An Investigation of Challenges and Limitations of Tourism Travelling to Totalitarian Governed Countries: The Case of North Korea as a Tourist Destination

Bas Cornelis Maria Putmans

HTMI, Hotel and Tourism Management Institute, Switzerland

Abstract

The aim of this research is to investigate the challenges and limitations of tourism travelling to and in totalitarian governed countries with North Korea as the case study. The motivation behind this research is that there has been no research done on the underlying challenges and limitations of travelling to totalitarian governed countries. The tourism policy and the destination image of tour operators are the key objectives that are researched in this paper. A qualitative research with an open-question questionnaire has been conducted with 100 tour operators or those in a close relevant field. With the addition of various theories it was concluded that the government does play an excessive contribution to the creation of the tourism policy. The destination image of tour operators does have an influence on the potential tourist' decision making. Thus, the challenges and limitations are identified that would generally lead to less travellers and less income. It is recommended that the government should reduce their power in the tourism policy forming. Tour operators should be aware of their destination image and respect the opinion of their clients, however not forget to mention the restrictions that could harm the safety and/or experience of tourists

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background information

The tourism industry is dependent on many (political) factors. According to Dwyer (2020), the tourism industry is a significant industry globally and a major sector in many economies. Furthermore, Dwyer states that in 2018, travel and tourism's direct, indirect and induced impact accounted for: (1) US\$8.8 trillion contribution to global gross domestic product (GDP) (10.4%); (2) 319 million jobs - 1 in 10 jobs around the world; (3) US\$1.5 trillion exports; (4) US\$772 billion investment. As the tourism industry plays a significant role in the current world economically, countries are creating their own individual tourism policy. According to Goeldner & Ritchie (2006), as cited in Edgell et al. (2008), tourism policy can be defined as a set of regulations, rules, guidelines, directives, and development/promotion objectives and strategies that provide a framework within which the collective and individual decisions directly affecting long-term tourism development and the daily activities within a destination are taken. However, the definition of tourism policy may vary. Hall and Jenkins (1995), for example, are saying that the tourism policy is whatever governments choose to do or not to do related to tourism.

1.2 Rationale

We do not know much about travelling to North Korea as travelling to North Korea is very limited and controlled by the North Korean government (Byman and Lind, 2010). Furthermore, in general, travelling to totalitarian countries can be very infeasible and sometimes impossible. Research about the challenges and limitations of tourism travelling to totalitarian governed countries has not been done.

To fulfil this gap, the author will analyse two policy-making and implementation theories from a totalitarian government perspective, investigate the position of tour operators and discuss how this challenges and limits tourism travelling and discuss why totalitarian countries are challenging and limiting tourism travelling. A review of the literature points out that the political situation in totalitarian governed countries, for example, North Korea maintains a problem and has a significant impact on the tourism industry. However, the common belief that individuals avoid travelling to totalitarian-ruled nations due to fear, insecurity, or hostility toward totalitarianism will not be addressed.

This is because the author believes it is necessary to address the underlying grounds and examine them from the standpoint of the nation and tour operators, as opposed to most research that has been performed from the perspective of the traveller.

This paper can be contributed to geographers, political analysts, politicians and interested travellers and tour operators.

1.3 Aim and Objectives

The aim of this research is to investigate the challenges and limitations of tourism travelling to and in totalitarian governed countries with a closer look at North Korea as a tourist destination. To achieve this, the author will accomplish the following objectives:

Evaluate the factors that influence the tourism policy-making process.

Investigate and discuss the position and perspective of tour operators

Analyse the destination image of tour operators on countries and their influence on potential tourism travellers.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Tourism travelling is something we humans have been doing since the evolution of humans. However, as a condition, there are always challenges and limitations when it comes to travelling to another place. Especially in modern times, we humans are experiencing visa issues, financial problems, language barriers, criminality when travelling to another location. In these times, the government has a significant role in terms of tourism travelling and brings challenges and limitations with it. Moreover, most totalitarian governed countries are applying a strict tourism policy. Therefore, the author finds it essential to investigate the correlation between totalitarian governed countries and tourism travelling and majorly what challenges and limitations it creates.

In chapter 2.2, the author will discuss and compare two models of tourism policy implementation. Moreover, the two models are evaluated based on other studies. Furthermore, in chapter 2.2.3, the role and position of tour operators in the current study will be discussed. The tourism policy implementation and the role and position of tour operators is the foundation of understanding the challenges and limitations in the present study. In chapter 2.3, the empirical studies done by other researchers will be analysed, and it will discuss the positive and negative aspects based on the empirical studies. In chapter 2.4, the author will give background information about the case study - North Korea. Lastly, in chapter 2.5, there will be a brief conclusion.

