made it clear that their organisation still maintained a presence on social media:

“We have Facebook, Instagram, uhmm our webpage but are just basic honestly. We are not uhmm very active.”

The limited activity on the platforms mirrors a broader occurrence on social media where there are only a few highly active users on social media (Fuchs, 2017). Further, these examples of smart initiatives were mainly geared towards the organisation, which makes them different from those at the destination level such as the initiatives implemented in Ljubljana that enable multiple organisations to be showcased via one platform. Here, engagement in smart destination initiatives was being constructed as social media based on the participant's classification of the necessary resources as being the same. This became evident through discourse analysis. Constructions will be further discussed in Chapter 7.

Early in the interview, participant 17 had indicated that they were uncertain as to what smart tourism was until examples were given. The participant was able to provide an answer regarding the business' lack of involvement though having no certainty of the requirements for collaborating in the process. This further solidified the need for examining smart engagement from a critical perspective.

6.7.3 Human Resources- Skills and Knowledge of Staff

The absence of the relevant skills and knowledge due to lack of staff training represents a major inhibitor to being involved in developing smart destinations (Ortega et al. 2020) and DMSs (Collins & Buhalis, 2003; Estevao et al., 2020; Wang, 2008). This was observed in Ljubljana, as well. A few participants noted that employees, especially those within municipality-led organisations have been employed in their respective workplaces for lengthy periods. This

has aided the socialisation process across the tourism industry; however, employees also have adopted the style of operations, skills and knowledge that were established from their time of employment. Sigala (2013) mentions a similar concern in Greece regarding DMSs. The author notes that skills development for public sector employees was an inhibitor to participation (Sigala, 2013).

While some workers have managed to embrace modern approaches and applied them within their businesses, these were still limited cases. Participant 13 was of the view that the security provided by the public sector work environment contributed to this lack of further skills development:

“They [business owners] do not develop the skills of their own long-term employees. Once the employees get the job, this is very secure environment for money which they then keep until retirement”.

Participant 13 noted that the organisation did not contribute to the skills development of their workforce, which inhibited the business' ability to participate in smart initiatives. The concern for skills to increase competitiveness and growth was not a core concern of the socialist era (Bongfiglioli, 2020) but now there were discussions surrounding productivity of the public sector workforce. This was unveiled through discourse analysis and illustrates the evolving nature of subject positions brought on by a change in discourse that can serve to regulate individuals and result in inclusion or exclusion (Foucault, 1982; Winkel, 2012). Workers who were concerned with increased productivity and skills training were accepted within the current society while others needed to submit to these practices to be included.

Publicly owned entities partnered with privately owned businesses in cases where they lacked the required expertise. However, collaborating in smart initiatives was not recognised as one of those instances since some partners were not aware of the various players except the DMO and municipality. Arguably, expertise also could have been sought from other companies involved in Ljubljana's smart development, however, there has been little socialisation among the two groups of suppliers - those in tourism and others associated with the city. An awareness of the multiplicity of suppliers involved could have allowed for active sharing of resources, which is one of the roles of suppliers as previously conceptualised in smart tourism research (Buhalis, 2015). A lack of socialisation has hampered the interactive process, which is central to inter-organisational networks (Gray, 1989; Selin & Myers, 1995; Wood & Gray, 1991). Access and sharing of information among suppliers have been proposed as being key for smart destinations (Gajdosik, 2018), nonetheless, this is lacking in Ljubljana. Not all entities identified human resource-related factors as influences, some even spoke about marketing-related factors and these will be discussed below.

6.7.4 *Marketing- Benefit of Promotion*

Perceived benefits serve as a major influence of engagement (Jamal & Getz, 1995; Waddock, 1989; Yodsuwan & Butcher, 2012) with specifically the benefit of promotion being identified as a factor in Ljubljana following the thematic analysis. Smart tourism initiatives provided businesses with an opportunity to drive awareness and interest in their product. On some platforms, such as the wheelchair application, the organisations' details were published, including the business' product, telephone number and website. Information that was relevant to the smart initiatives was also provided within the summaries as seen in Figure 6.7.4a, which represented the section that tourists engaged with on Ljubljana wheelchair application. Visitors were able to view organisation's location, access contact details and general information.

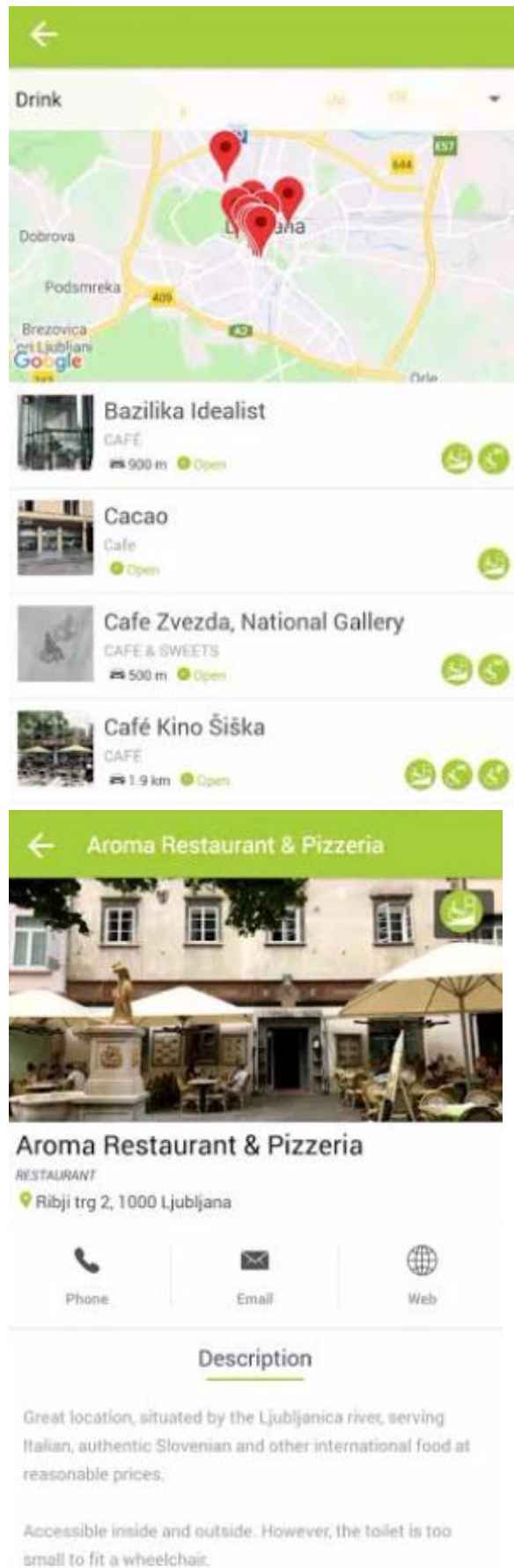


Figure 6.7.4a: Snapshot of Ljubljana's Wheelchair Application

The move to engage in smart initiatives helped to increase and diversify the platforms that suppliers were associated with as many were utilising popular distribution channels for promoting their products, such as online travel agents (OTAs)- Expedia and Booking.com, which are identified by some scholars as examples of smart tourism (Koo et al., 2017). Unlike OTAs, destination smart platforms did not offer business representatives the freedom to alter their information online. While this was also found to be the case with DMSs in the European contexts because suppliers lacked skills and interest (Estevao et al., 2020), a similar rationale for the lack thereof was not given in the case of Ljubljana. Smart destination initiatives in Ljubljana were being used to ensure business visibility as is generally the case for destination management systems and social media accounts (Estevao et al., 2020; Hays et al., 2013).

The need for increased promotion by suppliers was a result of the increasingly competitive environment. For instance, there were a few river cruises being offered at different points of the canal in the city centre. The Ljubljana tourist boat, one of the experiences accessible through the smart initiative Urbana card, also offered the same river cruise. Unlike the other cruises that were in the highly commuted area of the Triple Bridge, its departure point was in a less trafficked area of the city. According to document Doc-lbc, it was “just 3 min from Triple Bridge” (see Figure 6.7.4b). The smart initiative, Urbana, served as a marketing tool for the business to increase awareness among tourists. Urbana then represented a platform for promoting the destination offerings, which is also the function of a DMS (Sussmann & Baker, 1996). Smart initiatives like Urbana card offer unique products to tourists (Cimbaljevic et al. 2019) as it was the only card of its kind being offered in Ljubljana. However, the organisations listed on this smart platform offered similar products as other existing businesses as seen in the case of Ljubljana tourist boat, which raises the question of novelty surrounding smart initiatives. This point calls for future research.



Figure 6.7.4b: Supplier's Position in Relation to Triple Bridge (Doc-1c)

Not only did suppliers suggest that smart initiatives offered the benefit of promotion but one of great significance:

“To be a part of this scheme, this is a big promotion. It's a good promotion”. (Participant 10)

“You know 50,000 euros isn't enough for marketing. It's peanuts”. (Participant 22)

From the above, participant 10 described smart tourism as “good” and “big” promotion, which meant that smart initiatives offered value of reaching and satisfying tourists at a cost that was did not require direct payment by the organisation. Based on transaction cost economics theory, suppliers are influenced to engage in collaborations based on the cost of transactions (Tedjasaputra & Sari, 2016; Zach & Racherla, 2011). While there were no upfront costs to being involved in these smart initiatives, a percentage of the revenue was taken by the DMO monthly for Urbana card as explained by participant 22:

“When you [customers] come to the venue, you present the card. We [suppliers] have a machine that reads the card [Urbana/smart initiative card] and that's it. We don't have. We don't get money in per say. So every month I think we give a receipt to them [DMO] and they pay us on how much cards were sold. It's not full price. We don't get. I don't know, 6 Euros for every visitor in house. We get around half the price I think, benefit of fulfilling the desires of clients, how they influence. But its increasing, yes”.

Participant 22 also briefly noted that another attraction had removed themselves from the initiative due to matters related to costs. Gajdosik (2018) also find that concern for money can inhibit tourism businesses adoption for smart initiatives. In Ljubljana, this move illustrated that there were different understandings of smart as a cost-effective means of promotion, which emerged from the discourse analysis. Participant 22 perceived it as a low-budget option but that was not the case for all entities. Arguably, other suppliers may also choose to leave in the future based on the increasing cost.

Despite the need for promotion, tourism executives were still uncertain as to whether smart initiatives were cost-saving since they were not able to conduct their own assessments. They were yet to access data that tracked the number of individuals who had visited their premises. This opposes the view that smart destinations should provide equitable access to data as seen in the case of South Korea (Choi et al., 2021). Also, there still was no suspicion by Ljubljana suppliers, which Czernek (2013) highlight as an action that can emerge if businesses are not able to assess organisational benefits of collaboration.

The benefit of promotion was particularly raised by public organisations who were not usually focused on profits and increasing visitor arrivals. In fact, Participant 21 recalled how they were negatively reacted to in prior times when the participant told their managers that more monies for sales and marketing was needed:

“It wasn’t easy in the beginning because the organisation [management] was also more close than it is now, the hotels are understanding when I go to the meetings. They [management of the suppliers’ business] didn’t understand”.

Management’s refusal to engage participant 21 can be explain based on Foucault’ (1981) idea of resistance, which he noted as an act of avoiding situations and institutions with the same principles, objectives and effects. Participant 21’s management initially resisted since they did not provide the funds requested based on their understanding of the entity. Using Foucauldian discourse analysis, findings revealed that the business was being perceived by management as one where concerns should not be on increasing visitor numbers and earnings but on conservation of cultural heritage. This opposed participant 21’s view who had a concern for promotion. However, management’s view changed in more recent times as the business environment was becoming increasingly competitive.

With tourists spending short breaks in Ljubljana and more excursions arising, there came the need for increasing marketing efforts. Participant 21 changed their marketing strategy moving from a focus strictly on locals to incorporating residents, regional and international travellers:

“The focus is definitely on local, the local public, the Slovenian public. But of course, Ljubljana is becoming (7) "greatest" little cities in Europe and of course, we want to have part of these people [international travellers] in our venues”.

Participant 8 recognised the increasingly competitive context and emphasised the strengths of their main competitor in the interview:

“But there is a competition that I might say is very similar and as a product is LM Business.”

The participant has since engaged in collaborative initiatives like smart tourism to increase visitor numbers. However, the participant was unaware that their main competitor was also a participant in the same smart initiative. While collaborations among competitors are increasing, this situation is unlike previous networks where suppliers are aware of competitor participation (Belderbos et al., 2012; Van der Zee & Vanneste, 2015).

During an interview with executives from the competing entity, one participant happily noted that “we are better than them [participant laughs]” (Participant

21). The participant further highlighted that their involvement signifies “putting yourself [themselves] on the map”. Here again is a reminder of the importance of Baudrillard’s (2019) notion of the map, which was mentioned in Chapter 5.

6.7.5 *Marketing- Needs of Visitors*

Promotion was not the only perceived influence but also appealing and fulfilling the needs of visitors, which emerged from the thematic analysis. This influence was key for suppliers due to a unique situation in Ljubljana. The connectivity to European countries made Slovenia accessible and appealing for short-stay travellers whose average length of stay was 2-3 days in 2018 (Dockett). Suppliers then had a limited amount of time to cater to and exceed tourists’ expectations. If the smart initiative was specifically designed to cater to the tourists the establishment served, then they would participate. Participant 6 did not reflect on whether the business’ current product was even compatible with the demands of their visitors’ needs as was seen in the case of small organisations. Instead, the organisation was ready to participate in smart initiatives since it was claimed to enhance tourist experiences:

“Everything we do, we have our guests in mind. Our job is to make them feel welcome and we try to anticipate their needs, but also to personalise experience for them. We collaborate with the destination to enhance our guests’ experience”. (Participant 6)

Experience enhancement represents one of the focus of smart tourism (Gretzel et al., 2015a; Neuhofer et al., 2012). The participant was involved in the Urbana card, which enabled access and use of restaurants, bars, attractions, shops, accommodation and leisure activities to users. The Urbana card offered convenience to travellers who were unfamiliar with the city’s offerings. However, there was doubt by the researcher that Urbana card offered more efficient and enhanced experiences since smart tourism is claimed to do so (Neuhofer et al., 2012). First, persons with the Urbana card still had to join queues to get into facilities and join tours from researcher’s observation and experience. There was no fast-track benefit for tourists except having the opportunity of swiping the card instead of paying at the registration desks of facilities. Following registration, an Urbana card user was offered the same experience to that which a regular tourist had such as guided or unsupervised tours. On the other hand, efficiency and enhancement were evident in other initiatives namely the bicycle sharing and the electric train since persons were able to travel in pedestrian only zones rather than walking.

Unlike participant 6 and 4, another supplier claimed that their business did not need to participate since smart collaboration did not meet the needs of its clients. The initiative did not offer the flexibility of offering personalised

experiences, which smart initiatives have been assumed to have (see Buhalis, 2005; Marsa-Maestre et al., 2008; Neuhofer et al., 2012). The supplier noted that they had to stick to offering the dishes that were being promoted via the application, which did not offer flexibility for customers. During the interview, the researcher highlighted to the participant that the business was a listed entity. The participant justified this move as being a sign of “support” for the initiative. Participant’s 11 response is noted below when they were asked as to whether marketing and sales benefits influenced their decision for smart engagement:

“No, no, marketing. Yeah. We have a saying in Slovenia that what is good, markets on itself. We have Facebook, Instagram, social media, which is generally used but then it’s more or less word of mouth. And the TripAdvisor. That’s an important channel for us. We don’t see the benefits of this collaboration. But in general, we support it”.

This illustrates that engagement in smart tourism is not only based on value, which is the dominant perspective as discussed in the literature review. While the participant did not provide further details as to the rationale for supporting these destination initiatives, the owners briefly acknowledged at the end of the interview their frequent engagement with the DMO in relation to other ongoing initiatives.

In cases where visitors had no interests, some suppliers still engaged. Participant 4 acknowledged that the tourists that visited their establishment were sceptical about utilising services that were deemed to be smart:

“When they [tourists] hear that it [car] is electric, they prefer to have a normal one”.

Hence, not all tourists perceived smart initiatives as a means of improving their experiences. Negative attitudes exist among travellers and can inhibit the adoption of advanced technologies (Tussyadiah et al., 2020). However, this lack of interest shown by some tourists did not hamper Participant 4’s decision to engage in Ljubljana’s smart initiatives. They were still listed as suppliers although they hardly spoke about smart initiatives with their customers. While smart initiatives may not meet Participant 4’s customers’ needs, the participant still showcased brochures that referred to smart initiatives alongside other tours in the reception area since it increased and diversified the offerings on display that focused on Ljubljana.

The organisation’s representative did not show signs of negative attitudes towards smart technologies as was the case of representatives at hotel properties in Taiwan (Leung et al., 2019). The suppliers’ interest for promoting the wider destination can be associated with discourses of collaborative destination marketing, which was found through Foucauldian discourse analysis. According to Foucault (1979b) and reiterated by Hall (1997),

practices shape subjects. Generally, hoteliers showcase a variety of destination brochures in their concierge or front office to increase the property's revenue and city's appeal to travellers. Such a practice shapes the supplier as a hospitality professional and contribute to the framing of the business as a hospitality entity.

Suppliers chose to engage in smart initiatives to meet the needs of their visitors, which can vary across properties. However, there still has been no real assessment as to whether these needs are being fulfilled. In cases where visitors did not require these initiatives, suppliers still engaged, which was connected to practices within the hospitality and tourism industry. In addition to marketing, legitimacy also arose as a key influence of supplier engagement.

6.7.6 *Legitimacy as Guidelines by Management*

Legitimacy signifies business-related obligations. Based on institutional theory, these are regulatory in the form of rules and guidelines (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Scott, 1995). Suppliers acted in accordance with organisational institutional beliefs which influenced their engagement in smart (see also Fyall et al., 2012). Legislation was not found to be a barrier as seen in Ivars-Baidal et al. (2017), which was due to lack thereof. Nonetheless, there were agreements with management companies as well as those through municipality ownership that influenced supplier engagement.

Departing from tourism collaboration studies, there was a difference in reaction to how this factor was perceived by public and private suppliers. For instance, the private sector representatives perceived the agreements as documents with instructions that could be adjusted in some instances, thereby having less formality to legal contracts. Participant 10 and 23, who represented regional and global brands, noted that any activities that would benefit their target audiences in Ljubljana were considered first. They made it clear that rules set by their head offices served only as a guide for operations. Participant 23 was governed via a management agreement. However, after the hotel's opening, they realised that a local approach would be required resulting in changes in their decision-making process. Their business decided to focus on localised offerings following its inability to capture interest from residents after its opening in Ljubljana. This resulted in their interest in smart tourism initiatives and illustrates the importance of context in shaping supplier's decision as seen in tourism collaboration (Aas et al., 2005).

Like participant 23, participant 6 represented another global brand that specifically opened its doors in 2014. The participant explained that their company chose to engage in smart initiatives once the business' move was in tandem with the guidelines set forth by their parent company. The following captures Participant 6's feedback:

“We mainly follow the headquarters’ guidelines and collaborate on local level wherever possible”.

Participant 6 noted that any decision to be involved first had to be in keeping with the requirements set forth by their headquarters. The headquarters was responsible for dictating the procedures and requirements that could enable consistency in the operations of the hotel brand globally. Upon observing the property’s details online, it was realised that the business merged some aspects known to Slovenia with the original hotel theme to develop its product. For example, the property offered items such as “American-Balkan BBQ fusion” and “large parking space and the first super-fast Tesla charging station” of which the latter represented smart tourism efforts. There were efforts made to offer a global but local brand despite their being consideration given to the brand’s main principles first.

Furthermore, the management company in charge of participant 6’s entity demonstrated a willingness to adopt smart initiatives like Ljubljana. For instance, other Tesla charging stations were found at the same branded properties globally such as in Italy and the United States while Ljubljana also had its own. They were both focused on developing smart initiatives. Arguably, there would be no expected resistance to being involved in the city’s smart initiatives. This was precisely the case as the organisation participated in Taste Ljubljana, wheelchair application and was listed on the DMO’s website. Organisational support is a significant determinant for collaboration (Czernek, 2013; Jamal & Getz, 1995; Selin & Myers, 1995).

Unlike the entities previously discussed, there were others who were influenced not based on management contract but through municipality ownership. The local municipality has had an interest in preserving the cultural heritage of Ljubljana by investing in eleven attractions which were known as “public institutions” (Participant 22). Five of these businesses were founded during the period of 2007 to 2017 and were participants in smart initiatives unlike the others founded prior. Participant 10 noted that their organisation was involved with initiatives that the municipality associated with based on these contractual agreements:

“The guidelines which are accepted on the basis of municipality, we are accepting them. We have to do it”.