Since there is a gap of not knowing what kinds of limitations and challenges travelling to totalitarian governed countries have, the author will make use of theories as well as the empirical studies in order to achieve the aim.

2.2 Theoretical background

2.2.1 Tourism policy planning and implementation by Airey and Chong

The relation between tourism and politics is comprehensive and can affect each other in a different ways. Society and public opinion both rule tourism and politics in the same way. Politics have direct power over the tourism industry and the other way around (Murison, 2016). The effect

on tourism by the government can be divided into four categories: policy inputs inside (1) /outside (2), the tourism policy system (3), the policy process and the outputs and outcomes (4) (Airey and Chong, 2011). The policy output from the outside covers primarily the political influence, which are ideology, national policy, policies from other sectors and the international and domestic environment. On the other hand, the inside covers the view on tourism generally and the influence of the tourism policy community.

This being said, it means that "if a multi-disciplinary tourism science develops without the necessary ingredient of political analysis, it will remain incomplete" (Kosters, 1984, p. 612, as cited in Airey, 2015). Further, the Third statement, "Policy process", is the process part where other bodies will coordinate the factors outside as inside the tourism policy system (The inputs). In Airley's study, it is referred to as "TAO" (Tourism Administration Organisation). Airley refers to governmental positions, namely as an economy minister, minister of trade.

Consequently, this will create a policy learning process; thus, it will after all become the outputs & outcomes. In this stage, the policy is more likely the output with the outcomes as the consequences, for instance, a growing number in tourism which is the fourth stage.
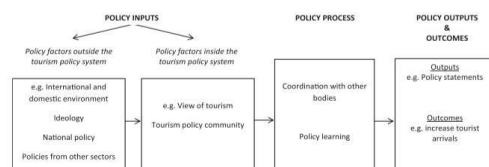

Figure 1. Tourism policy implementation framework (Airey and Chong, 2011)

The study of Causevic & Lynch (2013) points out that the stability has a massive effect on the tourism industry, for example, war, demonstrations and terrorist attacks. Unexpected activities are the major problems and may have a significant influence on the general industry. As an example, the 9/11 terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre happened. As a result, this led to stricter flight policies and had a considerable impact on the economy and politics worldwide. As Airey and Chong (2011) stated that ideology has a major influence on tourism, it has been criticised by Causevic and Lynch (2013). They suggest that the economic development including tourism development is not the type of

ideology but the stability which provides a tourism development. This is doubtful since the ideology can say a lot about the focus and goal (Airey and Chong, 2011).

Lew and Hall (2004) criticise Airey and Chong's model because it does not have a link with the theories of public policy. On the contrary, Krutwaysho & Bramwell (2010) are emphasising in their study the significance of studying policies in relation to their interactions with the broader societal environment. Furthermore, Krutwaysho & Bramwell are particularly noting that their research is using a "society-centred" and "relational" approach to the implementation of tourism policy, which focuses on the connections between policy implementation, state and society. This implies that the role of the government is ambiguous and marginalised. However, according to Airey and Chong (2011), the government-related factors (international and domestic environment, ideology, national policy and policies from other sectors) are 1 of the two main inputs when it comes to tourism making. Nonetheless, "While implementation must be related to the processes of the state, it also needs to be placed in its broad societal context and its interactions with it" (Hill, 1997, p. 165 as cited in Krutwaysho & Bramwell, 2010).

According to these two citations, Krutwaysho & Bramwell suggest that the societal context plays more of an essential role in the tourism making implementation than the state. Moreover, by Krutwaysho & Bramwell using a "society-centred", they are also suggesting that there is 1 factor influencing the tourism policy implementation process.

However, Airey (2015) has the "society-centred" aspects as well as the state-related aspects in the model.

Tourism policy planning and implementation by Wang and Ap Airey and Chong's (2011) and Wang and Ap's (2013) theory both have the same structure of macro-environment, institutional arrangements and the interest groups. However, Wang and Ap (2013) suggests that the tourism policy is more affected by macro-environment and hotel opinions than the political influence (government). The government, however, has the power to rule and control the tourism industry.