In agreement with Tyler & Dinan (2001), the state can control the institutional structure of the organisation, which impact ones’ decisions to collaborate. This illustrates government’s influential role in tourism collaborations (Bramwell, 2011).

Participants chose not to divulge much information regarding the agreements regarding municipality ownership, so it remained unclear as to whether there were guidelines specific to smart initiatives. It was evident though that all

these public institutions emerged prior to 2017 when smart was first mentioned in the tourism plan, which meant that these guidelines may have been general. However, some initiatives did exist before 2017, therefore, further data would be needed to investigate this.

Participant 10 claimed that “we have to do it”, which implied that these agreements and its contents cannot be altered, which was unlike the feedback from private entities that were bounded by agreements. The difference can be explained based on its underlying meaning that can result in different perceptions as Foucault (1972) noted and unveiled through Foucauldian discourse analysis. According to Foucault (1981, p.12),

“The central issue...is not to determine whether one says yes or no...but to account for the fact that it is spoken about, to discover who does the speaking, the positions and viewpoints from which they speak”.

There is a greater seriousness applied within the narratives of public executives. Resistance to activities such as smart initiatives was tied to a cost. The agreements spoke to municipality ownership, which meant that financial support was being provided to varying degrees from 50% of expenses upwards for different businesses. A breach or withdrawal of contract could result in public suppliers’ inability to fund operational expenses such as salaries.

There were other suppliers who had varying views of rules as being factors that influenced engagement. For instance, participant 16 explained that engagement in smart tourism was completely voluntary and suppliers can exercise autonomy, which is the case for destination collaboration (Wang, 2008). Participant 16, who represented a technological company that works with the local government, noted that this was not a compulsory process for businesses, and they had the freedom of choosing whether to participate or not. It also was a process that did not require any formal agreements or application. These points were also echoed by suppliers from private entities such as participant 2 who adopted a nonchalant approach to the affairs of smart development despite their business being listed as participants in the smart initiative Taste Ljubljana. These views were unlike some public entities, which can be explained based on position and association within the smart process. Understandings regarding collaboration varied among public and private sector entities (Viren et al., 2015). This further illustrated that not all entities were able to exercise independence in making decisions as noted in destination collaborations (Wang, 2008).

While agreements are not highlighted as influences in smart destinations (see Ivars-Baidal et al., 2017), there were guidelines linked to individual organisations in Ljubljana that influenced their decision to become involved in smart tourism. Suppliers’ behaviour to accept these guidelines were affected

by situations within the locality. Their views regarding these also varied based on their position within the collaboration.

6.8 Summary of Chapter

This chapter illustrates the processes and relationships in smart tourism that resulted in Ljubljana's claim to smart tourism. First, it provides insights regarding the smart development process by providing the stakeholders, resources and a four stage process of assembling, ordering, implementation, evaluation and transformation. Unlike Zhu et al.'s (2014) study that presents a linear and narrow perspective on smart development, findings show that the process is a complex undertaking involving a variety of stakeholders within and external to the destination. This expands on the narrow conceptualisation presented of smart tourism development as a result of drawing on a collaborative approach. Hence, the smart tourism destination development process in this thesis differs from that was developed by Zhu et al., (2014), which focused on the context of China. For instance, though the government may lead in China and as is the case in Ljubljana, there were other stakeholders further afield who guided the direction of smart development. Meanwhile, the government is not the only stakeholder who monitors the initiatives but also businesses.

The smart context also challenges some core understandings established in destination collaboration literature. For example, activities that are usually associated with a collaboration such as the establishment of norms and a clear goal (Wood & Gray, 1991) were missing from these collaborations. Other processes such as identification of key stakeholders even occurred not within the initial stages but during the latter part of smart development. In some instances, development also drew on already established infrastructure that were formulated from past developments. To a greater degree, the process illustrates that tourism supplier involvement is not interactive throughout the entire process as previously conceptualised (see Buhalis, 2015) but is limited to the implementation stage. Nonetheless, the role of tourism suppliers enhances understanding of how tourism businesses are viewed within smart cities literature as they were limited to the role of beneficiaries (see Kumar, 2017).

Despite the limited level of participation shown by tourism suppliers, they explained that their involvement in smart tourism was influenced by suppliers' perceptions of different organisational and relational factors. These novel insights were possible as this thesis drew on De Wit's (2017) relational factors of inter-organisational collaboration and resulted in broadening knowledge of engagement in smart beyond the dominant reason of value and technology-associated factors (Cai et al., 2020; Soares et al., 2020), which were discussed

in Chapter 3. These perceptions offer further contributions to knowledge as Ivars-Baidal et al. (2017) is the only study on the factors that influence engagement in smart destinations despite it lacking in-depth findings, theoretical lens and suppliers' perspectives. This chapter reveals the following factors: power- DMO, municipality, mayor; frequency of interactions- previous formal arrangements, familiarity through business networks and social groups, ongoing daily and monthly interactions; marketing- benefit of promotion and needs of visitors; human resources- availability of staff and skills and knowledge of staff; operations- organisational infrastructure; and legitimacy- management agreement and ownership.

By drawing on Foucault's views, this thesis adopts a social constructionism perspective to interpret the findings, which has been lacking not only in smart tourism but also wider research on technologies in tourism (Soares et al., 2020). This resulted in context-specific factors that signify that engagement by suppliers in smart tourism is deeply linked to social practices. For example, individuals' favourable response to municipal government representative was linked to autocratic practices tied to Slovenia's past. Meanwhile, the act of engaging in activities based on frequency of interactions has been normalised through practices of unity and brotherhood with the application of what Foucault calls technologies of power. Other findings made possible through Foucault's views, specifically on discourses, include the realisation that participants' views were not the same throughout but varied based on their own meanings and context specifically in terms of level of exposure to the collaboration process and conditions within the business environment. This particularly challenges the view that tourism collaboration is voluntary (Fyall & Garrod, 2005), which was not the case for particularly public-owned businesses. Based on Section 6.3, it became clear that collaborating in smart initiatives is not as formally established as other collaborations such as airline alliances or hotel consortia. Beritelli (2011) and Farsari (2018) note that theories such as institutional and transaction cost are more applicable in cases of formal collaborations.

Amidst the factors shared, suppliers continuously mentioned the mayor as key influencer, which is not the usual case of smart tourism, which generally speaks of government (see Boes et al., 2016; Choi et al., 2021) or even tourism collaborations since more attention is usually placed on the DMO (Saito & Ruhanen, 2017). This also can be due to the need for further studies on governance in inter-organisational networks based on technology (Sigala, 2013). Nonetheless, the mayor was not acknowledged as having any direct contact with participants in their capacity as business executives. Hence, the question is still raised as to why most businesses participated in this collaboration that affect not only them but other organisations across and external to the city. With smart city and smart destination being the same, this further shows that this is an initiative that affects a population. Foucault (2008)

noted that happenings between the state and population in democratic societies occurred through multiple power mechanisms. These controlled individuals' actions through discourses and technologies of power (Wickham & Kendall 2008). According to Foucault, we must cut the king's head off to notice these forms of power. These power mechanisms, which emerged from the Foucauldian discourse analysis, will be discussed in the following chapter. Therefore, for some suppliers' engagement was not a matter of being a straightforward choice of being engaged or not but due to aspects associated with the smart initiatives. Involvement was influenced by power mechanisms that produced varying degrees of participation, which are examined in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 7: DISCOURSE AND TECHNOLOGIES OF POWER ASSOCIATED WITH SMART

Interviewer: “Are you aware of what smart tourism is?”

Participant 21: “I don’t know what really goes with that”.

7.1 Introduction

Following on from the previous chapter’s focus on the processes and relationships in smart tourism, this chapter traces more specifically how power influenced supplier engagement in smart initiatives. Participant 21’s feedback above gives the impression that they were unaware of smart tourism. However, this participant was listed on two of the destination’s smart initiatives, namely the Urbana card and wheelchair mobile application. According to Foucault (1981, p.86), power “mask[s] a substantial part of itself. Its success is proportional to its ability to hide its own mechanisms”. Foucault’s ideas of discourse and governmentality can be applied to examine the disparity that was found between what was said by suppliers like participant 21 and observation of their organisations being listed on the platform. Foucauldian discourse analysis is applied, which allowed the researcher to understand the subject positions that exist and the reasons for this as seen in previous collaboration studies (see Fazito et al., 2016; Sharp & Richardson, 2001).

This chapter examines how governmentality informs dis (engagement) among suppliers, which is Objective 5 of this thesis. The chapter provides insights of the technologies of power that also shape supplier behaviour. This was chosen as the starting point since it moves the discussion from being just about a dominant lead namely the mayor (Chapter 6) to acknowledging the multiple power mechanisms within a society that enable control. Based on Foucault’s concept of governmentality, there are multiple technologies of power that can affect one’s behaviour (Burchell et al., 1991). By extending the term governmentality to smart contexts, smartmentality describes the multiplicity of mechanisms within smart places through which “citizens are very subtly asked to participate in the construction of smart cities” (Vanolo, 2014, p.893). The technologies of power found in the case of Ljubljana will be discussed as they provide a deeper understanding of the implications of smart development. In tandem with the critical perspective being taken, discussion continues by reflecting on the effects of smart through Foucault’s (2008) understanding of neoliberalism.

The chapter also reflects on the reaction of suppliers, paying attention to how they resist and justify their own involvement. This is in keeping with fulfilling Objective 4, which is to explain supplier engagement in smart destination

development through an analysis of discourses. The chapter presents an analysis of the ways suppliers' behaviour is discursively shaped by showing how suppliers constructed subjective meanings of smart tourism. Findings illustrate that there were 10 different interpretations, illustrating the diversity in meanings of smart tourism from suppliers' perspectives. Participants constructed smart tourism as typical representations of technological devices but also atypically, such as collaborative destination marketing programmes and an ongoing state of development. Participants' responses were aligned with three discourses, namely technology, sustainability and marketing.

Both discursive constructions and technologies of power produce diverse modes of positioning in relation to the smart initiatives, thereby suggesting that suppliers occupy varying positions and experience different forms of engagement when collaborating. This provides further insights for understanding the smart tourism supplier as currently smart tourism studies differentiate them based on types of businesses (Gretzel et al., 2015b; Koo et al., 2017). Smart cities studies show that there are different levels of engagement for stakeholders, specifically for citizens who are seen as passive participants (Cardullo & Kitchin, 2019; Shelton & Lodato, 2019; Vanolo, 2016). This thesis enhanced these discussions with the views of tourism suppliers. This findings chapter starts by examining the varying levels of involvement that were spoken about by tourism suppliers before examining the power mechanisms that caused this to occur.

7.2 Varying Levels of Engagement in Smart Tourism

Findings from the thematic analysis show that it was not simply a matter of being engaged or not. The explicit conveying of engagement was not found to be absolute. Participants expressed engagement in smart tourism by associating themselves with categories of smart tourism suppliers and varying positions of participation.

Suppliers expressed their own degree of involvement by associating with low to moderate involvement positions. The following passage shows a tourism supplier's response to the question regarding their reason for engaging:

“For us, it's like normal. It's like nothing. It is nothing very special that we have to be... I don't know. To me, it's a very strange question. It's a really strange question for me because its so very normal for us that we don't need. It's like go brush your teeth in the morning. You have to do it... it's the way of thinking, the way of effecting, the way of living, whatever you want to. Its just nothing special, if you understand me”.
(Participant 14)

The participant further unpacked this move by associating it with being a duty they had to uphold for certain target groups: “we have to be conscious of all minority groups”. This is in keeping with Choi et al.’s (2021) view that smart initiatives should serve marginalised individuals.

Nonetheless, participant 14’s justification was still not reflective of a deep consideration or reflection. It did not enable an assessment of value to the organisation, which is the basis of technology adoption models and value co-creation lens that are applied in smart research (Davis, 1989; Venkatesh et al., 2003). This also reinforces the need to move beyond value-based perspectives that are dominant in smart tourism research. The participant was also unable to explain the collaborative process, which is the point when value is realised (see Vargo et al., 2008). The following captures additional response from participant 14, which further indicated that there was no high level of involvement in smart initiatives by the organisation:

Interviewer: “What was the process like to becoming involved?”

Participant 14: “Listen, we are in a world with other people, we have approximately one and a half million visitors every year, little bit less. Its like. You know, its a big city or just a little bit less than we have inhabitants in Slovenia so we have to think about it. It’s not a special decision”.

Interviewer: “What was the process of becoming involved?”

Participant 14: “Oh, I can’t say”.

Unlike participant 14, participants 18 and 23 had more insights regarding smart tourism and represented examples of suppliers with moderate level of involvement in smart tourism. According to participant 18, “it makes sense to have bikes, bike sharing.” The participant justified their involvement in a similar manner to participant 14, specifically as a decision that is right and accepted. However, participant 18 differed from participant 14 as the former possessed a clear understanding of the processes associated with collaborating in destination initiatives. Participant 18 had responded to previous invitations to tenders that involved supply of technological infrastructure.

Like participant 18, participant 23 also conveyed a moderate level of involvement drawing on a similar method of justification as smart being “right”:

“It means that you did something so not that the others did not do anything, but you did something right and well.”

Being involved in smart is a move of committing to right values as seen in responsible tourism research (Caruana et al., 2014). However, the participant later associated this move with a response to increasing competitiveness as

they noted that “business is rising. Awareness. Europe-wide. Worldwide”. The participant explained that involvement could also be inconsistent, which led them to not being involved. Sometimes, their business changed marketing strategy to pursue other initiatives that delivered similar benefits:

“We try to minimise. Of course, because all these online channels, you pay a lot of commissions, and it's much cheaper if they come directly and like I said in many cases this is not possible or we do not succeed as much as we would like”.

Not all participants associated with no, low or moderate level of participation but some justified their involvement in relation to categories of smart tourism suppliers. Even those directly identified as lead in the process showed moderation when asked about their involvement in smart tourism as seen with the case of the DMO in Chapter 6. One tourism supplier listed amongst the city's smart tourism initiatives stated that “we are not stakeholders”.

According to Freeman (1984), a stakeholder is one who influences or affects an activity. Stakeholders of a domain are core components of a collaboration (Gray, 1989). However, for this participant, suppliers were those who had high level of involvement in smart development as leader and decision-maker, specifically DMO and municipality representatives. These are co-creators in smart cities, according to Cardullo and Kitchen (2019).

While there was a clear disassociation from the position of stakeholders, some participants associated with other categories. For instance, participant 20 noted that “we are just one of the city partners. Nothing else”. Participant 9 more broadly drew on the title of “partner” as seen below:

“We are partners [but] we are indirectly involved”.

Participant 9 represented one of the tourism suppliers that was publicly managed. Considering the lead role of the municipality government in smart development, the participant saw their role as being a partner in smart initiatives. However, this participant's response was accompanied by a disassociation from the smart process, which illustrates alongside previous examples in this chapter that there were varying levels of being involved. Involvement by the organisation was in the form of providing data. According to smart tourism scholars (Buhalis, 2015; Gajdosik, 2018; Gretzel et al., 2015b), a supplier can be involved through data exchange. However, based on participant 9's feedback, they did not consider this to be a direct type of engagement in smart initiatives at the destination level.

Like participant 9, participant 10 distanced their organisations from smart tourism but draws on the ideal type of cooperator. According to participant 10, “we know what's it about and we cooperate but not very strongly”. These suppliers created alternate views of themselves, revealing a spectrum of

participation types. This suggested that suppliers occupied varying positions and understandings of engagement in smart tourism.

Studies on smart depict there being an ideal type of participant as one who is actively engaged in a process of developing and receiving maximum value (Buhalis, 2015; Caragliu et al., 2011); however, these findings depart from this understanding to illustrate that positions and participation in smart tourism is fluid rather than static. Foucault (1982) reminded us that subject positions change based on discursive and non-discursive mechanisms. The following section will elaborate on this by first examining the technologies of power that have made this possible.

7.3 Smartmentality through Technologies of Power

The technologies of power that enable the creation of a smartmentality are explored below. These consist of spatiality, culture of collaboration and data and assessment procedures. The procedures are further divided into internal and external rating systems, sustainability indicators and online platform. These findings resulted from the Foucauldian discourse analysis.

7.3.1 *Spatiality*

Kothari (2001 p. 142) argues that “the very act of inclusion, of being drawn in as a participant, can symbolise an exercise of power and control over an individual”. Disciplinary power often starts with defining the space of operation (Foucault, 1979a). Participant 17 spoke about how the development of one initiative, namely the electric train, occurred in Ljubljana, identifying the outline of the physical space as one of the first steps.

“Actually, it was step by step. Because when you close all this area, actually you prepare the area for the innovation. The electric train is not train for the streets. It drives maybe 35 maximum speed. So it works inside of these pedestrian areas”. (Participant 17)

In terms of tourism suppliers participating in and engaging with smart tourism, the spatiality and boundaries of Ljubljana’s smart tourism district became a palimpsest of the municipality’s technologies of power (see also Cheong & Miller, 2000; Mach & Ponting, 2018).

The municipal government had constructed a well-defined boundary that allowed for the implementation of smart (mobility) initiatives, such as electric vehicles (see Figure 7.3.1a), bicycle sharing system and tourist Urbana card.



Figure 7.3.1a: Electric Vehicle

The boundary extends from the city centre to about a 15-minute walk from the centre wherein a pedestrian zone was constructed and was then surrounded by the Urbana and electric train routes (Figure 7.3.1b). The defined space made smart initiatives measurable for control by those who monitored initiatives.

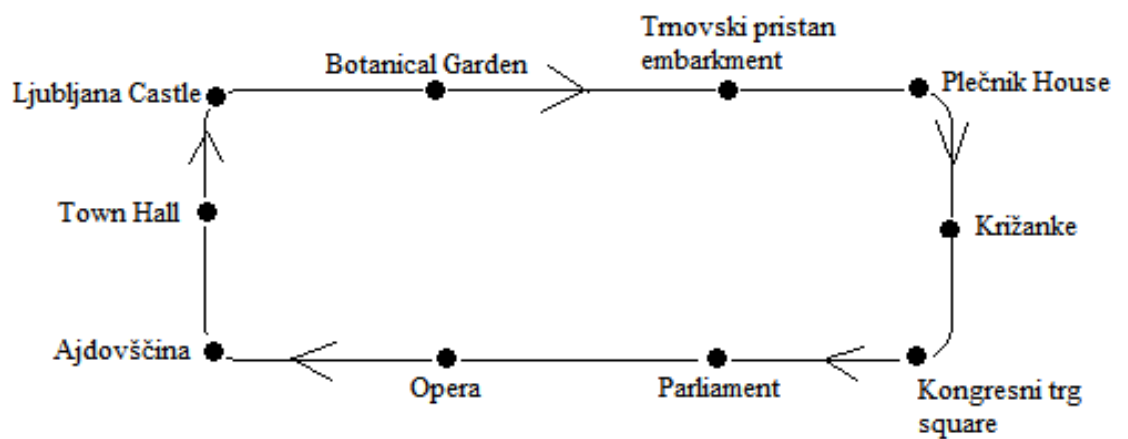


Figure 7.3.1b: Electric Train Route (Adapted from Web-lj)

While the spatial agglomeration of tourism attractions in this area of the city was a major rationale for the boundaries established, their specific locations along with the subsequent changes to the functional space demonstrated the after-effects of technologies of power. For example, the mayor did more than establish a smart tourism zone, he altered the use of the space with an eye to improving efficiency. The area went from one that was heavily congested with

motorised vehicles to one that was mainly designated for pedestrians and attracted visitors to the range of facilities that subsequently emerged.

Participant 11 commented that

“He actually closed the whole city centre like pedestrian zone, from the old stadium on is just one pass going to the city centre. The right line is for the buses, for the taxi drivers. This was before, like a double lane, we actually, with this, he reduced the traffic in the city centre. A lot of bars open. A lot of restaurants open on the pavement and so”.

Thus, the space acted as a functional mechanism (Foucault, 1979a) contributing to efficiency in planning and execution of destination activities for tourists. Tourist maps highlighted this central, smart zone in the city and directed them to related applications and further technologies. These smart initiatives were the new experiences that Rose (1999, p.32) speaks of when she states that “governable spaces are not fabricated counter to experiences; they make new kinds of experience possible, produce new modes of perception”. Indeed, participant 3 noted when tourists enquired about activities in Ljubljana, hotel representatives first recommended smart initiatives before suggesting other experiences. This directed the tourist gaze (Cheong & Miller, 2000).

“We have electric stations there for electric cars and also the first thing that we offer to guests is electric rent-a-car and also we have this package that includes you know the electric car”. (Participant 3)

However, the smart initiatives within the space also functioned as an in/exclusionary mechanism for participation. For instance, the electric train was introduced in 2016 as an offering for tourists, which operates within a “circular tourist trail” (Web-1b). The electric train route (see Figure 7.3.1b) enabled access to specific city attractions such as the Town Hall, Ljubljana Castle, Plecnik House and National Gallery that had different agreements with the destination management organisation and municipality. Some businesses were able to benefit from the initiative based on their inclusion within the space. They garnered exposure and generated business from tourists who used the electric train and Urbana card. Participant 5 stated that

“The electric train that is going around Ljubljana including centre and to the castle and so on. One station is near the attraction so you can also hop off and hop on. So these kinds of things are very important for us to be part of”.

The municipality owned many of the properties along these routes, which gave further authority and ease for them to place smart infrastructure in particular locations. Indeed, other participant interviews and documents suggested that this was part of the municipality’s strategy of encouraging engagement by bringing individual businesses into the smart initiatives.

Yet, while most of the attractions along this route were already involved in the smart initiatives, the boundaries then excluded some tourism suppliers from participation. For instance, participant 23 was quick to point out that they mentioned to the DMO that their businesses were excluded from the map that incorporated the route for some smart initiatives. Participant 23 stated that

“I had a look at the map of Ljubljana, the tourism of Ljubljana is preparing. There is just the city centre. The map is like A3 size and I say ok where is our business? Yea, you know, this is the border of the paper, the map is there and you are here. I said come on guys, you don’t even put us on the map of Ljubljana”.

Although, document Doc-sl claims that smart initiatives cater for one and all, the smart destination seeks to achieve efficiency and maximisation of benefits using minimal resources based on neoliberal values (Cardullo & Kitchin, 2019). Therefore, not all businesses may be included in all initiatives, which included participant 23.

This architectural layout established the city’s smart tourism space and the suppliers involved in the production and consumption of smart tourism initiatives. The rationalisations as to the degree of their involvement were expressed in terms of power, or lack thereof, specifically in terms of land ownership and decision-making abilities. For instance, participant 12’s organisation was listed as a supplier engaged in the bicycle sharing system (see Figure 7.3.1c for picture of the smart initiative). However, when discussing their rationale for being involved, the response was that “we are not technically involved” because it was “not our land”. Being included in the smart initiative was a benefit for that participant, but it was not a “choice” to be involved.

“Well, we are not technically involved. It’s not what we decide to do. It’s not our land. It’s the municipality deciding where it would be useful to have the stations. So, it’s good for us it’s there but it’s not our decision”. (Participant 12)



Figure 7.3.1c: Bicycle Sharing System

Because of the establishment of clear boundaries within the city's centre, along which the smart infrastructure was concentrated, there was an implication of participation and non-participation amongst those businesses. These boundaries were first set by the municipality, whose role it was to lead the city's smart transformation, in alignment with Schein's (1999) assertion that landscape is discourse materialised. Indeed, in many ways, the spatial design of Ljubljana's smart city centre set the conditions for engagement in the city's earliest initiatives. The space itself delineated who was expected to be involved, as well as who was excluded. However, other technologies of power are at work in this smart destination, namely the fostering of a culture of collaboration.

7.3.2 Culture of Collaboration

Participation is a governance mechanism that enables smartmentality (Ho, 2016; Vanolo, 2014). Similar to Vanolo's (2014) findings from smart cities in Italy, findings reveal that there was a dominant group encouraging Ljubljana's

collaborative culture, which influences who can participate. The municipality was considered an agent responsible for directing the undertakings within the city's development (see also Cheong & Miller, 2000).

However, unique to Ljubljana, was the notion that a culture of collaboration was present prior to the introduction of smart tourism. In fact, several participants affiliated it with past ideology of unity associated with socialist Yugoslavia (Bakic-Hayden & Hayden, 1992). This idea emerged after Yugoslavia transitioned from being a communist government. Participant 13's response highlighted unity as being a part of residents' history:

“I remember that when we were Yugoslavia, still it was communistic country really, so it was, it was very close but nevertheless it was ahh you know, mhhm, like Cuba is in my head. Yeah. I remember how funny it was that we didn't have bananas and we needed to go to Austria to second country or we didn't have chocolate and we go there. Now, there is always a possibility and there was always money and I know that it was like this. This mentality. What we earn, we divide....parents taught us like this that whenever, doesn't matter where you worked, it was not like this, like the managers took the money but they always split it and gave to everybody and they, this was something, you know, it connected”.

Similar views were shared by participant 12,

“I think it's apart of culture in Slovenia certainly. But I think it's coming from this sense of together we are stronger so I think in this sense it is somehow natural....I mean I was born in the previous system, I was schooled in the previous system, I was educated in the previous system and so we are all still very much alive”.

Collaboration was seen as a governance mechanism that was responsible for shaping individuals into local Slovenians, which meant they were considered as local Slovenian businesses that connected with each other. Based on participant 13's response, this collaborative culture was constructed and normalised over a period through various discourses of family and employment. This attitude has continued to manifest in their handling of tourism-related activities as participant 13 continued to say

“We are going together to some business trips, you know and uhmm I cannot sell the hotel only. I have to sell destination and that means automatically collaboration, so if I go, I don't know to Italy, I sell Ljubljana, I sell, I don't know, from my colleague 4-star hotel, cause you know, he's not here and I know that some guests need it, I sell the venue, so yeah.”

Nevertheless, other participants stated that this collaborative culture was built upon and further promoted by the leader of the municipality. According to participant 14,

“Our leader definitely wants to collect and combine all these services under one big roof I would say, all the services which a citizen might need. He has this interest to have this inside one big family”.

The fact that most of the tourism suppliers involved in smart initiatives were in fact affiliated with the municipality through ownership and funding further facilitates a collaborative atmosphere.

“It's much easier to plan between the public institutions. This cooperative mode is very strategic for the current government of the city”. (Participant 15)

At the same time, fostering a sense of collaboration extended beyond businesses and public institutions to the citizens themselves. Ljubljana's city government saw the smart tourism initiatives to encourage public participation as well by putting forward calls for ideas and innovations. In this way, the public served as active resource integrators providing information through public, municipality-controlled feedback platforms contributing to the development of several smart initiatives, including the wheelchair application. In this instance, it was more similar to a one-way communication channel where there is little opportunity for interactivity. This is unlike inclusive decision-making that Choi et al. (2021) acknowledge as being necessary for smart destination. Suppliers nonetheless characterised this as a “partnership”.

“The public-private partnership means you give something to the city and the city gives something to you. So we give the city all the hardware, all the shelters, everything and they give us the land, the city land with permission to make advertising on this land.” (Participant 16)

“The partnership is something that we very strongly develop or get involved with.” (Participant 9)

Smart tourism relies on the exchange of resources for solutions to be developed (Jovicic, 2017; Polese et al., 2018). Engagement of individuals and organisations is assumed as being a solution for power distribution (Reed, 1997); however, not in this case, as most suppliers spoke of having very limited involvement beyond the initial implementation phase of the collaboration process. Furthermore, final approval of these ideas as smart initiatives was given by those who were considered leaders of smart development in Ljubljana. This resembled top-down leadership, which resonates with the conclusion by Zhu et al. (2014) and Boes et al. (2016) and was noted in Chapter 6.

The culture of collaboration contributed to the creation of suppliers who considered themselves to be included or excluded as well as unequal power relations occurring in smart tourism. While this facilitates the formation of smart initiatives due to involvement by several publicly owned suppliers, to an extent, it excludes private entities. Shelton and Lodato (2019) conclude that partnership within the smart cities' domain is a façade as inequality exists when it comes to representation of locals and their concerns.

Indeed, there is a dominance of small and medium-sized tourism suppliers participating in smart tourism (see also Ivars-Baidal et al., 2017). Yet, when these issues were examined and deliberated on at conferences and forums in Ljubljana, they excluded the city's tourism businesses. Based on Foucault's idea of governmentality (Burchell et al., 1991), such events can be seen as spaces that controlled the nature of the conversations on the smart design elements. This point challenges the assumption that through increased collaboration (Komninos et al., 2013), equality and mutuality are possible through smart tourism (Civelek, 2018; Polese et al., 2018) since the interests of tourism suppliers were not being represented during smart discussions and the event spaces served to define smart agendas. Furthermore, this act of categorising and separating businesses is common within sites of discipline (Foucault, 1979a). As a means of control, it enables optimum performance (Alves et al., 2018) while maintaining stability by controlling the types of stakeholders involved in the system (Wareham et al., 2014).

7.3.3 Data and Assessment Procedures

Data collection, efficiency monitoring, performance measurement systems, and benchmarking methods are all common smart strategies employed to optimise performance (Alves et al, 2018; Gabrys, 2014; Vanolo, 2014) and produce a smartmentality (Vanolo, 2014). From the data analysis, power mechanisms found were internal and external rating systems, sustainability measures, online platforms and individual gazers. These will be discussed below.

Internal Rating System

The internal rating system referred to one that was formed within the traditional local tourism industry. In Ljubljana, the destination marketing organisation has its own database that has allowed it to collect and manage information as well as reclassify and target suppliers. One participant noted that businesses could participate in smart initiatives, but they had to meet specific criteria, which was not clearly explained to them. As technologies of power, databases more specifically act as surveillance mechanisms (Foucault, 1979a).

“I mean actually all that are interested and up to a certain level [...] We know who works, has to develop a bit more”. (Participant 17)

Participant 17 specifically noted that “we know who works”, signifying that leaders of Ljubljana’s smart development have details of the different tourism organisations. By storing and using information on individuals and organisations, this can enable control (Foucault, 1979a). While the DMO’s ratings were not openly available or disclosed, they were apparently put to use when deciding which tourism suppliers were considered in the city’s smart initiatives and which were excluded. This move also furthered the development of the smart platforms, resulting in additional suppliers being added. According to participant 23,

“If there is not a lot of content on the page then the page [smart tourism platform] not going to work so”.

This resonated with Naipaul et al.’s (2009) conclusion that a benefit of collaboration is being able to provide a range of diverse tourism experiences that can be promoted to increase the appeal of a destination product.

External Rating System

In contrast to the internal rating system, external features were those that were not developed or under the direct control of suppliers within Ljubljana. TripAdvisor reviews were highlighted as an example of this by one participant. Participant 18 explained that while their business was initially considered, the DMO ultimately decided not to include it due to its ratings on this website:

“They [DMO] told me they have better reviews on the TripAdvisor and because of that they [DMO] put them on the Taste [a smart initiative] and because of that we are not in”. (Participant 18)

Classification systems and measurements are used as a means of standardisation for decision-making regarding stakeholders that can be considered for inclusion (Vanolo, 2014). Suppliers’ involvement in smart developments was directly linked to these technologies of performance, thereby illuminating the point that behaviour in smart tourism is influenced not only by leadership, as seen in Zhu et al. (2014) and Boes et al. (2016), but also through technologies of power (Burchell et al., 1991).

Sustainability Measures

Some databases and monitoring systems were externally generated and opted-in by the city. Upon examining the list of smart initiatives, it was evident that some were based on the theme of sustainability. In order for businesses to

participate in these initiatives, they had to comply with the sustainability indicators and certifications that were set forth by various international organisations approved by the national tourism organisation:

“[Businesses] have to choose one of the international labels like Green Globe, TravelLife, Green Key, whatever. We [Ljubljana] embrace seven different labels, so they have to get one of those, and once they get that, they would get Slovenia Green Accommodation, for example, on top of that”. (Participant 19)

Engagement in smart tourism was not an open process where suppliers were free to participate. Engagement was subject to their data being included on databases and based on rankings within these systems. External programmes can limit actions since these technologies of power serve to trigger behaviours among suppliers (Foucault, 1979a). As Foucault (1979a, p. 166) noted, “the order does not need to be explained or formulated; it must trigger off the required behaviour and that is enough.” As these technologies of power direct suppliers’ behaviour, they support Quaghebeur et al.’s (2004) finding that participation is as a result of power. Moreover, governance, in this form, helps to lessen constant evolvability and maintain stability through controlling the type of stakeholders involved in the system (Wareham et al., 2014).

Indicators, which are also forms of technologies of power, reshape the conduct of individuals in smart cities since it causes business operators to alter their business’ operations by incorporating efficient and effective resource conservation methods (Argento et al., 2020) as was evident with some restaurants and hotels in Ljubljana. Participant 3 stated that over a six-month period, their hotel had to adjust its operations by implementing practices and rules, informing staff and guests (see Figure 7.5.3 for an example), as well as providing tourist experiences that were in conformance with the sustainability indicators.



Figure 7.3.3: Sign Informing Guests of Sustainability Practices

The participant noted that conformance to assessment had become the norm. This also resulted in reshaping the property and its differentiation from other hotels that were a part of the same chain regionally and globally and contributed to the recognition of the business' brand.

“What is also very important is that we are you know a 3-star hotel and ahh before that we were not somehow very, very cool for let's say the journalists come from abroad you know”. (Participant 3)

The procedures served to govern and normalise the organisation as a smart supplier. Foucault (1979a) labelled this as control or discipline through procedures.

Online Platforms

The technologies of power that have been highlighted thus far, namely the sustainability measures and rating systems serve as a means of collecting data for governance of suppliers. This section turns to examine online platforms, which Vanolo (2014) and Ho (2016) refer to smart systems being technologies of power for participation in smart cities. Technologies play a central role in organisation and control of individuals. In Ljubljana, these systems also served as a limitation to the level of engagement by businesses. Hence, suppliers' role may then not be as active within the collaborative process as previously suggested in smart tourism (Buonincontri & Micera, 2016; Wang et al., 2013) and generally expected in collaboration (Wood & Gray, 1991). Participant 20

reinforced this point in the interview while distancing the company from smart tourism development.

“We install. We pay our investment for servicing. Now, we are maintenance of the system and that’s it”. (Participant 20)

One of the characteristics of smart is interconnectivity (Buhalis & Amaranggana, 2013) but on the online platforms, the level of engagement was limited as the online links did not allow for seamless interactivity between users, such as tourists and suppliers. The information for businesses was displayed on the platforms, hence, local suppliers were seen as providers of information. This positions smart tourism as an information system (Li et al., 2017). Unlike technological systems such as sharing economy platforms whereas users’ identities change (Gretzel et al., 2015b; Koo et al., 2017; Phua, 2019), the identity of the organisations remains the same and categorised using organisation categories such as “restaurant” or “bar”. In Ljubljana, they were not represented online as organisations with shifting roles. However, this differed in the physical world as suppliers were also providers of information as well as sales agent as noted prior in the smart process in Chapter 6. This distinction is yet another valuable insight in smart research.

The smart initiatives with online systems such as the mobile applications can be seen as an example of the digital panopticon machines that exist in tourism (Urry & Larsen, 2011). They tracked not only consumers’ behaviours but also suppliers’ operations. Hence, like the panopticon and other hierarchical means of observation (Foucault, 1979a), these initiatives act as a form of electronic surveillance systems. For instance: the bicycle sharing system provided information on bicycle availability at a site. The Urbana card machine stored data regarding the number of tourists that visited a particular attraction, thereby making visitors and suppliers subject to the panoptic gaze of private entities and the lead of Ljubljana’s smart development. Information can be garnered regarding the number of tourists that visited a facility at a particular time. This makes the internal operations of organisations visible (Foucault, 1979a) to multiple gazers (Urry & Larsen, 2011). Not only were tourists subject to the gaze as emphasised in tourism literature (Urry, 1990) but now suppliers were too. Furthermore, instead of there being a single gaze as was suggested by Foucault (1979a), there were multiple gazers within smart tourism since it allowed for real-time observation. Also, consent was not required in cases of public organisations, which opposed one of the main identifiers of justice and governance in smart destinations (Choi et al., 2021).

Unlike the prescribed and restrictive performances by suppliers to tourist gazers seen in tourism (Urry & Larsen, 2011), no evidence emerged in this case study that was associated to the adjustment of their “performances”. This may be due to the limitation in the data collection method chosen for this thesis. This is an area for future research, which is relevant considering the

concerns for privacy and intrusion with smart technologies in public discourse. The data collection process for this thesis illustrates the effects of technologies of power. It was difficult to locate points of resistance or objection by local smart supplier subjects, which is one of the traits of being a docile body (Burchell et al., 1991). During one of the interviews, a participant was open in sharing information on smart in Ljubljana, however, this changed in the official interview where they were accompanied by a municipality representative. Arguably, participants may have realised that they may be under the continuous surveillance of suppliers such as gaze of management or the destination.

Destination collaborations should be voluntary for organisations (Wang & Fesenmaier, 2007) but this is not the case for some Ljubljana suppliers based on the technologies of power that have been discussed. This opposes the right to autonomy in collaborations that is based on freewill not compulsion (Wood & Gray, 1991). In this instance, smart resonates more with its original meaning, to be forceful (Etymonline, 2018). An understanding of the effects of these technologies has practical implications. Findings can help leaders of smart development better evaluate the consequences of their own actions. In fact, this is missing within the evaluation stage of smart development (see Chapter 6). By understanding the effects, suppliers can assess their decision to accept or disassociate with smart initiatives. This also is a missing element during the assembling stage of Ljubljana's smart development.

This lack of independent decision-making calls for leaders to reconsider promoting smart development as bottom-up approaches or make changes to smart plans that can allow autonomy to prevail. On that note, the thesis raises the question as to whether greater bottom-up approaches will solve this issue of lack of autonomy and inclusion in decision-making. Tourism collaboration studies propose that greater inclusion of suppliers can overcome power imbalances (Aas et al., 2005; Reed, 1997), however, this will be reflected on in the following section as this has been a long-standing challenge with technological innovations as discussed in the Introduction.

7.4 Will Further Promotion of Bottom-Up Approach Solve Greater Supplier Integration in Smart Tourism? Exploring Neoliberalism and Smart

“So, we will be very active in kind of, formally, officially adopting new things, but will be much slower with the implementation of those”.
(Participant 5)

Participant 5 was questioned about Ljubljana's status as a smart destination. They acknowledged the continuous effort of introducing smart initiatives but noted that less attention and deep consideration would be given to the

execution of smart initiatives. This situation can be further explained through Foucault's (2008) neoliberal governmentality, which refers to governing the conduct of oneself towards notions of enterprise. This results in an increased emphasis on promotion rather than implementation of initiatives within smart cities (Levenda 2019; Vanolo, 2014). This form of governmentality provides insights of why a top-down approach to smart initiatives continue to prevail even within democratic societies. An in-depth understanding has been lacking in smart tourism studies, which associates this top-down perspective as the approach taken by some destinations (Boes et al., 2016). The following discussion will illustrate that simply altering the technologies of power and increasing stakeholder involvement will not be sufficient for facilitating greater stakeholder integration as smart represents a discursive device associated with neoliberalism (Cardullo et al., 2017; Das, 2020; Kaye-Essien, 2020; Levenda, 2019; Vanolo, 2014). It serves to control the conduct of individuals towards achieving market-oriented values. The following section will better explain this by first providing an understanding of the state of the local context in which the operationalisation of smart occurs.

7.4.1 Active and Willing Neoliberal Member of the EU

Neoliberalism was bound to shape the society of Slovenia through its association with the EU. According to Gill (1998, p.9), the policies supported by the EU are "towards a neoliberal and financial, as opposed to a social market or social democratic, model of capitalism". It was evident in Ljubljana that the city had become an active and willing neoliberal destination within the EU. Privatisation efforts of public entities in tourism had been underway, which resonates with Bongfiglioli's (2020) view that the current tourism industry in Slovenia is mainly centred on earnings and productivity rather than social benefits for all.

"Restructuring of state-owned hotel companies with investment and management plans...new investments in hotel and holiday resort capacities- determining 15 to 20 key projects for the development of hotels...need new investments in order to compete globally; to this end we propose that an investment credit line for tourism companies be established through SID Bank; furthermore, we will identify 15 to 20 key areas for tourism development, etc.". (Doc-gs)

Terms such as "compete" "investments" as well as numerical targets as seen in the above extract are associated with economic discourse and emerged during the Foucauldian discourse analysis. Tourism was being used as a tool dominantly for wealth accumulation as the city was being perceived as a business (Ferguson, 2010).