Therefore, the government has to listen to macro-environmental statements as well. However, this is not always the case and depends

on the ideology and political culture which is stated by Airey and Chong (2011) as well as by Wang and Ap. Moreover, Wang and Ap also mention Inter-Organizational Relations & Inter-Organizational Coordination structures, which are referred to as "longer-term relationships between and among organisations (e.g., suppliers, customers, competitors, trade associations, and the public sector organisations)" (Ebers, 2015, p. 1). In fact, this point has been made by Airey and Chong (2011) as well. However, Wang and Ap do have an additional stage which is the implementation of the policy. On the other hand, the policy should be tested on a small proportion before implementing (Sugars, 2010). In this way, a small test can be conducted in order to identify any problems without conducting them on a full-scale and to get any measurements (Insights Association, n.d.).

Liu et al. (2012) state that policy communities are usually made up of people who interact within the networks, including the sub-government and the attentive public. However, Wang and Ap (2013) put this statement as the interest group and inter-organizational relations & inter-organizational coordination structures.
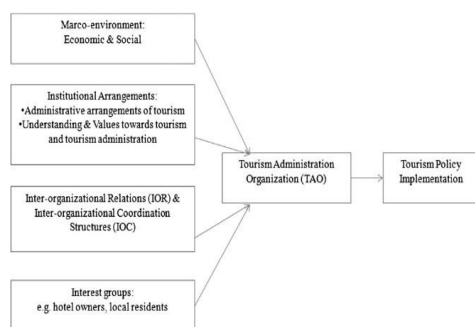
Figure 2. Tourism policy implementation framework (Wang and Ap, 2013)

Liu et al. (2012) created a framework for the national tourism policy improvement plan. From this framework, there is more focus on the evaluation and sustainability of the tourism policy rather than the basics of creating a tourism policy. However, despite the different focus, the framework has many similarities with the frameworks of Wang and Ap (2013) and Airey and Chong (2011).
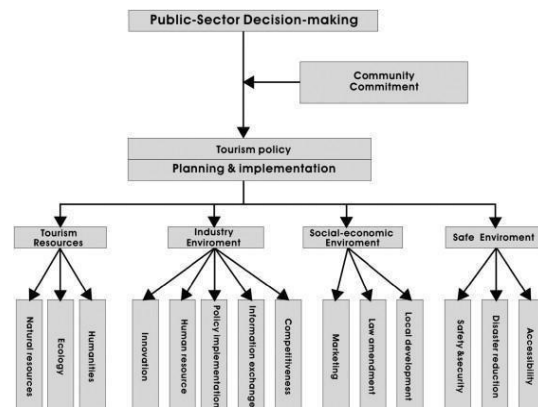
Figure 3. The conceptualised framework of the national tourism policy improvement plan. (Liu et al., 2012)

The framework consists of 4 dimensions and 14 criteria that will exert an influence on national tourism policy implementation. When the government, not-for-profit organisations, and industry sectors work together and conduct their planning as part of a joint effort, they must jointly determine the different dimensions and criteria for success associated with tourism policy, decide the relationships between these criteria, and produce priorities for tourism policy (Liu et al., 2012).

From the three mentioned tourism policy-related frameworks, all of them have strong relations with the government, organisations and industry sectors. Liu et al. established this framework based on the questionnaire he conducted with 18 expert-policymakers. 6 of various industries, six from various governments and six from various non- profit organisations. However, in this clarification, the government can be wildly divergent as the type of government could potentially influence this particular framework. Liu et al. used several techniques when making this framework called the DEMATEL (decision making trial and evaluation laboratory) technique.

2.2.2 Tour operators' role, position and perspective in tourism travelling

Tours to North Korea must be booked through an accredited tour operator that is state-owned by North Korea (Borowiec, 2014).

Therefore, only tour operators can make travelling to North Korea possible for interested tourists. According to (Baloglua and Mangaloglub, 2001), destination images held by tour operators and travel agents are more likely to influence vital processes for a tourist destination than promoting and developing

destination packages. To support this (Lawton and Page, 1997) suggest, because travel agents are opinion formers for their clients, their images and knowledge about destinations will have a significant impact on potential travellers' vacation decision-making process. This is important information because this allows the author to analyse if this is also the case with totalitarian countries. According to Baloglua and McCleary (1999), the destination image is dependent on two factors, namely (1) personal factors and (2) stimulus factors. The personal factors are psychological and social values and the stimulus based on external information and physical experiences from the past. However, as the information sources on totalitarian countries are not positive with the combination that most personal values do fit in a totalitarian governed country, the author believes that there is a challenge of promoting the destination image to potential travellers.
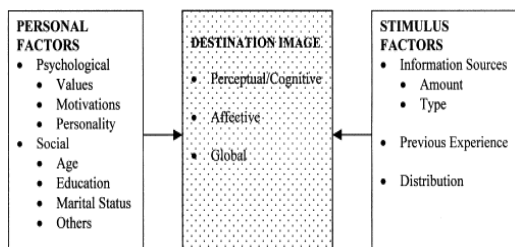