During fieldwork observations, there was ongoing construction within a five-minute walk from the city centre. While the researcher was not able to firmly establish what exactly was happening, one participant brought attention to the point that international private hospitality brands were recently added to Ljubljana's landscape. There was an increase in private entities in an environment that has been dominated by locally-owned properties. Throughout the conversation, participant 1, drew on discourses of difference, through his use of phrases such as "was only us", which emphasises the separation between local and foreign entities:

"We [Ljubljana] have the Intercontinental like one recognised five-star property in Ljubljana which we [Ljubljana] didn't have like 2 years. There was no recognised in Ljubljana. So now we have Sheraton, Intercontinental. We have Radisson. Before 3 years ago, there was only us [local entities] and that was it". (Participant 1)

Not only were new investors being welcomed but the residents and businesses were influenced by market values. The need for increased competitiveness in Ljubljana was echoed among employees and businesses, included those that were publicly owned. It was seen as a way of life, which is representative of the effects of neoliberalism, resulting in the locals becoming what Foucault (1980) described as docile bodies.

Residents transformed their city dwellings into facilities to be promoted through Airbnb, a smart platform. Participant 23 mentioned that Airbnb properties were filling a gap in the shortage of rooms within Ljubljana. At the time of this study, there were a total of 300 listings located in Ljubljana (Airbnb, 2020). Since the increase in these types of lodgings, participant 23's property had faced increased competition despite offering a higher category product based on traditional hotel categorisations. Competitions are known to be a feature of neoliberalism (Martin, 2016).

"There is a lot of Airbnb. Capacity now, anyhow, competition. Yeah". (Participant 23)

Participant 21 spoke about the effects of this increase in Airbnb listed facilities within Ljubljana. The participant stated that though the changes were welcomed in Ljubljana, it led to increased prices in real estate both for rent and purchase in the city:

"Ljubljana is the most expensive city in Slovenia to live in, to buy a flat".

Participant 23 shared the view that even hospitality employees had to be competitive to survive within the work environment. Those who did not strive for maximum efforts would falter:

“If you put a lot of effort, if you work hard, you have the faculty, whatever, you can be successful. Of course, you strive. I am not driving a bike, I am driving a good car...A lot of them have everything but they [staff] are not willing to give anything so without giving, you don't get so its yea, its hard work”. (Participant 23)

Staff was considered to be failures if they did not subscribe to this neoliberal focus on productivity, which is similar to the case of Scharff's (2016) study on entrepreneurs located in London and Berlin in which these persons were described as lazy. According to Bal and Doci (2018), this type of thinking resonates with neoliberalism as it tends to prefer the strongest individuals. Foucault (2008) made it clear that the individual as an enterprise was shaped by controls that operated based on emphasising differences that aligned with market values. Foucault (2008) also noted that the subject of neoliberalism perceived activities as being investment in self, which was acknowledged by participant 23 when they stated that “they [staff] are not willing to give anything”.

Another trait that associated with the entrepreneurial self, which was evidenced here was an emphasis on ambition (Rose, 1992). One of the representatives for a dining establishment was questioned about the relationship with other businesses in Ljubljana. The participant responded by explaining that one of their supplier's had chosen to diversify their professional development by forming food establishments in addition to being a meat seller. Participant 11's response is noted below:

“So, for meat, B has his, it's not a personal butcher, but a butcher that works with two restaurants in Ljubljana. Otherwise, it's not really from the vicinity. It's like 120 km from Ljubljana on the southern border. But he is really ambitious in a way that he doesn't want to stay a butcher”.

The residents, whether as an employee or citizen, were encouraged to see their lives as enterprises that led to their own production, which is contrast to Slovenia's socialist era (Bongiglioli, 2020). As Foucault (2008, p.226) noted

“A homo economicus as entrepreneur of himself, being for himself his own capital, being for himself his own producer, being for himself the source of [his] earnings”.

It is within this neoliberal context of active and competitive residents that smart initiatives emerged. The question is now raised as to what “smart” means. A discourse analysis was done on specific smart documents associated with the municipality to achieve what Foucault (1972, p.29) noted as “freeing them [objects- smart] of all the groupings that purport to be natural, immediate, universal unities”.

It is salient to explore its meaning based on individuals who were identified as being the main suppliers since they are considered as major authorities who contribute to the continued existence of an object (Foucault, 1972). During an interview with the mayor that was captured in document Doc-sl, smart was mentioned 37 times. Foucauldian discourse analysis was used to further understand the meanings associated with smart. It was first represented as a commitment and moral imperative to residents and visitors, thereby drawing on moral discourse. Narratives included “we continually strive to raise” and “we are their best service”. Strategy discourse emerged with terms such as “build necessary infrastructure” and “introduce innovations”. This positioned the municipality as one who tackled the issues related to the city. It also served as a reassurance of the city’s commitment.

However, there was a contradiction of discourses when individualised responsibility arose following the city’s commitment to fulfil citizens’ needs, which has also been the case of smart cities plans in the UK (Joss et al., 2017). The concept of smart was framed as self-governance with citizens being depended on to produce results. Smart was represented using terms such as “opportunities and incentives” through an investment discourse. Therefore, smart was an investment and residents were investors. Through the lens of neoliberal governmentality, an individual then “is an entrepreneur of himself who incurs expenses by investing to obtain some kind of improvement” (Foucault, 2008, p.230).

All three discourses constructed smart Ljubljana as a business as was also evident Higgins & Coffey (2016). This is the core underpinning of neoliberalism, signifying that the destination then is governed by market values (Hall, 2019). The moral discourse showed the city’s focus on customers, while strategy illustrated seriousness to fulfil goals. Responsibility discourse associated with personal duty for residents which is another principle of business (Ferguson, 2010).

Smart represents a technology of power as it acts upon the conduct of individuals within Ljubljana. The following section will further explain by discussing the emerging subject positions from the Foucauldian discourse analysis: responsible residents and entrepreneurial leader. This can also lead to greater understanding of engagement in smart destinations.

7.4.2 Responsible Residents

Suppliers are regarded as active integrators and value co-creators in smart tourism (Boes et al., 2016; Buonincontri & Micera, 2016; Polese et al., 2018), which signifies empowerment and autonomy during the collaborative process (Wood & Gray, 1991). However, critical smart cities scholars note that citizens are “experimental subjects” who are responsible for ensuring smart initiatives

work in favour of the government and corporations (Levenda 2019, p. 573). Responsibilisation among residents is one of the effects of neoliberalism (Morrison, 2017). A similar occurrence is seen in promotion of sustainability where citizens are called upon to be responsible citizens (Eden, 1993; Hall, 2019; Pey & Islam, 2017). This was also evident in the Ljubljana as residents, including the mayor, had the responsibility of representing Ljubljana as “ambassadors”:

“The most important ambassadors for Ljubljana are undoubtedly our residents, who immerse themselves in the mix of cultures and always ensure a touch of comfort and warmth with their openness, kindness and hospitality”. (Doc-li)

Smart represents what Foucault calls a disciplinary technology since it shapes the behaviour and identity of the subject (Burchell et al., 1991). As a result of smart initiatives, citizens were considered as ambassadors who had responsibilities. The title of ambassador represents a technology within neoliberal governmentality that can aid conformance to different initiatives within destinations (Dzenovska, 2004; Mehta-Karia, 2011; Ninan et al., 2019; Schwak, 2016).

Residents of Ljubljana were classified as the most important stakeholders and beneficiaries in the smart development process; however, this raised the question as to whether these experiences were proposed or met with mutual acceptance by local citizens. However, this was not the case as the mayor emphasised that there was difficulty in altering local habits, which overtime occurred:

“Although changing people’s habits is the hardest task our residents prove they are prepared to change certain points of view, especially when they are acquainted with all the benefits such changes bring and can take part in their creation”. (Doc-sl)

Foucault (1980) noted that in order to control individuals, access would be needed over their attitudes and daily habits, which is evident in Ljubljana. Local citizens were first required to change their *modus operandi* to facilitate the implementation of smart experiences. For instance, residents were accustomed to driving to the city centre, but this changed when the pedestrian zone and bicycle sharing scheme were introduced. The mobile applications that were developed also served as a means of changing habits.

Residents did not only have a duty to represent Ljubljana as ambassadors but to also ensure the success of smart initiatives:

“But the fact remains that the individuals are the ones who decide whether they will take advantage of these opportunities, and that is why we [municipality representatives] are putting a lot of effort in

awareness-raising of residents so they would take a greener sustainable path”. (Doc- sl)

Based on the quote above, the purpose of government was not only to oversee smart development as previously noted in Chapter 6 and previous smart destination research (Boes et al., 2016; Zhu et al., 2014), they were also constructing responsible citizens as is the case of smart cities in Texas (Levenda, 2019) and India (Das, 2020). This represents the effect of Foucault’s disciplinary power (Burchell et al., 1991). Individuals were controlled through various mechanisms such as advertisements and the smart platforms, which resulted in them becoming the ideal smart tourism subject- the responsible resident. Once smart initiatives were successfully embraced by citizens, this led to increased recognition of the destination that was promoted by the entrepreneurial leader.

7.4.3 Entrepreneurial Leader

The entrepreneurial leader is represented as the mayor. Narratives of competitiveness was dominant in his interviews with smart city experts. In one instance, he drew attention on smart initiatives as being a way for ensuring residents’ quality of life but was also keen on demonstrating the city as a leader in smart. He drew comparisons between Ljubljana and other places with an emphasis placed on the city having a leading position as a result on smartness:

“For me, Ljubljana is the most beautiful city in the world- a capital unique for its special position in the heart of Slovenia. As a city with rich history and cultural heritage, it attracts more visitors every year from near and far...welcome to Ljubljana”. (Doc-li)

Participants associated the mayor’s behaviour with his background as a professional in the private sector as participant 17 stated:

“He’s working in the economy for many, many years. This is actually his first job as actual mayor of a municipality. He never worked in it”.

The mayor brought business skills to tackle issues within the public domain. An enterprising mindset is usually evident among private sector representatives as well as the convenor of collaborations (Fyall et al., 2010). Such a mindset was the product of neoliberalism based on market logics that the mayor would have been familiar from his experience. Individuals that are influenced by neoliberalism are known for having ambition, reaching and exceeding targets and remaining competitive (Rose, 1992; Scharff, 2016; Turken et al., 2016).

This entrepreneurial mindset has dominated how some participants perceive that business should be done and can be found in their narratives where they emphasised the role of the previous administrations as one of no growth in comparison to the current situation:

“Ohh there was long time stagnation until the new, which is still current mayor who is a businessman and kind of runs the city more like a private enterprise”. (Participant 9)

The ongoing changes within the city have been welcomed by some tourism suppliers who tend to classify the period before the mayor’s admittance to office as “long time stagnation” (Participant 9) and after as being a time to “revoluntise the city” (Participant 7). According to Participant 13, the mayor had “managerial” skills:

“Before, basically tourism was not regarded as a priority. It was not an agenda and the whole centre was more or less abandoned. The last mayor was not ambitious and have this managerial capacity, you know, to push the development. If we would be waiting for public sector not many things would have happened.”

A further evaluation of what “managerial” meant by the participant showed that this trait was more centred on the notion of being productive and profitable, which associated with the entrepreneurial self of neoliberalism (Rose, 1992; Turken et al., 2016).

Since admittance and implementation of smart initiatives, the mayor has had continued success at the election polls. Ivars-Baidal et al. (2017) highlight political terms as inhibitors of smart tourism engagement. The mayor has managed to maintain a continued governance structure through his re-elections, which facilitates the implementation of smart initiatives.

The mayor was still fixated on promotion to attract tourists and investors. Macfarlane (2017) highlights this fixation as being a result of neoliberalism efforts that seek to concentrate on the customers’ needs rather than collaborative efforts for developing a product. This is also a familiar occurrence with mayors in smart cities (Das, 2020; Levenda, 2019). Rowe (2020, p.792) calls it “self-interest, obsessively focused on gaining a private advantage”. This focus on promotion results in less deliberations and thorough development as highlighted in the quote at the start of Section 7.4, which is restated below:

“We will be very active in kind of, formally, officially adopting new things, but will be much slower with the implementation of those”. (Participant 5)

The issues that smart initiatives were aimed at solving was less attended to. A focus on promotion moves attention from bringing these initiatives to fruition

for managing destination issues, which smart initiatives seeks to address (Levenda, 2019). This signifies neoliberal governmentality as smart represents a tool that is shaping how the destination operates. It is guiding conduct of the city and its residents towards further embracing market values (Burchell et al., 1991; Foucault, 2008).

As citizens embraced initiatives, the mayor was able to continue promoting the destination as a city open for business. Smart destinations are known to be established in smart tourism research (Buhalis, 2019; Lopez de Avila, 2015) but instead findings show that they represent test sites for innovations as smart city scholars confirm (Buuse & Kolk, 2019). In Ljubljana, the success of each initiative increased the city's profile as a place for "testing" and "proof" (Participant 19), resulting in continued consideration as a test site for smart initiatives. Participant 19 highlighted this as not being "typical":

"Now we have this one hundred million projects for the water supply. It's ok. But this is not typical".

Participant 19 was optimistic and welcoming of these changes. However, there was also a loss of autonomy as the city had to prioritise focus of these tests over their own. The public's interest has not been adequately served since these tests bring with them their own pathways that can divert from local plans and long-held values. Already the influence was apparent with the introduction of digitisation which has never been the core of Ljubljana's tourism efforts (see Chapter 5).

This fixation on the implementation of already formulated tests was not significantly beneficial to the tourism industry. In Ljubljana, these new initiatives provided opportunities, which required advanced technologies that local tourism suppliers were not able to provide, thereby resulting in lower participation in the collaborative process. Private entities, not in tourism, were responsible for providing the technical expertise in Ljubljana's smart tourism, which has been seen in other smart cities (Das, 2020; Levenda, 2019). Participant 17, a representative of a public entity, specifically highlighted that they would rather private entities having control over monitoring the mobile parking application due to the time-consuming process of gathering, sorting and managing high volumes of data that have been captured by these applications. The data handling process was more tedious than expected due to a lack of cooperation by suppliers:

"Actually, every city is creating, data and alot of data of course. Ahh with the sensors and I don't know. But sometimes or many times even, people don't want to cooperate. And then they will put also the data on the parking spaces on the page but they want to push this data on the transport for the municipality. Something is a little bit strange but that is the situation. We will change this. So we have app [mobile

application] which is privately, app, and this app is working with of course our data so we have private parking and also private parking”. (Participant 17)

There is an emphasis on optimising the process as found in smart collaborations (Bibri, 2019), signifying that inclusion will not be the first point to consider regarding design and development of initiatives (Yang, 2008). Foucault (2008, p.226) stated that the neoliberal subject is “not at all a partner of exchange” but based on own production for satisfaction. Therefore, there was less consideration for ensuring mutual exchange of value for all. Instead, individuals focused on economic processes. Arguably too, this view may have been unknown to tourism suppliers, which points to a lack of transparency. Kuecker and Hartley (2020) recognise the absence of transparency as being one of the effects of neoliberalism in smart cities. While local tourism suppliers paid a less active role in development, they were required for ensuring the success of these smart initiatives. Not only were they considered active and responsible residents but were needed to ensure the smart platforms could function, which is why the technologies of power are essential in smart development.

In summary, Slovenia is an “independent” country, free to pursue its own initiatives and decisions. The destination has since become a willing neoliberal member of the EU, embracing a variety of activities that include smart initiatives. Smart represented a technology of power that control how the development process was operationalised. Responsibility was shifted from municipality representatives to residents to ensure the success of these initiatives. As initiatives become successful, the head of the municipality promoted the destination in order to showcase the competitive advantage of the destination. This increased promotion resulted in further consideration as a “test” destination. These tests required resources that are mainly sourced from private entities. This therefore excludes tourism suppliers from the central decision-making process, however, they were still needed to make smart initiatives work, which necessitated drawing on technologies of power to ensure their inclusion. They represented citizens who both contributed and utilised the initiatives. This and the continued efforts by other residents to partake in these initiatives resulted in success that increased the competitiveness and ratings of the destination as well as continued the process of being considered for more initiatives. This is what Russo & Brandais (2021, n.p.) call a “technological lock-in” evident in smart cities.

Autonomy and control are not mutually exclusive but deeply connected (Foucault, 2008; McNay, 2009). Local destination suppliers should be mindful of this as they consider smart collaborations as this can result in some of the findings of this section. These insights challenge some dominant views held in smart tourism literature but have surfaced in smart cities literature:

- all stakeholders being value co-creators in smart destinations (Boes et al., 2016; Buonincontri & Micera, 2016; Polese et al., 2018) but also responsible residents (Cardullo & Kitchin, 2019; Simonofski et al., 2021);
- an understanding of a smart destination that signifies completeness (Buhalis, 2019; Lopez de Avila, 2015) rather than a destination that is in a continuous state of development and based on the implementation of tests for smart initiatives (Buuse & Kolk, 2019);
- government leadership is a core component of destinations (Boes et al., 2016; Zhu et al., 2014) but also an entrepreneurial stakeholder and shaper of subjects (Das, 2020; Levenda, 2019); and
- a city that focuses on destinations' interests and resources (Cavalheiro et al., 2019) but also focused on economic gains and efficiency (Levenda, 2019).

These points represent areas for future research and can hopefully aid in establishing critical discussions regarding smart contexts. This section has further shown exactly why it is important for practitioners to garner an in-depth understanding of smart prior to embarking on development when there may be a “lock-in”.

Following the previous discussion, one may stop to contemplate if individuals are entirely limited within the smart process and whether they have no freedom to engage. The next section turns to understanding how suppliers' views may have led to resistance as well as other behaviours. This is linked to the varying subject positions suppliers spoke about and was discussed at the start of the chapter. However, this is not the emancipatory view of resistance that was proposed by Fairclough, Habermas and others (Curtis, 2014). Foucault (1979b) still maintained that one is still limited based on discourses. Hall (1997) echoes this point to state that an individuals' position is made possible through discourse, hence, the following section will reveal the discourses that made these subject positions possible by first reflecting on how smart tourism was constructed.

7.5 Constructing Smart Tourism

Participants constructed smart tourism as the ideal representation of technology. However, following discourse analysis, other constructions emerged that formed the basis on which suppliers justified their involvement. There being multiple meanings of smart within the same city is not new as Desdemoustier et al. (2019) illustrate this being the case in Belgium. Constructions include discourses related to:

- technology: automatic, dehumanising, improvement, connectivity to visitors and connectivity to operations;
- sustainability: initiatives that reflect culture and preserve environment;
- marketing: means of promotion and experiences for tourists; and
- unknown concept and continuous state of development.

According to Foucault (1980), discourses create different subjects. Therefore, Foucault (1972) thought that analysis of discourse is not complete if one did not “define the positions and functions that the subject could occupy in the diversity of discourse” (p.200). Each construction can be associated with two approaches: a top-down approach that emphasised experts aligned with smart initiatives as well as bottom-up whereas the suppliers’ role was recognised. This resulted in three supplier subject positions:

- the invisible supplier who has no role in developing technology-based smart initiatives;
- the interacting supplier who is needed to ensure that the technology initiatives work; and
- the co-opted supplier who perceives smart initiatives not as technology but programmes where their concerns are focused on first and they have a direct understanding of development.

The subject positions should not be seen as static but fluid positions as some suppliers were found to draw on different understandings to justify their involvement, which will be discussed in Section 7.6. Smart then is not an objective reality as previously conceptualised by some scholars and discussed in the literature review (see also Caragliu, 2011; Jeong & Shin, 2019; Wang et al., 2016a) but is socially constructed by suppliers within a destination context that affects representation and meaning.

7.5.1 Smart and Discourses of Technology

Smart tourism was perceived as different technological devices, thus associating it with discourses of technology. Smart tourism was first described as automatic technology, using terms such as “automatic”, “systems connecting” and “ecosystem” as is the case of technology-driven smart cities (Joss et al., 2017) and generally in the field of technology (Doran et al., 2013; Loewy, 1997). Data is gathered and analysed through connected systems. Suppliers did not specify the types of systems or mention the core technologies driving smart such as cloud services, internet of things and end-user internet service system (Buhalis & Amaranggana, 2013; Wang et al., 2013). Nonetheless, these systems in Ljubljana would result in being able to “manage the tourism flow with this data” (Participant 17). Participant 13 drew on this construction to share their meaning of smart:

“technology is used as a glue which collects, analyses and distributes the data that we need for management whereas the management is capable of understanding how to use this technology efficient... competent management which knows how to use technology and technology that enables, let’s say, really like smart analytics and smart decision making based on this advanced analytics”.

Within participant 13’s response, one will realise that the only subject position involved in the process is “competent management”. This role was assigned to those who had data analytics skills, which validates who can be counted as a stakeholder. The participant continued their response to acknowledge that Slovenia’s education system was not able to equip residents with these skills since its curriculum was still focused on “an elementary course” for “general ICT used for tourism”. Based on the participant’s experience with tourism suppliers on digitisation projects, it was concluded that tourism suppliers were not equipped with these necessary data analytics skills. This view is quite familiar in technology-based collaborations (Estevao et al., 2020; Sigala, 2013).

Participant 14, a hotelier, was not able to identify with smart. The participant referred to it being “technical stuff” as if it were unknown. The lack of competence resulted in suppliers like participant 14 not being seen as having a role in smart tourism but instead invisible suppliers. Only technological systems and individuals who were deemed competent, were acknowledged as being necessary in smart initiatives:

“The technology is a start-up world of geeks and who just want to quickly grow their business, find very efficient solutions”. (Participant 13)

“And if you ask me, already now, the smart tourism, or smart city or smart Slovenia will never be Slovenia that everybody will be uhhh very good IT [information technology] professional. Some tourism providers will be good IT professionals”. (Participant 3)

In a conversation with participant 17, one of the participants who was known as an expert on smart, emphasised the lack of autonomy for residents. There was a narrative of “us” and “them” as seen in the quote below:

“We [experts] started to inform them....we started to give them [residents] information”. (Participant 17)

Control signifies non-participation by citizens in techno-cratic smart cities (Cardullo & Kitchin, 2019). Participants’ 13, 17 and 3 quotes not only reinforced the invisible status of the tourism supplier but also illustrated the reliance on a few in society. The smart tourism destination that is technology-oriented only focused on the technology and a few experts. This is similar to

Vanolo's (2016) smart city imagery with no citizens and Shelton and Lodato's (2019) absent citizen that highlight the context as based on technology that includes the expert and other stakeholders as being invisible. In the case of Ljubljana, little to no reference was made to individuals but instead emphasis was placed on technologies, as has been observed in smart cities research (Mohseni, 2020).

Dehumanisation is a concern mainly brought up by tourists with regards to technology (Tussyadiah et al., 2020). However, suppliers in Ljubljana also perceive smart as dehumanising technology. This construction emphasised the need for efficiency in service delivery but was deemed as threat to the continued existence of the hospitality professional. Phrases used included "not personal" (Participant 9) or "itemised" (Participant 10). Like the construction as an automatic technology, this meaning of smart was also based on the existence of experts and technology. Suppliers were not thought of having a role in settings where these technologies would be used resulting in the need for the individual to find employment elsewhere. This will be further expanded on in Section 7.6 as it was drawn on to justify engagement across discourses.

The meanings of smart based on technology were not always surrounding data and efficiency. It was also perceived as technologies geared towards improvement of city as is also the case of Joss et al. (2017). According to participant 19, these technologies were "smart solutions" or "better solutions". Unlike the previous constructions that emphasise the use of experts as individuals, this focused on experts being technological companies, DMO and government.

"Yes. Well this is ahh solving together...IBM start a solution 10 years of 15 years ago, they know that a city does not work like that. They could help with the technology but the technology is not all. You need the sensors, you need computers, you need to technical solutions, all this you need to make better decisions". (Participant 19)

"IBM alone can't work." (Participant 17)

These experts were needed not only to provide the technological device but also a greater understanding of the problems that were being attended to:

"We have to understand the processes that DMOs have to serve, have to manage, have to promote, have to further develop and what is really important, they [DMO representative] have to be highly trained, highly educated, they have to understand the whole big picture of it". (Participant 3)

Like smart as an automatic technology, there was a concern for competent individuals. There was also a focus on solving issues and placing people's concerns over profits. Participant 8 explained that it was a means of solving

some long-standing issues within the city, which is also acknowledged in smart cities (Caragliu et al., 2011). At the same time recognising that there would be little to no financial gain, which is a point yet to be raised in smart tourism literature:

“Ahmm and its something that, maybe it's still not, it's not seen as something profitable. It's something that we want to do, not to get any reward, any money or anything like that”. (Participant 8)

Tourism suppliers were still not acknowledged in this perception of smart despite their dependence on the city as a destination. Again, the tourism businesses were invisible suppliers.

Participants also described smart tourism as technology for connectivity to visitors for comfort and pleasure. There were significant references to “[mobile] apps” (Participant 1; Participant 17; Participant 20). Here, there is a focus on utilising technology for delivering experiences to tourists:

“Use technologies, make out of it new experience to make products, to make, you know, ahhm, for us its bringing them chances to develop and ahhh so more and more connecting to us [suppliers] and ahh optimistic”. (Participant 16)

“Different technologies to help different kinds of people”. (Participant 14)

“I would say, the usage of like uhhm of technology, in regards to serving solutions, like mobile apps [applications], for I don't know, maybe to rent uhhh a bicycle, I don't know to rent an electrical car or ahmm so”. (Participant 1)

These technologies were seen as being connected to suppliers who were needed for providing information for visitor experiences. Mentions were made of using social media within organisations as a means of communicating with current customers and garner attention from potential clients as is also the case of Hoffmann et al. (2018). Participant 1 invested time and resources in ensuring that their organisations remained active on Facebook, Instagram with less attention given to YouTube and company websites:

“So uhh we are very active on Facebook, Instagram, for both hotels, like we have this uhh, so our strategic decision is that we at least post something, 3 times per week but we now at least on Instagram we have noticed it should be like one post per day and like on Facebook at least 3 times per week. Now we also plan to be more active on LinkedIn for the business segment. We had Twitter, we had , we have no, now no video production but we are well aware that we need good videos for Youtube. This will come in the future. So uhh the website, like our

main hub, with the content, uhh , from time to time some blogs, we still dont have like very good newsletter, technical solutions”.

From the analysis, suppliers were deemed to be interacting suppliers based on their consideration and active role in smart development. Furthermore, these types of smart initiatives were more focused on the organisation rather than the destination.

Smart was also perceived as technologies that improved business operations:

“Each property runs his own yielding system, PMS [Property Management System], but everybody in terms of pricing is done here”.
(Participant 23)

This response mirrors the case of Femenia-Serra et al. (2018) where millennials still associated smart with less advanced technologies. However, according to Gretzel et al. (2015a) and Buhalis (2019) PMS, emails and yielding systems are not examples of smart tourism but instead associate them with eTourism. Participant 23 classification is linked to Foucault’s (1972, p. 83) thought that “[discourses] may undergo a number of intrinsic mutations that are integrated...without the general form of its regularity being altered”. Therefore, although, there are different examples of innovations they still fall within technology discourse.

These innovations (examples: PMS, emails and mobile applications) connected directly to the organisation and were reliant on suppliers for functioning. The prices would be decided on by the reservations and sales executives. Then, the rates were inputted in the system for use by other workers at the organisation. These rates were shared with potential clients who either called or emailed the property. Suppliers are therefore seen as having an active role in smart tourism, which results in their categorisation as interacting suppliers.

Perceptions of smart were similar to Kozinets’ (2007) ideological fields of technology, namely green luddite being similar to technology as dehumanising and work machine being technology that improves business. This thesis departs from Kozinets (2007) as well as Gretzel and Murphy’s (2019) work to reveal additional constructions as automatic technology as well as those for connectivity. Furthermore, findings show that technology discourses provided certain narratives that limited or removed the role of suppliers. These narratives define the specific object (Foucault, 1972), which is smart as well as the position of the supplier.

Findings also illustrate that smart tourism was not solely aligned with the dominant technological perspective, which will be explain in the following section. Other discourses emerge that differed based on their constructions (Foucault, 1981). This opposes Das’ (2020, p.74) view that smart destinations only refer to technology and appeal to “digital natives”.

7.5.2 *Smart and Discourses of Sustainability*

Sustainability has been acknowledged as key aspect of smart destinations (Ortego et al., 2020) and cities (Granath, 2016; Haarstad, 2017). This thesis illustrates that not only was it seen as a key aspect but represented the full meaning given by suppliers for explaining smart. Hence, they did not mention the technological aspect. In this regard, “discourses in turn constituted its object [smart] and worked it to the point of transforming it altogether” (Foucault 1972, p.32). Also, the specific constructions associated with sustainability discourses were considered unique to Ljubljana. The destination then represented what Foucault (1972) called a surface of emergence for discourse. Sustainability as noted in Chapters 5 and 6 were constituted by the society and filtered in the lives of residents through the family and education system. Smart through sustainability discourses means that those who were locals in Ljubljana were expected to engage, which is unlike technology discourses that emphasise exclusivity. Participants constructed smart as cultural and environmental sustainability discourses. Therefore, there are different kinds of constructions within the same discourse (Foucault, 1972).

One participant regarded smart as an initiative that should reflect the “traditional” culture of the destination. It was not surprising that only one participant mentioned this as cultural sustainability since it is hardly referred to in smart research in comparison to environmental sustainability (Granath, 2016; Haarstad, 2017). Participant 9 voiced concerns that Taste Ljubljana, a smart initiative, was not offering a true reflection of the destination and its offerings:

“No. No. We are not apart of that [Taste Ljubljana] because ahhmm I don’t agree with some ahhm what they want to do. Because ahh for me traditional means traditional and that means ahhm Slovenia, this is traditional Slovenian dish”.

The participant raised concern that the items being promoted via the smart initiative were being modernised due to being in “the new age”. Here, the interpretations of culture have evidently changed. Foucault (1972) noted that a particular understanding does not exist for decades but modifies overtime, which is the case in the scenario being discussed. The participant illustrated this by presenting their example of the Slovenian dish consisting of potatoes and pork roast and argued that other participating entities were updating the presentation of the dish as seen in the brochure (see Figure 7.5.2):

“And always when I remember you got 2 potatoes, two mashed potatoes and pork roast. It look. When you see that, it looks like it. Alright, I understand kitchen is exactly, uhhmm exploding about the last 5 years , all gastronomy, exploding, alot of ideas changing and

everything is on the front if you see. But if you are traditional, my opinion is that everything needs to be traditional. Also, on the plate, it needs to be traditional. I understand that we are in the new age and we can improve yes but this is not traditional for me. Ahmm I'm looking with my eyes like that".



Figure 7.5.2: Taste Ljubljana Brochure (Doc-It)

After sharing views with those who were involved in development, the participant displayed strong resistance and led to their decision of not engaging in the smart initiative:

“Ahh I don't know why they ahh put out uhhm I try to discuss with them but they told me nothing but everything ahmmmm we are not apart of Taste of Ljubljana”.

This move by participant 9 illustrated that there was a higher level of interaction by suppliers in comparison to those who drew on technological meanings since they were able to voice concerns and actively consider their place in the collaboration. This was also evident in Joss (2017) where it was acknowledged that some discourses associated with smart cities result in subject positions where residents could share their views in decision-making.

Foucault (1979b) reminded us that actions are bounded by discourses and in this scenario, participant 9's actions of refusing to participate in Taste Ljubljana were based on their perception of this smart initiative being one that should reflect cultural values. The participant's action was not found to be detrimental to collaborating in smart initiatives as the DMO did not accommodate or react to their views. Nonetheless, this concern by participant 9 has implications for the development of smart Ljubljana. Cavalheiro et al. (2020) note that a smart destination should promote its cultural experiences. However, this move towards a commercialised presentation of offerings follows a history of implementing branding strategies that are not centred on promoting past traditions as seen in discourses of Europeanness (Morgan & Pritchard, 1999).

Other suppliers referred to smart as a means of preserving the natural environment. Smart described initiatives that preserve the natural environment. Terms used in interviews and documents to identify sustainability include "green" (Participant 4), "environmentally friendly" (Web-ljb) and "preserve" (Doc-sl). This connection to the environment can be linked to the destination's long-held focus on sustainability as discussed in Chapter 4. Sustainability initiatives, which is the object, has been maintained through surfaces of emergence (Foucault, 1972). These included the family, school and society. This resulted in maintaining the aesthetics of the destination, which is regarded by Foucault (1980) as power being productive.

"This [being smart] is important. I mean, if you just throw it somewhere in the woods, first it doesn't look nice, it does not belong there, why. I don't have any in my living room at home. I have also. At home, you have cleaner. If you have your home clean, if I go to the woods or if I go out, it's nice if its clean". (Participant 23)

Smart initiatives as environmental initiatives were mentioned with terms such as resilience (Doc-scc), mobility (Doc-sg) accessibility (Participant 15). Particularly, mobility associate with the sustainability dimension of smart destinations (Ivars-Baidal et al., 2021). Participant 15 commonly cited smart with the term accessible during his interviews:

"this smart tourism. Tourism Ljubljana is working on this [wheelchair application]. So Ljubljana is accessible to everyone."

The participant did acknowledge that they willingly participated since accessibility and mobility practices were key offerings of their business. In fact, the business was instrumental in implementing other smart initiatives such as the electric train. However, the participant still disassociated their organisation from being actively involved and assigned this role to the DMO. Participant 15 unpacks his explanation further by acknowledging that his

business has “nothing to do with tourism” but were instead involved in “offering mobility practices”.

At the same time, some individuals used the term sustainability alongside smart in their discussions. Participant 16 represented one who used the terms together throughout the interview. In fact, the participant referred to them as being buzzwords, which has been acknowledged by scholars in terms of smart tourism and cities (Gretzel et al., 2015a; Gajdosik, 2018) and generally the concept of sustainability (Schaltegger & Burritt, 2006; Scoones, 2007).

“You get 10 invitations to different networks that they want to build and everything is sustainable and everything is sustainable tourism and smart and...Ok. We really want to do things. Not just buzz around”.
(Participant 16)

Participant 16’s quote emphasised collaboration among suppliers. In this construction as sustainability initiatives, the supplier had more control than that seen within technology discourses. Smart involved “the private and public sector” (Participant 8). There is evidently an initial desire to engage, which is the first step in the collaborative process (Jamal & Getz, 1995; Wang & Fesenmaier, 2005). However, participant 16 was concerned that engagement by suppliers has not rendered sufficient actions and results, which results in smart and sustainable being described as buzzwords.

Unlike participant 16 who used the terms alongside each other, some suppliers differentiated smart from sustainability. Participant 20 associated Urbana card, bike sharing and mobile applications as being sustainable tourism initiatives rather than smart tourism. The following captures the participant’s reaction when asked to define smart tourism:

“When you sent this to me, I didn't know about smart tourism. We work more on sustainable tourism”.

However, initiatives that were categorised as being sustainable were the same examples of smart based on the researcher’s observation. Nonetheless, it was important to highlight this construction as some suppliers, who were focused on meanings of smart that aligned with technology, did not believe that one’s view of smart tourism could be based on sustainability. Hence, some like participant 13 did not recognise these individuals as having a role in smart development. The following captures the participant’s views as they sought to differentiate the two groups of subject positions (subjectivities):

“I don’t think this 2 kind of groups really like go in hand in hand. It’s either you are an eco-mama or how I call kind of people of our generation who give birth and they are obsessed that only the organic food can make them better child, they can only play with organic toys and so on. That's sustainability to the core bottom. Whereas like the

technology is the papa who is developing his crypto, I don't know what, and the start up and kind of wants to make millions and doesn't really care about the environment and kind of grow organic discourse that his wife will be telling him about".

In addition to sustainability, there were constructions that deviated even further from the ideal technological meaning of smart tourism, such as those associated with tourism marketing, which are discussed below. These were not evident within smart cities literature, thereby illustrating the advantage of specifically focusing on the context of tourism. This is also in line with Foucault's (1972) idea of discourses as they are evidently multiple discourses that form the concept, smart. This is also an indication to industry practitioners to consider moving away from this long-held understanding of engagement being limited to individuals who are technologically competent (Femenia-Serra et al., 2019).

7.5.3 Smart and Discourses of Marketing

There was no connection being made to technology within these discourses of marketing, therefore, having what Foucault (1972) described as points of incompatibility. Technology discourses were centred on systems and efficiency while marketing discourses on value and experiences. Smart tourism was seen as collaborative promotion. Tourism suppliers recognised it as collaborative initiatives such as WTM and ITB. In this sense, this construction of smart can be associated with destination marketing collaboration as discussed previously in Chapter 6. Participants who associated with this construction were considered co-opted suppliers, which signifies that there was no technology as well as a higher level of involvement and awareness of the initiative. Those who were engaged had a concern for their business and offering value.

Unlike the direct tourism suppliers such as hotels and attractions who view smart as another means of promotion, other entities that were indirectly associated with tourism relied on smart initiatives to generate business. Participant 20 was a "technology" infrastructure provider that was responsible for providing some of the technological infrastructure or what Boes et al. (2016) calls hard smartness. Participant 20 made it clear that offering the infrastructure was less than profitable and chose to become involved as they saw it as a revenue stream:

"[Mobile application is] made only for public- private partnerships. If we want to pay these big investments, we need to earn money. We earn money with advertising so this is what we do".

The company offered advertising space to businesses for them to promote their offerings via the technology, whether it be the mobile application or virtual boards. This construction of smart initiatives as advertising platforms is similar to one considering it as a product for sale as in the case of tourist experiences. The differentiating factor lies in the point that Participant 20 sold the product, specifically advertising slots, to businesses who had an interest in raising awareness about their product.

Smart tourism focuses on providing enhanced experiences based on technologies (Buhalis, 2015; Gretzel et al., 2015a; Kim & Han, 2020; Wang et al., 2013). While enhancement or any other differentiating factor was mentioned, participants simply described smart tourism as experiences that were developed for tourists. For instance, some participants classified smart initiatives as activities that they offered to their guests who wanted to pursue activities during their stay in Ljubljana. Participant 4 stated that

“There is this program [smart initiative]...that most guests come here for a short period like 2 days and they want”.

However, participant 4 and 23 simply constructed smart as being tourist experience. Participant 4 viewed it as a pre-arranged experience, which is unlike Gretzel et al. (2015a) conceptualisation that more aligns with participant 23's view:

“Ahh. Smart cities. This, I perceive as, that you can do what you do in the time that you consume in other cities for doing the same thing, that you consume here less time and that actually is safe, green, clean, friendly and actually cosy that you have everything by your hand. That you don't need to check on the internet which restaurant is good, which restaurant is bad, where to go, that the quality is really good. And this is in my opinion smart. And public transportation is working fine, transparent, you don't have difficulty moving from point A to point B. Just have a map, have a look like a tube system, bang bang and everybody can use it and people speak foreign languages. If you come to Russia and you cannot speak Russian, you have a big problem because not a lot of them are speaking English. If you need to use the public transportation system, it is written in 30... if you cannot read, you cannot read. This is my perception of smart. The guests that are coming are having his life going around enjoying”.

However, there is still a distinction with Gretzel et al.'s (2015a) work as though the participant acknowledged smart as being a series of experiences that occurred during trip, the initiatives were not classified as technology encounters. The destination, through collaboration with suppliers, delivers what may be considered as the opposite of a “bad experience”.

7.5.4 *Smart as an Unknown Concept*

Not all participants saw smart as device or initiative but instead as an unknown concept. While there were few participants who were able to confidently define the smart tourism as a concept, more often throughout the interviews, smart tourism was referred to as an unknown concept. This meant that participants did not have previous knowledge of the concept or they were unable to define it. One participant invited the researcher to even explain the concept during the interview:

“Yes, this is uhh, so yes this you can tell me something more about that and I will try to give you some additional information”.

During another interview, a participant admitted that they were unaware of the concept despite having already used the word in the conversation prior to being asked about its meaning. Participant 15 also drew upon the term, giving the impression that they understood the meaning of the term.

Participant 15: “Also this smart tourism, LT is working on this”.

Interviewer: “You said that you are developing a lot more sustainable and smart initiatives. What do you really understand from the term smart? What does smart mean to you?”

Participant 15: “I didn’t know about smart tourism”.

Smart has become a buzzword and has been used to describe smartphones, smart cities and now smart tourism (Gretzel et al., 2015a; Park & Chen, 2007). However, this goes against the principles of smart governance, which recognise that residents have a clear and informed understanding of smart initiatives (Choi et al., 2021).

A lack of understanding results in residents’ being uncertain about their expected behaviour and responsibility in smart destinations (Choi et al., 2021). In Ljubljana, the participants who were not able to define the concept were even uncertain about their participation in these initiatives. It is important to note that these suppliers who were not familiar with the concept were in fact involved in Ljubljana’s smart initiatives based on the researcher’s review of the smart initiatives. Instead, participants were able to relate to examples given by the interviewer. Participant 21 even responded by stating that smart “is only a label”. The participant went on to further explain that the meaning is tied to one’s perception of it. This meant that its meaning was based on the multiple interpretations of the person using the term, which signify a socially constructed view of the concept. Rather than having its own inherent meaning, smart has to be embedded in a discourse to produce contextual meaning. Therefore, smart tourism as an object has no real or fixed meaning outside of discourses. This conclusion has also been acknowledged by researchers who label smart as an empty signifier (Haarstad, 2017; Wiig, 2016).