Figure 4. A general framework of destination image formation (Baloglua and McCleary, 1999)

However, as the author believes that promoting the destination image of totalitarian governed countries is perceived as a challenge, it would also create a new target audience. Moreover, humans who have a passion for adventure travelling are more likely to travel to places that they are unlikely to travel to. This being said, it could be argued that tour operators have to change their target audience for their destination promotion. Hence, dark tourism could be the new target market for tour operators. Novelli (2007) identified dark tourism as "visitations to places where tragedies or historically noteworthy death has occurred, and that continue to impact our lives." In this case, the motivation of Baloglua and McCleary's destination image model plays as a result of this the decisive factor for going to these destinations. Therefore, Baloglua and McCleary's model is vital for this study as it allows us to determine to the extent if tour operators are using this destination image model for their decision-making process of influencing potential travellers. It will also contribute to analysing the correlation between tour operators, potential travellers, and their destination image.

2.3 Review of empirical studies

2.3.1 Political effect on tourism in different destinations.

The political situation is different in every country and comes with its advantages and disadvantages. The political situation can also improve and decrease due to (unexpected) actions. According to Kubickova (2016, p.619), "The primary drive for any government to get involved in tourism development is its ability to impact the national economy and the residents' quality of life". However, there are many countries where the government is not or little involved in the tourism industry (Kubickova, 2016). As Kubickova states, the political situation can be affected by (unexpected) actions. As an example, the Hong Kong government wanted to introduce a law that affects the Chinese influence on Hong Kong (BBC, 2019). Because of this, the Hong Kong population became outrageous and started a protest which destabilised the political situation in Hong Kong, which resulted in a decrease of more than half of the hotel occupancy rates, and the house prices sank by 70%. In broad terms, it had a 40 per cent negative impact on the tourist business (BBC, 2019). In a positive way, the government can have a positive impact on the tourism industry by improving infrastructure, policies, safety, employment opportunities, more public development, better local economy and cultural exchange (Andereck & Nyaupane, cited in Mak 2013; Besculides et al., cited in Mak, 2013; Latkova & Vogt, cited in Mak, 2013; Snyman, 2019).

In China, the politics are similar to North Korea (Mak, 2013). The author states that socialism and tourism are contradictory. In North Korea, for example, the citizens are not able and allowed to leave their country for any purpose (Human Right Watch, 2019). However, Chinese citizens are able and allowed to leave the country (Mak, 2013). D. R. Hall and Kreck (cited in Mak, 2013) found a connection between ideology and tourism. Tourism encouraged communism, which resulted in communist behaviour and actions impacting the lower classes of society. The goal of this strategy was to stimulate and demonstrate economic progress to tourists from other nations, as well as to demonstrate how to earn real cash. Citizens of socialist nations are prohibited from travelling to non-socialist countries, forming an international connection with other (early) socialist countries. The Western idea was a terrible disaster and a complete failure for society in the eyes of communist nations (Mak, 2013). A variety of tourist policies may

exist in socialist nations, with the primary goal of propaganda. Cuba and China, for example, did not want to improve their economies; rather, they sought to demonstrate their power by luring tourists. This aims to demonstrate more might to the Western world (Richter and Schuchat, cited in Mak 2013). Sanctions can also be used to alter tourist policies. Because of Cuba's communist regime, the United States, for example, has banned direct flights to the country.

Furthermore, this issue has persisted after Trump imposed further restrictions against Cuba as a result of the country's continued communist rule (Oppmann, Vazquez, 2019).

According to Richter (1989), the shooting down of the unarmed Korean aircraft was a stressful event with significant ramifications for the tourist sector. Western countries forbade their airlines from flying to the Soviet Union and forbade them to land on Western soil. However, due to the invasion of Afghanistan, the United States has already prohibited this.

The United States retaliated by boycotting the Olympics in Moscow and cancelling trips and exchanges. Directly competing, the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe boycotted the Los Angeles Olympics (Richter, 1989). This occurred during the Cold War between the democratic Western front and the communist Eastern front (Richter, 1989).

Looking at these unexpected events, it is apparent that the tourism sector will need to adapt. Because North Korea has been subjected to similar unfavourable acts in the past, the author should take in mind that this will shape the destination image of potential travellers.