7.5.5 *Smart as a Continuous State of Development*

Smart was described as a continuous state of development, which was also the case of representatives in smart cities (Buuse & Kolk, 2019). It also explains why current smart destination is yet to showcase a destination that is entirely smart as noted by Baggio et al. (2020). Although Ljubljana has been recognised as a smart tourism destination, participants noted that there were different levels of smartness. For instance, participant 17 described the destination as being “1/4 smart and we would like to be fully smart”. Being entirely smart would require the implementation of more “pilots [pilot initiatives]” (Participant 17). However, participant 16 noted that this only resulted in a smart destination for the “short-term”, which is the case of “90% of smart cities”. Participant 13 also had similar concerns regarding the smart initiatives in Ljubljana, noting that that despite being introduced, they were not widely developed:

“Smartness is now more again like a declaratory level than really being lived out. It’s nice to emphasise on it but the initiatives, the real developed initiatives are not there yet.”

Participant 13 thought that there were still many more changes needed for the destination to rival places such as Hong Kong and Copenhagen:

“I would say nationally looking, Ljubljana is smart, internationally looking, Ljubljana is an average city destination in terms of smartness. Nowhere near Copenhagen or Hong Kong and so on”.

A few suppliers disagreed with participant 13 stating that smart was based on context. While admitting that there was still much left to be developed, Ljubljana had passed an introductory level, according to Participants 3 and 16:

“You don’t have to be all. Like we have now, different booking systems”. (Participant 3)

“For example: you have, in Portugal you have this, they started with Tourism 4.0 before we started. They have a completely ahhh different approach there, building startup ecosystem to help”. (Participant 16)

Having understood the core meanings, the following section will illustrate that engagement in smart tourism is not based one perspective but is justified through a process of navigating discourses.

7.6 Navigating Discourses and Positions

Discourses have effects on subjects, which is necessary to illustrate as Foucault (1972) noted that in order to prove that scholars have found distinct discourses concerning the subject, they must illustrate that the subject has drawn upon and deployed it in their actions. In Ljubljana, participants drew on and moved across varying discourses to justify their actions in four ways: marketing/sustainability discourses; marketing/technology discourses; marketing/sustainability/technology discourses and technology/sustainability discourses. Suppliers navigate across and within discourses and assume either the subject position of invisible supplier, co-opted supplier or interactive supplier, which were noted previously. This resulted in (dis)engagement in smart tourism, which is further discussed.

Participant 23 who was asked to define smart tourism, was found moving across marketing and technology discourses. The participant provided a definition of smart tourism that aligned with tourist experiences, which situates within marketing discourse. However, they started to give examples of initiatives that associated with smart being a technological tool for productivity:

“We have, for example, PMS, yielding system, changing the prices online, emails, anyhow, housekeeping app over the telephone”.
(Participant 23)

The participant's property had chosen to adopt these technologies since it enabled efficiency in operations. This situates understanding of smart within discourses of technology (Sigala, 2013). However, the participant continued the conversation by highlighting that their decisions to engage in initiatives were usually aligned with the area of sales and marketing. Although the participant was not based in this area within their organisation, they admitted that they drew on a sales and marketing perspective when making their decisions. The participant worked in hotel departments that focused on sales, marketing and reservations.

“My background is from sales, so I was always selling. Always in sales. Whatever I did in my career or when I was working before and I see a role of a manager, primarily a role model, how you should behave, what you should, but first of all I need to be a sales person, if I am not bringing, the biggest events, the best events, the high end business, then I can't say to my director of sales, then listen, you need to bring more business ... Before it was not like this. For example, I had one manager before me. He was an Austrian guy and he didn't do such a thing”. (Participant 23)

These decisions aligned with the participant's previous professional roles that presented opportunities for increasing value, which has been recognised as a

focus of smart tourism (Buhalis, 2015; Gretzel et al., 2015a; Wang et al., 2013). More importantly, it must be noted that practices imposed upon an individual can impact their actions (Foucault, 1982). The participant constituted themselves as participant in smart through discourses of marketing, hence, marketing and sales practices impacted participant 23's decision to engage. This is in keeping with Foucault's (1982, p.212) view that this "points at the same time to an actor capable of initiating action and to a being subjected by power, so that actors are never fully determined by a strategic situation".

Participant 23 was not alone in acknowledging that a background in sales and marketing guided decision-making in choosing to engage in smart initiatives. Participant 10 who represented another hotel was now a management executive because of the success they brought to the organisation as a sales and marketing representative for over ten years:

"I started as a sales manager and when I came I was alone. There was no ahh actually there was no department for sales and marketing. The new owners came and they decided that they will start to sell this hotel proper. And I started as a sales manager and I was like 4 years. In that 4 years, ah we did a big jump. You know, it was like 30 %, 40 % higher occupancy and uhh of course in 4 years I got team with 2 members. So we were 3".

Participant 10 explained that it was important to differentiate the property and establish it as a brand within the destination and abroad. This led to their interest in sustainability initiatives, which was at the time attracting attention to Ljubljana. It is important to note that these initiatives were the same examples of smart initiatives. When the participant was questioned about smart tourism, they responded with a definition that aligned with a technological perspective:

"Ahhm poo I don't know what I would say. Smart tourism, ahmm , I dont know. I always think of you know that everything is less and less individual and personal and more and more you know to be I dont know itemised. Yea. This I understand. And I don't feel so much you know this sustainable part here".

Here, smart can be categorised as dehumanising within technology discourse. Participant 10 favoured the delivery of personalised human interactions, which they acknowledged as being the role of hospitality entities. The participant justified engagement in Ljubljana's smart initiatives by associating it with projects that contributed to environmental sustainability. Power, in the form of discourses, determines individual participation (Zhao & Timothy, 2015). However, when the participant was questioned again later in the interview on perception of smart tourism, reference was made to both sustainability and technology despite early disassociation with technology initiatives.

“Well uhmm maybe yeah but it’s not you can not have that [sustainability] or that [technology]. Again, here it’s good to have some kind of synergy, a bit of that and a little bit of that. Of course we all look also you know ahh not only to have better and better service ahmm but also on the other side there are costs and of course. If you know. So in this case, I understand smart.”

Participant 9 disapproved of smart tourism when it was constructed as technology as she noted that technology lacked human attributes and interference. According to Kim and Han (2020), hospitality and tourism executives often acknowledge these limited human encounters as key attributes of smart initiatives, which are beneficial for tourists who require a relaxed atmosphere. Despite these considerations by tourism suppliers, findings show that suppliers in Ljubljana were more concerned about their ability to provide a traditional hospitality experience as evident in participant 9’s feedback:

“When you come in the guest house and you expect a robot, this is not a guesthouse, you will be a number. And I think this is strange. Yea. Yea. But tourism is the human. I think it’s live things. I don’t know why they want everything, ahh, changing computer system. It’s ok. I understand technology and everything but a lot of things in the world it’s something special and you cannot change that”.

The position of the subject is defined through discourses (Foucault, 1972). Participant 9 did not consider themselves as an engaged supplier when drawing on discourses of technology to explain smart. The participant did not think that embracing these smart initiatives represented the service-oriented nature of the hospitality and tourism industry. Smart as dehumanising technologies were not able to provide the emotional and personalised service offered by staff at the property. Banard and Sandelowski (2001) also realise that in instances where technology interfaces with humans, technology is positioned as having precedence over humane care and touch. According to Johnson and Verdicchio (2020), robots can possess human-like qualities in their appearance, movements and responsiveness, which represents one of the rationale for considering them in service delivery. This placed participant 9 in an invisible supplier position. The participant later justified their endorsement with smart initiatives such as electric cars and bicycle sharing system due to their association with environmental sustainability:

“Yea it’s ok electric cars is very good, bike is very good, a lot of things is good. Not service. Service can’t be technology”. (Participant 9)

The participant also went a step further to resist engaging in a smart initiative due to having the belief that one of them, namely Taste Ljubljana, was not reflective of the culture of Slovenia, which was highlighted in Section 7.5.2. At first, this seems like a contradictory choice since the initiative can be

associated with sustainability. However, different constructions can result in varying responses (Foucault, 1972), which in this case has to do with culture. Further, according to Foucault (1970), the classification of objects can create a field of possibilities that enables one to carry out certain activities. Based on participant 9's understanding of smart, they chose to either resist or engage in different initiatives based on various associated constructions. This illustrates that "there is a plurality of resistances...; by definition, they can only exist in the strategic field of power relations...mobilizing groups in a definitive way" (Foucault, 1981, p.60).

Discourse can also be a hindrance to viewing other representations of an object (Foucault, 1981). Smart initiatives were previously highlighted as tourism experiences developed through collaborative efforts, falling within marketing discourse. Participant 20 was quick to point out that the entity had no association with tourism when asked about the rationale for engaging in smart tourism initiatives. They did not associate with the smart tourism label, which is a sign of resisting and not associating with an industry's ideas, systems and objectives (Foucault, 1981). Instead, they aligned smart initiatives with being associated with mobility and accessibility that associated with environmental initiative:

"Not too much because we are dealing with transport and Urbana card is one part of this transport. But yeah we do hear something about smart tourism and smart Urbana but not so much... We also collaborate like now in this smart, not smart, electric vehicle and stuff life that... This system in Ljubljana is ours. I was surprised when I read your mail because we don't have nothing with tourism, nothing".

The business' logo was prominently featured on promotional material for smart initiatives such as the electric train under descriptions pertaining to tourism: "the electric train Urban introduced an attractive tourist circular route connecting the most important attractions in Ljubljana". Participant 20 represented a transportation provider in the city and transportation is considered essential to smart tourism and the tourism industry at large (Gretzel et al., 2015b). Future research would be needed to ascertain whether participant 20's view was reflective of a long-held disassociation that organisations have with the tourism industry due to them not being seen traditional tourism businesses.

7.7 Summary of Chapter

While previous studies present a favourable collaboration in smart tourism (Gretzel et al., 2015a), this section challenges this view through discourses and governmentality. It explains supplier engagement through technologies of power and discourses. The chapter illustrated that suppliers associated their

engagement with varying levels of involvement. Some justified their participation in relation to categories of smart suppliers. These positions included partner, stakeholders, being involved or cooperating, which differs from the absolute understanding of the supplier in smart tourism literature (see Gretzel et al., 2015). These varying degrees of participation, whether based on varying level of involvement or in relation to positions, were made possible through technologies of power and discursive constructions.

The chapter further illustrated that technologies of power within smart development influence suppliers' engagement, which extends one's understanding of the influences of smart engagement. Studies tend to highlight government as a major influence (see Boes et al., 2016; Choi et al., 2021), however, there are also power mechanisms that control suppliers' behaviour. Space was a representation of control; hence, engagement was not always based on autonomy or choice. Culture of collaboration, which is unique to Ljubljana, enabled inclusion but to some degree as some suppliers were further excluded while participation is only afforded to some that are involved. In this instance, suppliers are not all connected and offered mutual value as is proposed in smart tourism (Buhalis, 2015) or collaboration research (Wood & Gray, 1991). Databases and assessment procedures were forms of control as these excluded those who do not fit within known and unknown requirements. Smart tourism developments do not offer individuals the opportunity the choice to engage, which is contrary to collaborations (Wood & Gray, 1991) or views promoted through rational theories that smart literature dominantly draws on. The technological devices and platforms were found to shape individuals' engagement in smart cities (Vanolo, 2014) but this was not found to be the case in smart Ljubljana. Despite the effects of technologies of power, these mechanisms of power were also productive resulting in the continuance of smart initiatives. The findings of this chapter provide novel insights to destination practitioners on how to foster greater inclusion meanwhile suppliers can better evaluate their decision to engage, which demonstrates the benefit of drawing on Foucauldian view.

Based on collaboration theory (Gray, 1989), greater inclusion can overcome these power imbalances. However, the chapter shows that smart is a discursive device associated with neoliberal governmentality, which can further explain why a top-down approach can continue to exist in a smart destination. Findings show that discourses underpinning smart associated with the core understanding of neoliberalism, that is, the city as a business. The following subject positions also emerged: active and willing neoliberal member, entrepreneurial leader and responsible residents. This resulted in the continued existence of passive citizen as previously found in smart cities research (Cardullo et al., 2017; Levenda, 2019). However, this study departs from these studies to illustrate that not all corporations are active and of significant

influence as local tourism suppliers were found to have limited participation in smart development especially decision-making.

Foucault noted that not all individuals will be subject to these mechanisms as some will try to resist. This led to examining supplier engagement through an analysis of discourses. The passive supplier that was seen in the smart development process in Chapter 6 draws on different subject positions and meanings associated with smart to rationalise engagement. Suppliers also navigated across and within discourses to justify their involvement. Meanings associated with the prototypical understanding of technological devices. On the other hand, constructions emerged, which were not connected to the academic and industry definitions of smart tourism that join marketing and technology perspectives and continue to dominate the literature (see Chapter 3). Suppliers associated with smart based on distinct understandings by drawing on these views in discussions and later justifying engagement by associating with one discourse/construction. Through a Foucauldian perspective, findings show that these views are ultimately tied to social processes and practices. Through discourses of marketing and sustainability, most participants interpreted smart tourism as an initiative that first considered individual suppliers rather than rendering them invisible. An understanding of the various meanings associated with smart will prove beneficial to developers who require better ways of implementing these initiatives to increase desirability. Furthermore, the smart destination context enhances one's view of Foucault's power by illustrating that the underlying meanings change at a faster pace in comparison to the time of Foucault's writings that took on more of a historical approach. Also, the technologies of power are less obvious and explained in comparison to the time of Foucault's work on governmentality. The following chapter will provide a general conclusion of engagement in smart tourism. It will reflect on the research objectives as well as the implications for tackling challenges in smart places going forward.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

8.1 Introduction

For over 50 years, there has been a continued rise in technological innovations resulting in more participatory tools and initiatives. These advancements have been met with concerns regarding collaboration, as they often take place through top-down approaches (Boes et al., 2016; Goodman & Powles, 2019) or with limited stakeholder engagement (Auda et al., 2018; Kitchin & Dodge, 2011; Kitchin et al., 2019). There has also been a shortage of studies that unpack the factors influencing engagement within smart contexts.

This thesis examines local tourism suppliers' perceptions on engagement in smart initiatives that are implemented at the destination level. It specifically uses the twice awarded Europe Capital of Smart destination, Ljubljana, Slovenia, as the case study. The research examines the motivations for pursuing smart at the destination level and explores the processes and challenges surrounding engagement, with particular attention to the role of power. The following section will examine in detail the objectives that were set out for this thesis and how these were met.

8.2 Objectives of the Thesis

Five objectives were crafted for this thesis, which were introduced in Chapter 1. Each will be individually discussed.

8.2.1 *Objective 1: To Understand the Rationale for Developing a Smart Destination*

The first objective was to understand the rationale behind the investment by Ljubljana in pursuing smart tourism, which was achieved in Chapter 5. Smart represents a means for handling a wide variety of issues associated with city development, from raising the quality of life to preservation of the environment and cultural heritage. However, a deeper examination of the findings revealed that it was also connected to a broader destination brand concern that has existed for over 20 years. Through tourism marketing, the destination has been able to promote and maintain an identity of Europeanness (reflecting Western and Central Europe). Drawing on Foucault's idea of discourses, resulting constructions of Ljubljana include Roman, within Yugoslavia but not completely Slavic, diverse, Central European and global European destination. To a lesser extent, some suppliers also did resist these discourses of Europeanness.

To aid the development of Ljubljana as a European city, the destination has continued to engage with industry representatives, cooperate with regional and global organisations, training and participate in programmes such as the EU Capital of Smart Tourism. The latter produced top-down views of Europeanness through geographic space, spatial identity and spatial descriptions, representing the idea that space is discourse materialised. These notions of Europeanness may also be applicable to other European destinations. Additionally, being a European smart destination has also served as a disciplinary mechanism that enables inclusion and exclusion by guiding the conduct of the destination. The geographic space is controlled as it encouraged focus on specific aspects of smart tourism. The space was also crafted to align with characteristics of modernisation and infrastructural development in order for Ljubljana to be associated with Europeanness. The destination was also further identified as being European through flags and logos evident within the city.

In addition to industry representatives and training, smart is a technology of power that fosters the shaping of a European identity, resulting in benefits for the destination. It has allowed Ljubljana to maintain consistency in promoting the theme of sustainability. However, with the introduction of digitisation in the smart agenda, there is a chance that this might change course, thus presenting an opportunity for further future investigation. Nonetheless, these findings highlight the need for closer attention to be paid on the political nature and geopolitical power of smart destination brands as these can serve as motivations for smartness.

8.2.2 *Objective 2: To Examine How Smart Tourism was Developed*

The findings presented in Chapter 6 illustrated that a smart city and smart tourism destination undergo a similar collaborative process of assembling, ordering, implementation as well as evaluation and transformation. The application of Wang and Fesenmaier's (2007) stages of destination collaboration extended the understanding of smart formation through the addition of the evaluation and transformation stage. Other elements not previously discussed in the smart process were also included. During the assembling stage, there were multiple problems being addressed rather than one set problem, which is not customary for a tourism collaboration. The collaboration drew on both internal and external sources as well as past associations. The ordering stage illustrated that there was a leader-centred vision that guided the collaboration. There were also no formalised relationships or roles and rules. In fact, a smart city manager was not appointed until after some of the initiatives had developed. The implementation stage incorporated processes that were past-dependent. Also, the tourism suppliers, DMO and particularly city's mayor was quite active at this stage of the

collaboration process. It was also found that during implementation smart city Ljubljana and smart destination Ljubljana were identical and only differed based on the narratives used by suppliers.

Path dependence theory enhanced the stage approach by focusing on external processes that affected different stages of collaborations. It illustrated that some of the internal collaborative activities were a result of historical trends and highlighted the importance of the context in shaping the collaboration process. For instance, the smart development in Ljubljana is past dependent, emerging from the destination's concentration on sustainability, with mechanisms such as infrastructure previously in place and not requiring focus as seen in smart city development. Though previous smart formation models have not captured the historical context, it helped to illustrate the rationale for the adoption of smart and Ljubljana's vision being not as technologically advanced as other destinations. This supports the view that scholars should then embrace a context specific understanding of smart cities (Bibri, 2019). Collaborations, though presented in a linear manner in tourism collaboration and smart cities literature, were in fact complex surfacing in cyclical and historically contingent pathways.

8.2.3 *Objective 3: To Explore Suppliers' Perceptions of the Factors that Influence Engagement in Smart Tourism*

Drawing on De Wit's (2017) relational factors of inter-organisational collaboration, findings extended knowledge of collaboration through additional factors, highlighting the varied perceptions and impact of context. The factors that influenced engagement were categorised as organisational and relational factors. Organisational influences included benefit of promotion, needs of visitors, availability of staff, skills and knowledge of staff, organisational infrastructure, management and ownership agreements. Meanwhile, the relational factors were frequency of interactions through previous formal arrangements, familiarity through business networks and social groups, ongoing daily and monthly interactions, DMO, municipality, discourses and technologies of power. Some factors have been acknowledged generally in tourism collaboration literature thereby confirming the relevance of drawing upon a collaborative approach. Although, there is still much to be done in terms of achieving collaboration as some suppliers identified factors that may not have been an issue if they were involved in the entire collaboration process of smart development. Findings also illustrate that technology was not a concern, which is dominantly focused on in smart literature.

The results show that there were different perceptions of the influences by various suppliers. For instance, tourism executives' view of the influential stakeholder was the DMO. Meanwhile, the DMO disassociated themselves

with being one of the main influences and instead indicated the municipality. In terms of legitimacy, suppliers associated with the public sector based their engagement as requirements that were passed on through contractual agreements. However, private sector representatives who were associated with development and implementation of smart initiatives were of the view that collaboration in smart was a completely voluntary process. This points to inconsistencies regarding the requirements of participating in Ljubljana's smart development.

Individual perceptions were socially situated and based on social processes. For instance, the factors, benefit of promotion as well as legitimacy as guidelines by management, emerged as influences in the thematic analysis. However, Foucauldian ideas of discourses, governmentality and discourse analysis was used to identify competing discourses and the subject positions that emerged, which either resulted in resistance or engagement. For instance, this is seen in the case of legitimacy and how suppliers perceived this factor, which resulted in some suppliers applying flexibility while others imparting seriousness, which led to definite engagement. Also, interactions with suppliers and conformance to the mayor represented factors that were tied to past practices within the destination that were normalised. Other instances that served to highlight the context dependent nature of the factors included the explanation of some public sector entities' decision to participate being driven by the need to increase promotion. This need did not exist in prior times but was as a response to the increasingly competitive environment in the destination.

Through the understanding of the smart development process and factors that influence engagement, there is a dominant top-down approach, which contradicts the bottom-up approach that has been the core understanding of smart developments. However, findings from Chapter 7 (Section 7.4) show that the operationalisation of smart within Ljubljana has been embedded in a context shaped by neoliberalism, which hinders greater inclusion processes within the decision-making process.

8.2.4 *Objective 4: To Explain Supplier Engagement in Smart Destination Development through an Analysis of Discourses*

According to Foucault (1981), one's subject position is made possible through discourses. Social discourses limit actions. By drawing on Foucault's ideas, this thesis was able to examine engagement through an analysis of discourses. Findings revealed that suppliers' involvement was underpinned by a variety of meanings of smart associated with discourses. When participants were questioned about their definitions of smart, they responded with 11 different constructions of smart tourism.

While some of these themes resonated with those seen within the literature, others arose that were based on dominant technology discourses as well as contradictory to this stance, aligning with sustainability and marketing discourses. Those related to sustainability were specific to the context of Ljubljana. These three discourses underlying smart tourism facilitate passivity towards smart tourism. Through technological discourses, suppliers regard themselves as having no position in the entire process, hence, some disassociate themselves from this understanding of smart tourism since it conflicts with discourses of marketing. At times, suppliers associated with more than one construction, resulting in them navigating within and across discourses to justify their engagement in smart initiatives. Some individuals even resisted defining smart and their involvement based on technology discourses, which was further explained through Foucault's (1981) ideas of discourse and resistance.

Additionally, suppliers' involvement in smart was not consistent but can vary as they associated themselves with low to moderate levels of involvement. Engagement was also justified by associating with other categories of tourism suppliers namely partners who were indirectly involved, suppliers who are cooperating, strongly cooperating and stakeholders. This revealed that there was no one ideal tourism supplier, namely a co-creator of value, but instead different subjects of engagement.

8.2.5 *Objective 5: To Examine How “Governmentality” Informs (Dis) Engagement among Suppliers in Smart Destination Initiatives*

The last objective examine how governmentality informs (dis)engagement among suppliers. Governmentality signifies that a variety of technologies of power exist that govern the conduct of individuals within a population (Burchell et al., 1991). This thesis concludes that power exists in multiple ways. Power is exercised through technologies of power that enable smartmentality and position suppliers in relation to Ljubljana's smart initiatives. These mechanisms included space, culture of collaboration and data and assessment procedures, serving to shape, facilitate and inhibit supplier participation. This also contributes to the development of smart tourism and its benefits, such as efficiency and design of tourism experiences, which associates with Foucault's (1980) idea of power as being productive.

Space functioned as a disciplinary mechanism setting the conditions for (non) participation in smart tourism initiatives. It controlled the tourist gaze through promotion and delivery of experience. Based on these instances, space represented control; hence, engagement within this smart tourism destination was missing the independence that a collaboration process provided. The

culture of collaboration facilitated smartmentality by encouraging different stakeholder groups to engage in smart initiatives and development.

Collaboration was possible through feedback mechanisms that were controlled by the municipality, illustrating that the presence of bottom-up initiatives in smart tourism may not result in strong collaboration. While some suppliers referred to this as a “partnership”, unequal power relations existed in smart Ljubljana as seen in the limited interactivity, the dominant representation of publicly owned organisations and agendas followed that were not tourism driven. Yet, tourism suppliers, whose direct interests were not being served, were still required to play a role in bringing the smart agenda to fruition.

Databases and assessment procedures also served as technologies of power in smart tourism. They served as mechanisms of control, connecting suppliers’ involvement. Classification and evaluation systems, which were sometimes not divulged to suppliers, enabled the regulation of supplier behaviour. Indeed, in some cases, such indicators led to the reorientation of business operations. This diverted from the pursuit of goals originally set by establishments, thereby influencing the direction of suppliers and infringes on autonomy, which is a core element in collaboration as well as empowerment proposed by value co-creation.

Collaboration theory assumes that power imbalances can be overcome with greater involvement (Aas et al., 2005; Reed, 1997). However, the discussion continues to show that smart is a discursive device that shape and sustain subjects such as the entrepreneurial leader and responsible resident, signifying neoliberal governmentality. This type of governmentality pays less attention to mutual exchanges and benefits. While tourism suppliers’ main interests were not being served, they were still required to be responsible residents and contribute to the development of initiatives. A neoliberal governmentality lens provides a better understanding of the reason for the continued existence of a top-down approach to smart development process, which was seen in Chapter 6.

8.3 Contribution to Knowledge

There are some key contributions to emphasise that will affect the direction of knowledge on smart development. Despite there being much literature on smart tourism, there is even less on smart destinations and only one that sheds light on supplier engagement by drawing on the perspectives of academics. Smart tourism scholars highlight the scarcity of studies on engagement and development of these initiatives (Avelar, 2020; Baggio et al., 2020; Mehraliyev et al., 2020). As a result, the researcher was also not able to locate cases from suppliers’ perspectives that investigated smart tourism destination engagement or challenges associated with implementation of these initiatives.

Although there is a plethora of studies that advance the need for smart tourism and to a great extent technology, there is a general lack in diverse viewpoints because of the continued application of narrow perspectives in smart research. In recent times, various scholars call for further novel insights within tourism and technology studies (Cai et al., 2020; Gretzel et al., 2020). This can better enable scholars and practitioners to tackle some of long-held challenges associated with smart development such as inclusion and diversity in the collaboration process. Against this background, this thesis provided a theoretically based understanding of smart based on a collaboration approach, resulting in a more holistic understanding of engagement that is needed in smart tourism literature. It also emphasised the factor of power that provides further details regarding deep-rooted issues surrounding supplier engagement. Power mechanisms as influences provide new perspectives and empirical insights to not only smart tourism literature but also generally tourism collaboration. A variety of contributions has also been made to other research areas, namely collaboration within management studies, destination branding and smart cities. The contributions are further discussed below.

First, this study was able to further conversations on smart brand, building upon work done by smart tourism scholars, Gretzel and Collier de Mendonca (2019) and expanding on the motivations highlighted by others such as Boes et al. (2016), Femenia-Serra and Ivars-Baidal (2018) and Wang et al. (2013). From the smart tourism literature, destination competitiveness was viewed as being the key motivation for destinations to embrace smart. However, this understanding was limited since destinations had to utilise advanced technologies in order to achieve competitiveness, which these innovations have been lacking in some destinations. The Foucauldian ideas of discourses and governmentality applied also resulted in contributions to critical branding literature. While discourses of Europeanness have been acknowledged (Hall, 1998; Nelson, 2012), the thesis revealed new constructions. Five constructions of Ljubljana as a European destination were presented. The thesis also illustrated that in the midst of this, resistance by some suppliers can occur not in an emancipatory manner as proposed by Fairclough but bounded by discourse as noted by Foucault. Furthermore, Foucault's concept of space as discourse materialised in combination with technologies of power were yet to be applied not only in smart but also critical destination branding literature. Findings illustrated that the geographic space, spatial identity, and characteristics can have varying effects and foster inclusion that contribute to furthering association with Europeanness. It also furthers understanding in smart cities literature by illustrating that sustainability and smart can exist simultaneously but does not guarantee focus on the needs of local populace.

Second, findings also allowed for novel contributions of a smart development process to be made to smart tourism literature, following Zuzul (2019) and Mehraliyeliv et al. (2020) calls for greater understanding of the collaboration

process. This study joins conversation on smart development and specifically the smart destination process where currently there is only one study (Zhu et al., 2014). Unlike Zhu et al. (2014), the four stages process provided in this thesis provided in-depth findings that captured greater details of the stages, resources and stakeholders needed. The findings also improve tourism collaboration and smart cities discussions, which mainly apply linear models, as the research incorporated both Wang and Fesenmaier (2007) and path dependence perspective to provide a deeper understanding of the complexity and historical conditions of the smart process. It also illustrated that the smart destination and smart city are synonymous, unlike previous conceptualisation and separate research development by smart tourism scholars.

Third, this thesis proposed a collaboration (relational) approach to examining smart, which improved upon the narrow perspectives used in smart tourism that emphasise individual end users and based on a transactional approach. As a result, the research provided a theoretically based understanding of smart engagement resulting in novel insights in smart tourism literature. This resulted in organisational and relational factors that influence supplier engagement. Some influences were specific to the case of Ljubljana such as those associated with power and frequency, which were further explained based on Foucault's disciplinary power and discourses. At the same time, these findings contribute to destination collaboration literature, specifically regarding destination management systems as it illustrates the importance of relational factors and the social context that shape perspectives. Factors related to technology were also not identified by suppliers. These findings can further discussions that have been started by smart tourism destination scholars, Ivars-Baidal et al. (2017), on the factors that influence engagement in smart destinations. It also extends the work done by De Wit (2017) in management literature through modifications relevant to the technology and tourism collaborations.

More importantly, this thesis has illustrated the importance of power in discussions on collaboration as it was a significant influence for supplier engagement. This was evident in the form of the mayor, municipality, destination management organisation, discourses and technologies of power. These insights position this thesis again specifically within conversations on smart tourism as well as destination collaboration. Particularly, discourses and technologies of power are novel in both research areas. As a result, this thesis study addresses Bramwell (2011) and Moscardo (2011) call for critical studies in tourism collaboration as well as Cai et al. (2020) for more studies from perspectives other than technology adoption models. This work serves as one of the early studies to contribute to the development of critical perspectives in smart tourism and technologies in tourism and also the first specifically within smart destination literature.

This research examines supplier engagement by drawing on Foucault's (1969) idea of discourses to understand the many ways of speaking about smart tourism and effects on individuals. Findings oppose the dominant view of smart tourism as an objective truth. Smart is seen as socially constructed based on 11 different constructions associated with the concept. Some meanings are unique to Ljubljana such as environmental and cultural sustainability initiatives. Suppliers draw on various discourses to define smart tourism and justify their engagement. This illustrates that asking individuals whether they are involved in smart tourism or not is insufficient for understanding engagement. This illustrates that involvement in smart is not only based on value as dominantly cited in smart tourism. Findings also reveal novel insights regarding the subject positions associated with smart, going beyond the idea of stakeholders as being digital natives. Additionally, through Foucault's governmentality, one realises that technologies of power such as culture of collaboration, which are unique to Ljubljana, can affect engagement. This can hinder core components of collaboration such as autonomy and joint decision-making, which contradicts the assumptions of interdependencies and mutuality that has been promoted in smart tourism as well as tourism collaboration.

This thesis, based on Foucault's neoliberal governmentality, also proposes an additional understanding of smart as being a discursive device associated with neoliberalism. This is also a new perspective to smart tourism literature. Following the revelation of the technologies of power that result in exclusion, this additional perspective was necessary since it is assumed in collaboration that greater inclusion can tackle power imbalances. However, based on Foucault's idea and Foucauldian discourse analysis (FDA), this research was able to unravel the competing discourses, subjects being produced and resulting effects to better understanding the operationalisation of smart. One can see how smart operates and therefore tackling the challenges of exclusion are more deep-rooted. Despite the limited interactivity by tourism organisations, this process was still carried out as findings show that smart leads to increased destination promotion, recognition and consideration for future initiatives. To a greater degree, findings contribute to the area of governance in tourism collaboration research as it represents the first to apply Foucault's idea of governmentality and illustrate that power is productive.

Through power mechanisms, the thesis illustrates that smart tourism suppliers are not mutually benefitting co-creators or involved in "participatory governance" (Jovicic, 2019, p. 280) or is "everyone is interconnected" (Buhalis 2015, n.p.; see also European Capital of Smart Tourism, 2020, n.p.). This was possible due to Foucault's ideas and FDA. Foucault's ideas regarding discourses (including resistance), governmentality (including space), neoliberal governmentality and suggestions for understanding these areas were useful for providing an alternate view to the narrative of participation being equal for one and all in smart tourism destinations. Willig's (2011) FDA allowed the

unravelling of meanings, multiple constructions, conflicting discourses, technologies of power, subject positions and effects of power in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. It provided steps that assisted the researcher in clearly focusing on the object and subject, which were central to Foucault's work. By focusing on the tourism supplier and the practice of smart tourism, this thesis was able to understand how power operated and its effects on businesses in Ljubljana. Findings illustrate that over 60 years later, from the introduction of Walt Disney's experimental prototype community of the future (Sadowski, 2017) and smart homes (Aldrich, 2006), there is still more work to be done in order to achieve inclusion and diversity. The findings from this thesis can make valuable contributions not only to knowledge but also practice, which are discussed below.

8.4 Contribution to Practice

This study results in practical contributions for key practitioners such as the DMO, municipality representatives and suppliers directly and indirectly associated with tourism. This is more so important in democratic societies where there have been growing concerns regarding autonomy and inclusion in smart developments. As stated in Chapter 1, there are different forces of power that draw concerns for local populace. Having provided a better understanding of how engagement occurs through technologies of power, prospective suppliers will be able to make more informed decisions regarding engagement. The findings of this study illustrate that resistance to smart tourism will require an understanding of the multiple meanings associated with smart and therefore simply promoting more benefits of smart in public discourse is not enough.

The findings also point to the need for destination practitioners to reassess how collaboration occurs within these settings to better accommodate tourism suppliers. Factors that were identified as barriers to engagement could have been sourced from other suppliers within the smart development process. Further work is also needed to ensure that participation and outcomes are felt by suppliers. Greater socialisation of tourism suppliers in the process may remove some of the organisational barriers identified as suppliers are able to participate in a process of resource exchanges. The municipal government has played a key role in Ljubljana's development, which has been due to political design. While the political design has changed in comparison to prior to independence, a top-down approach is still evident within a democratic framework, which has been a concern for some suppliers.

Education for practitioners both within and external to the industry is important to ensure collaboration in smart development. The disassociation from tourism, which was indicated by some participants point to a greater need for education among the populace for furthering tourism linkages. Education

and training regarding smart cities and tourism can minimise passivity and negative attitudes from suppliers which stem from a lack of information as well as lower supplier neglect and facilitate greater contributions to decision-making. There was a lack of understanding regarding being a stakeholder as suppliers never regarded themselves as being vital or sometimes insignificant for smart development.

Although the destination has chosen to embrace smart tourism, care should be taken to ensure that officials are also ensuring the development of the industry rather than mainly the implementation of pilots, tests and ideas from neighbouring places. As the destination moves towards becoming a global European destination, practitioners should also ensure that their smart initiatives offered are in tandem with the needs of their target market. Ljubljana can take advantage of its rich and diverse culture to create and offer innovative products. This can increase the relevance of the municipality and DMO to large tourism organisations who already have the resources to develop smart initiatives. Tourists can also be better served through having interactions with suppliers via smart platform. Meanwhile, tourism businesses would be better served through greater inclusion in the decision-making process and access to data generated from the smart initiatives that will allow them to make accurate assessments.

The gap between theory and practice is associated with the issue of knowledge transfer to industry practitioners (Van de Ven & Johnson, 2006). The researcher has started to share insights from this study with practitioners within the tourism industry. First, attempts were made to disseminate findings at the World Travel Market (WTM) tradeshow to be held in 2020. WTM is the world's largest tradeshow that is attended by over 30,000 visitors, over 70 tourism ministers, 3,000 members of the media and 5,000 exhibitors (WTM, 2021). Plans failed to materialise due to the pandemic. Following this, in 2021, the researcher was able to contribute a blog to the WTM website (see Figure 8.4). The website has on average 34,000 unique monthly visitors (Semrush, 2021). While a Foucauldian approach sometimes does not enable the generation of practical outcomes (Sharp & Richardson, 2001), the researcher was able to create a blog that focused on the implications of the technologies of power in smart destinations.

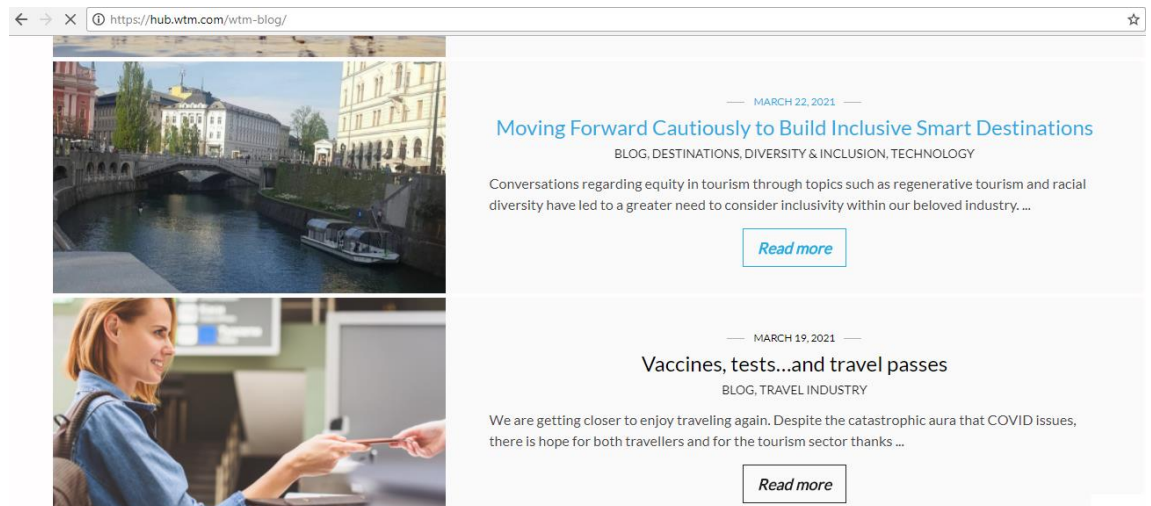


Figure 8.4: Moving Forward Cautiously to Build Inclusive Smart Destinations Blog (WTM, 2021)

In July 2020, the researcher was invited by a supplier in Ljubljana to share expertise through online discussion. This supplier was in the planning stage and hoping to embark on developing a smart initiative in one of its towns. Discussions have been slow since the pandemic. A follow-up was done in February 2021 for updates and if further details were required. However, the team is still in its early stages of reviewing potential ideas. Some of the findings from Chapter 7 have also been shared in April 2021 at a conference that involved a lead supplier of one of Ljubljana's innovation projects. Back in 2020, contact and preliminary discussions commenced with suppliers within the Jamaican tourism industry as plans are being formulated to develop two of its cities. These plans have also halted with discussions to continue in the future.

8.5 Recommendations for Future Studies

This research reveals that there are numerous avenues for future research. It is hoped that this thesis will pave the way for a more holistic focus on smart tourism engagement as well as encourage focus on social theories that can be applied to tackle challenges associated within technology-enabled contexts. Foucault's ideas of discourses and technologies of power were based on European societies where practices were disseminated across institutions. Practices may be unevenly distributed to a greater degree in other populations such as those within the Middle East where power is more centralised. This limits the applicability of Foucauldian perspectives.

While the original framework on that factors that influence collaboration incorporated urgency, it was not found as being an influence of supplier

engagement in Ljubljana. Future studies can include this factor especially in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has called for immediate actions by suppliers. This factor was also brought up in one of the researcher's pilot studies.

This thesis focused on a single case. Future studies can concentrate on larger and multiple destinations to have a larger dataset for analysis and conduct comparative analysis and testing of the model for generalisation of findings. Nonetheless, the case of Ljubljana provided rich details that contribute to the very few studies that acknowledge the socio-cultural contexts. Findings may also be relevant to similar contexts.

While the study directly aims to focus on suppliers' perspectives, future studies can also provide a holistic understanding by incorporating the perspectives of local citizens considering the overlap of smart cities and destinations. Then, scholars can also aim to conduct interview outside of workplace settings. By collecting data in these settings, this can implicitly position interviewed participants away from their professional selves. Studies can also exclusively target additional suppliers who are not participants since most participants focused on in the thesis were listed. Nonetheless, findings illustrated that focusing on the included participants resulted in novel insights as some were also excluded in other cases.

Discourse analysts see meanings as being constantly changing, which can result in an ongoing analysis process, but the extent to which this could be achieved was limited by time and context due to funding and PhD requirements (Morgan, 2010). A longitudinal study can monitor the changes that take place as smart development continue to unfold as well as the perceptions of suppliers considering these changes. Furthermore, the thesis drew on certain aspects of the findings from Willig's (2011) FDA more than others and excluded the third focus of Foucault's idea- problem of individual conduct through concepts such as confession and the self practices.

8.6 Personal Reflections

Having a long-held passion for hospitality and tourism provided the drive for me to pursue this thesis. During this PhD journey, I was reminded that this industry draws from a variety of disciplines and requires me to venture off into uncharted waters such as sociology and politics. Specifically, when applying social theory or a collaboration approach to the area of technologies in tourism, I was met with hesitation from colleagues who maintained a more practical view of technology. These areas still have a positive stance on engaging and adopting technologies (Gretzel et al., 2015). Furthermore, there were a host of challenges in identifying the research gaps as there is a lack of clarity surrounding the concept of smart since the term is still being used as a

buzzword in literature and practice as well as studies are being published in a wide range of journals with and without rankings. However, I believe the time is changing as more calls are being made for critical studies on technologies, which includes smart cities and smart tourism.

Since 2020, discussions that draw on challenges surrounded technologies have intensified in the public domain, for instance, *The Social Dilemma* and *Coded Bias* documentaries, meanwhile, academics in smart tourism have started to issue calls (examples: Choi et al., 2021; Sigala, 2020). I believe that the end of this PhD is the start of an exciting journey, which has cemented my desire to continue pursuing research in the areas of technologies in tourism, destination management and marketing as well as the hospitality workforce. As calls are being made for an overall shift in the tourism agenda to be more inclusive and diverse and embrace concepts such as responsible and regenerative tourism, this thesis can play a small part in starting to identify areas of inequality and inequity. More broadly, it provides a deeper understanding of the influences of supplier engagement that can be beneficial for destinations who are considering implementing smart initiatives during and possibly after this pandemic when there is an anticipated increase in technology usage and adoption.

8.7 Concluding Remarks

As visions of smart increase globally with the promises of inclusion and diversity, this thesis illustrates that there remains significant work to be done with facilitating collaboration among suppliers. The promise of “value for all stakeholders” and “interconnected and mutually beneficial systems” (Buhalis 2015, n.p.) is tempered through the lens of collaboration and power.

Engagement by tourism suppliers is framed through limited participation during the implementation stage of smart initiatives. While this may appear to not be an issue, it challenges some core understandings of collaboration. There has been no central issue related directly to tourism that has drawn the interest of tourism suppliers rather a broad focus exists. This illustrates the lack of a domain orientation in collaborative settings (Wood & Gray, 1991).

Collaboration, known to be an interactive process (Wood & Gray, 1991), is not experienced to a great extent by tourism practitioners, instead, it is dominated by other local and external influences who dictate the direction of smart initiatives.

Tourism suppliers are still influenced through numerous power mechanisms to ensure participation, which challenges the crucial component of autonomy within collaboration (Wood & Gray, 1991). We can probably draw on the original meaning of smart to explain these instances; smart, original word *smeortan*, means to be forceful (Etymonline, 2018). At the same time,

suppliers hold different perceptions of smart and engagement, which may be unexpected or even contradict dominant views, hence, there is need to ensure that their views are recognised and not excluded to better ensure inclusion and representation as a smart destination. Consequently, there is still more to be done in practice to ensure value not only for the State but those organisations within the tourism industry who also represent the local citizenry.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Example of Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form



Participant Information Sheet

Title of Study: Relational Factors that Influence Multi-Stakeholder Engagement
in Inter-organisational Collaboration: An Examination of Tourism Supplier
Engagement in Smart Tourism

Investigators: Abbie-Gayle Johnson, Dr. Jillian Rickly and Professor Scott McCabe

Institution: University of Nottingham- Business School

Good day,

You have been invited to take part in the research study titled above. Prior to your participation, kindly review the information on this sheet carefully as it provides details regarding the aim of the project and what is required of you as a participant.

Overview of the Study

There have been calls for greater collaboration within the tourism industry, among multiple types of organisations, in order to ensure effective destination management. In a period when collaboration is still an issue, Slovenia, as a tourist destination, has stood out as an example where successful collaboration is evident. Specifically, in Ljubljana, there has been a variety of smart tourism initiatives that have been implemented. These initiatives require the interests and efforts of multiple stakeholders to engage in a collaborative manner. Destination Ljubljana represents a current and relevant case, which can render in-depth insights for facilitating a greater understanding of collaboration in tourism that can possibly prove useful to other similar destinations that endeavour to ensure successful smart tourism (collaborative) initiatives at the destination level. In an effort to understand multi-stakeholder engagement in smart tourism initiatives, the study examines the relational factors that may influence *your business* to become involved in these initiatives within destination Ljubljana.

Essentially, we seek to understand why and how do these factors facilitate or impede *your business'* involvement in smart tourism initiatives. Data will be garnered from organisation documents and through semi-structured interviews.

Participant Requirements

You are kindly invited to participate in a semi-structured interview during the month of *April* for approximately sixty minutes. The interview will be scheduled for a date, time and venue that is convenient for you.

The interview will be divided into different sections in order to ascertain details of the relational factors that affect your involvement in smart tourism initiatives in Ljubljana.

- One relationship factor includes sphere and level of involvement, specifically examining what role do the interest and involvement of an organisation in the initiative have on another business' decision to be involved in collaborative networks. This interest and level of influence can be exhibited by international tourism organisations (such as the United Nations World Tourism Organisation), national tourism boards (such as the destination management organisation), as well as local tourism suppliers.
- There is also the factor of rules and business strategies. In this instance, we wish to understand how government regulations, tourism development plans, the business' strategies influence firm's decision to engage in Ljubljana's smart tourism initiatives.
- The third factor is the perception of urgency. This explores whether a stakeholder chooses to engage due to the possible immediate action required to solve regional and global problems such as need for destination management, overcrowding in destinations as well as the enforcement of sustainable initiatives. Through this factor of urgency, the study also examines whether the business engages in the initiatives due to a corporate and immediate interest in these problems.

- The final factor is that of frequency, which explores how previous affiliations with tourism stakeholders influence a particular tourism business to engage in Ljubljana's smart tourism initiatives.

Data Storage

In order to ensure that the data is correctly recorded, we also seek your approval to audio record the interview session. The data is stored on files that are labelled with pseudonyms, on a password-protected, personal computer that is only accessible by the principal investigator.

Participant Confidentiality

We also seek your permission to include quotes from the interview session that may enhance the findings of the research. Care will be taken to ensure participant anonymity. When reporting the findings, actual names will be withheld and so as a participant you are not identifiable. Instead, pseudonyms will be used to report data collected in the thesis or any publications resulting from the thesis. The details and responses from the interview session as well as documents exchanged between the principal investigator (Abbie-Gayle Johnson) and participants are strictly confidential and used for the sole purpose of undertaking the study.

Participant Consent

Kindly indicate your consent by ticking the corresponding boxes for the statements below.

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the study mentioned above. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily. ☐
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason. If I choose to withdraw, this is without prejudice or negative consequences and non-participation will not affect the participant's/investigators' rights to other services. ☐
3. I agree to take part in the above study. ☐

Contact Details of Investigator

Should you require any further information or have any queries, please feel free to contact Abbie-Gayle Johnson, principal investigator, via email at abbie-gayle.johnson@nottingham.ac.uk or telephone- 07507673491, supervisors of the lead investigator, Dr. Jillian Rickly, via email at jillian.rickly@nottingham.ac.uk and Professor Scott McCabe, via email at scott.mccabe@nottingham.ac.uk.

Complaint Procedure

If you do have any complaints regarding the conduct of this research, please contact the principal investigator at first. You can further contact the Research Ethics Officer at the University of Nottingham, Dr. Davide Però, at 01158467766 or davide.pero@nottingham.ac.uk.

Thank you for your time and possible consideration of participating in this study.

Yours sincerely,

Abbie-Gayle Johnson

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Participant Consent

Name: _____
Signature: _____
Date: _____

Appendix 2: Interview Guide

Introduction

In the past few years, there have been calls for greater collaboration within the tourism industry, among multiple types of organisations, in order to ensure effective destination management. In a period when collaboration is still an issue, Ljubljana has stood out as an example where successful collaboration is evident in its smart tourism initiatives. As a key stakeholder that has contributed to this success, we are interested in your perspective, shedding light on what are the factors that facilitate or impede your involvement in Ljubljana's smart tourism initiatives, why and how these factors do.

1. First, can you introduce yourself? What is your role here and how long have you been affiliated with the business?
2. Tell me about your business. Why was it established? What is your vision? Who are your customers? What do you offer?
3. How long has it been in existence?
4. You've been around for (time period- X years/months), can you tell me how has tourism changed in Ljubljana? Do you think it has changed over the years, for example: more businesses, overcrowding, more businesses, different rules for business? What has it changed in the city?
5. As a local resident, are you concerned about these developments in Ljubljana and why?
6. As tourism develops, do you find that as a business you've collaborated with other businesses in Ljubljana? Have you partnered with other businesses to share expertise, resources or participate in joint marketing initiatives?
7. You've participated in (name of smart tourism initiative), therefore, playing a role in Ljubljana becoming a smart tourism destination. What is your understanding of smart tourism or Ljubljana becoming a smart tourism destination? What does smart tourism mean to you? What caused the development of smart tourism initiatives in Ljubljana?
8. As a tourist, how can I know that you're a part of the initiative? Are you assigned a stamp or symbol of identification?
9. Why did you become involved? Did your business' vision have a role to play in this? Did your concern for Ljubljana's growing industry play a role? Are there any regulations that forced you to engage in this initiative?
10. How did you become involved? Did you have to be involved in the tourism association or did you have to sign up? If the latter, tell me how you found the process of joining.
11. As a business, how do you sign up? What's the process to becoming involved? How does it work?
12. Being a part of the initiative, are there any guidelines you have to abide by? How do you know what they are? How do they work?
13. Who develops these guidelines? What is the role of this stakeholder in the collaboration? Is this the only key stakeholder in the group?
14. Are there any other businesses involved in (name of the initiative) that you've partnered with in the past or are all these businesses new partners of yours?
15. What do you think is stopping other suppliers from being involved? What are the barriers for engaging in (name of smart tourism initiative)?
16. Tell me about your relationship with businesses that are involved in (name of smart tourism initiative). Can you position them in a circle, putting the ones you interact with most, closest to you in the centre?
17. Do you always agree with the decisions held by other members of the group?
18. Do you think this initiative has benefitted your business and Ljubljana? If yes, how? If no, why do you think this is happening? How do you feel about it?
19. Do you think you will continue to participate in future smart tourism initiatives in Ljubljana? Why?

Appendix 3: Example of Itinerary Anonymised

Ljubljana Itinerary (including interview appointments)

Date	Time	Activity	Participant	Business	Business Address and Telephone Number	Smart Tourism Initiative
Monday, February 18, 2019		Travel Day - Coach transfer from NOTT at 7:15 am to LGW at 12: 20 pm - Flight from London LGW at 4 pm to LJU at 7:10 pm - Airport transfer by GoOpti: drop off at Grand Hotel Union Business at 9 pm - Check in at Rooms				
Tuesday, February 19, 2019	11 am	Face-to- Face Interview				
	2 pm	Telephone Interview				
Wednesday, February 20, 2019	9 am	Face-to-Face Interview				
	12 noon	Face-to-Face Interview				
	Time to be confirmed on February 18, 2019	Face-to-Face Interview				
Thursday, February 21, 2019	10 am	Face-to-Face Interview				
	1 pm	Face-to-Face Interview				
Friday, February 22, 2019	8 am	Check out				
	12 noon	Lunch				
Tuesday, February 26, 2019	10 am	Face-to-Face Interview				

Appendix 4: Letter of Guarantee Needed for Visa Application



GARANTNO PISMO/LETTER OF GUARANTEE

I. Podatki o garantu Guarantee information

Izpolniti v primeru zasebnega obiska

Fill out in the case of personal visit/ime in priimek
Name and surname:

Datum rojstva: _____
Date of birth

EMŠO: _____
National identity number

Državljanstvo: _____
Nationality

Razmerje do tujca: _____
Family relationship to applicant

Pravna oseba/samostojni podjetnik
Legal Entity/Company

Matična številka: _____
Identification number

Ime in priimek zakonitega zastopnika:
Name of legal representative

Ime in priimek pooblaščenca zakonitega
zastopnika (predložiti ustrezno pooblastilo):
Name of potential proxy of the legal representative

Izpolniti v primeru poslovnega obiska

Fill out in the case of business visit

Naslov: _____
Address

Telefonska številka: _____
Telephone nr.

II. Podatki o tujcu Applicant information

Ime: ABBIE - GAYLE
Name

Priimek: JOHNSON
Surname

Datum rojstva: AUGUST 31, 1990
Date of birth

Državljanstvo: JAMAICAN
Nationality

Firma oz. ime in sedež pravne osebe, kjer je tujec zaposlen oziroma se izobražuje:
Name and address of the legal Entity/company where the foreigner is employed

UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM
JUBILEE CAMPUS, NOTTINGHAM, UNITED KINGDOM

III. Podatki o obisku
Travel Informations

Razlog obiska:

Due to the following reason:

SMART CITIES CONFERENCE
IN LJUBLJANA

Trajanje obiska:
Duration of stay

Od:
From

SEPTEMBER
15, 2019

do:
Until

SEPTEMBER 18,
2019

S tujcem je bil stik vzpostavljen:

The contact was established

- Na čigavo pobudo (ustrezno obkroži):
On whose Initiative

☐ Garanta
Guaranteee

☐ Prosilca
Applicant

- Na kakšen način:
In what Way

IV. Jamstva
Pledge

Z garantnim pismom jamčim, da sem sposoben/a (garant ustrezno obkroži in dopolni ter v primeru prevzemanja jamstva predloži ustrezna dokazila o finančnih sredstvih garanta in/ali lastništvu ali najemu nepremičnine):

With this letter of guarantee for a foreigner I declare being able to (guarantor indicates accordingly)

☐

kriti stroške bivanja
Cover means of subsistence

☐

zagotoviti nastanitev (garant navede naslov bivanja):
Provide for accommodation (guarantor indicates the address)

☐

ničesar od zgoraj navedenega (tujec si sam krije stroške bivanja in stroške nastanitve ter predloži ustrezna dokazila)
Nothing of above mentioned - foreigner has to cover the expenses alone

Izjavljam, da so podatki, ki so navedeni v tem garantnem pismu, resnični. Seznanjen sem, da se podatki iz tega garantnega pisma zbirajo in obdelujejo skladno z določbami Zakona o tujcih (Uradni list RS, št. 50/2011) in Zakona o varstvu osebnih podatkov (Uradni list RS, št. 86/2004 - uradno prečiščeno besedilo). Soglašam, da se podatki zbirajo v garantnem pismu, elektronsko obdelajo in posredujejo organu, ki vodi vizumski postopek. Garantnemu pismu skladno s 24. členom, odstavkom 4, člena Zakona o tujcih priložim dokazila o finančnih oziroma sredstvih garanta, lastništvu ali najemu nepremičnine garanta. Garantno pismo bom skupaj s priloženimi prilogami posređoval tujcu, ki jih priloži preostali dokumentaciji organu, ki vodi vizumski postopek.

Na podlagi drugega odstavka 24. člena Zakona o tujcih s podpisom garantnega pisma jamčim, da bom tujcu zagotovil nastanitev oziroma kriš stroške bivanja v Republiki Sloveniji v kolikor jih sam ne bo hotel ali zmožni plačati. S podpisom garantnega pisma jamčim, da bom tudi morebitne stroške nastanitve tujca v centru za tujce ali v azilnem domu ter stroške morebitne odstranitve tujca iz države. Zavedam se, da je izdaja garantnega pisma z namenom pridobitve vizuma z drugimi nameni kot je v njej navedena, kazniva.

Seznanjen sem z dejstvom, da se primeru zavrnitve izdaje vizuma osebi za katero je bilo napisano garantno pismo, informacije glede zavrnitve posredujejo izključno prosilcu za vizum.

I declare that the information given in the Letter of Guarantee is correct and true. I am aware that information included in the Letter of Guarantee is collected and processed in compliance with the provisions of the Aliens Act (Ur. l. RS, št. 50/2011) and the Personal Data Protection Act (Ur. l. RS, št. 86/2004 - official consolidated text). I agree that the information set out in the Letter of Guarantee be electronically processed and forwarded to the authority conducting the visa procedure. In compliance with Article 24, paragraph 4, of the Aliens Act, the documents indicating the guarantor's financial status, ownership or lease of real property and data from the criminal records of the guarantor shall be enclosed with the Letter of Guarantee, which will be forwarded to the foreign national, together with relevant enclosures. The foreign national shall then submit it, together with the remaining documents, to the authority conducting the visa procedure.

On the basis of Article 24, paragraph 2, of the Aliens Act I guarantee with the signing of the Letter of Guarantee to provide accommodation for the foreign national or cover his/her subsistence costs in the Republic of Slovenia if he/she will not or cannot cover them. With my signature on the Letter of Guarantee, I guarantee that I will also cover potential costs of accommodation of the foreign national in an aliens centre or an asylum centre as well as the costs of potential deportation of the foreign national. I am aware that it is punishable to issue a Letter of Guarantee for obtaining a visa with another purpose than that stated in the Letter.

I have been informed of the fact that in case of refusal to issue a visa to the person for which the Letter of Guarantee was drawn up, the reasons for the refusal are communicated only to the visa applicant.

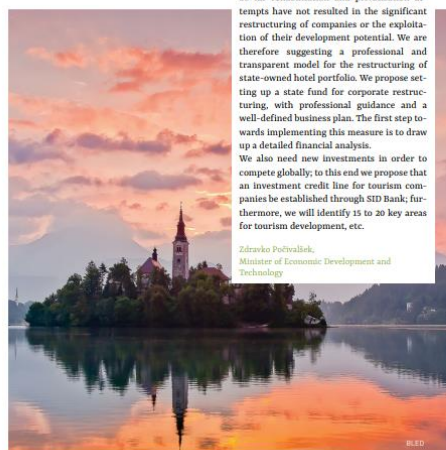
Datum in podpis:

Date and signature:

Appendix 5: Example of a Section from Tourism Development Plan

3. ACCOMMODATION, TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE AND INVESTMENTS

Slovenian tourism needs to undergo a major restructuring with the renovation of tourism infrastructure. The infrastructure should be based on high-quality and innovative tourism products that will have a positive impact on the occupancy of accommodation capacities and will increase guest's level of daily spending.



One of the key policies is the investment policy, on which it depends whether our goals will be achieved and whether the Slovenian tourism industry will make a breakthrough or remain at a standstill. We need to resolve the issues relating to the restructuring of state-owned companies, new greenfield investments and incentives such as loans, reliefs, and grants. So far rehabilitation and privatisation attempts have not resulted in the significant restructuring of companies or the exploitation of their development potential. We are therefore suggesting a professional and transparent model for the restructuring of state-owned hotel portfolio. We propose setting up a state fund for corporate restructuring, with professional guidance and a well-defined business plan. The first step towards implementing this measure is to draw up a detailed financial analysis. We also need new investments in order to compete globally; to this end we propose that an investment credit line for tourism companies be established through SID Bank; furthermore, we will identify 15 to 20 key areas for tourism development, etc.

József Pócsik,
Minister of Economic Development and
Technology

MEASURES:

RESTRUCTURING OF STATE-OWNED HOTEL COMPANIES WITH INVESTMENT AND MANAGEMENT PLANS

- Conducting a detailed financial analysis
- Setting up a state fund for corporate restructuring (under the auspices of the Slovenian Sovereign Holding - SSH)
- Ownership consolidation
- Structuring a new portfolio

NEW INVESTMENTS IN HOTEL AND HOLIDAY RESORT CAPACITIES

- Determining 15 to 20 key projects for the development of hotels and holiday resorts
- Determining incentives
- Creating promotional booklets to attract investments

STRATEGIC INVESTMENT PROJECTS

- Drafting an instrument for strategic projects in tourism

INCENTIVE SCHEMES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM AND HOTEL SECTORS

- Establishing an investment credit line for tourist companies
- A system for the absorption of grants for tourism

PROMOTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF SMES

- A system for the allocation of funds to SMES
- Favourable credit lines for SMES

MASTER PLANS AND MARKETING PLANS FOR MACRO-REGIONS

- Developing individual master plans for macro-regions
- Developing marketing plans for macro-regions

EU-FUNDS/NATIONAL FUNDS TO IMPROVE TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE

- Providing grants at the national, local and EU levels for investments in tourism infrastructure
- Increasing the absorption of EU-funds for investments in intangible assets in tourism

SMART MOBILITY

- Including public passenger transport in Slovenian tourism
- Developing urban smart cards
- Projects for calming traffic in tourist destinations and the development of alternative solutions

Appendix 6: Example of Field Notes