2.3.2 Existing Empirical Research on Baloglu and McCleary's destination image framework

Camprubí et al. (2009) emphasise on Baloglua and McCleary's destination image framework that word of mouth is one of the most important factors influencing the destination image of potential travellers. This enhances the importance of the function tour operators have on giving potential tourists the destination image. Camprubí et al. also state that there were no studies that took affective components into the study until the late 1990s Baloglua and McCleary notably took it into account. More recent studies such as Beerli and Martín (2009), Hong et al. (2006), Ryan and Cave, (2005) are also taking affective components into their study. This

implies that, either before the 1990s, the destination image of humans is not influenced by moods, feelings, and attitudes, however rather by cognitive components, or either there was not enough research done on the factors that influenced the destination image of humans.

Pikkemaat (2004) comments on Balogua and McCleary's framework of destination image formation that the affective evaluation is concerned with feelings or emotions to destination characteristics, whereas the cognitive assessment is concerned with ideas or knowledge about destination image. This supports the current study author's belief that potential travellers can be influenced by the negative information and personal values about/towards totalitarian governed countries.

Furthermore, Pikkemaat argues that various researchers believe that emotional and cognitive tourist evaluations are consistent components in the formation of a tourist's destination image. This supports the notion that emotional variables shape tour operators' perceptions of destinations. Despite tour operators' efforts to promote locations by presenting neutral favourable impressions, Pikkemaat claims that emotions and feelings play a role in the formation of a destination image.

2.4 Background to the primary research context

Diversity in the type of government has always been in this world. With only a small portion having a totalitarian government, the author will take a further look at North Korea. North Korea was established on 9 September 1948 and has an estimated population of 25,25 million people (Worldometers, 2019) and is located in Asia bordering China, Russia and South Korea. According to Human Right Watch (2019), North Korea has almost total political control and restricts all civil and political liberties, including freedom of expression. It also prohibits any form of political opposition and independent media, and civil society.

The Korean peninsula is split into North Korea and South Korea as a result of World War 2 (Lee et al., 1998). The north became a soviet administered zone with a one-party, Marxist government and the south a US administered zone with democracy and capitalism. This led to an undeveloped tourism industry in NK with very minimal information about the revenue created by tourism in North Korea. Furthermore, the sanctions from other countries all over the

world have a big impact on North Korea's government stability and the tourism industry (Albert, 2019). Moreover, the US strengthened their visa-free entry policy for foreigners who visited the country in the last 8 years to get even a bigger impact on North Korea's tourist industry, according to Agence France-Presse (2019).

2.5 Conclusion

To conclude, Airey and Chong's (2011) and Wang's and Ap's (2013) theories are mostly similar. Moreover, most of the variables are the same or similar in a broad perspective. The tourism policy is made by looking at the macro/micro-environment, the view on and cooperation with connected organisations, and at last, the output and outcome.

Wang and Ap think the tourism policy is more affected by the macro- environment and hotel opinions than what Airey and Chong stated political influence. Both authors stated that the government is affected by the macro-environment but that this depends on the ideology and political culture. Another difference is that Wang and Ap do have an additional stage which is implementing the policy by testing it on a small sample first and later to review it and change if needed. The government has a big influence on tourism in a general perspective, as the government can be affected by (unexpected) actions, such as protests, scandals and wrong decisions in policies. Krutwaysho & Bramwell made a unique statement by stating that their study is "society-centred" which implies that the role of the government does not play that of a significant role opposing the frameworks of both Wang and Ap (2013) and Airey and Chong (2011). Moreover, Krutwaysho & Bramwell insists that there is only 1 factor influencing the tourism policy implementation process. Liu et al. (2012) and their framework is more focused on the evaluation and the sustainability of the tourism policy however, it has many similarities with both the frameworks of Wang and Ap (2013) and Airey and Chong (2011).

Moreover, they all agree that the government, not-for-profit organisations, and industry sectors need to work together in order to establish a tourism policy successfully.

Tourism and socialism are contradictory. Socialism does not focus on economic development but uses tourism as a way to create a good destination image of their socialist country and uses tourism as a propaganda tool. North Korea was a better economically developed country than South Korea was after the division of the Peninsula. This implies that North Korea has the chance of having a successful tourism industry. However, the oil crisis and the fall of the Soviet Union has affected North Korea's economy and tourism very hard; thus, North Korea lost their status of being a well economically developed country.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Aims and objectives

The aim of this study is to investigate the challenges and limitations of tourism travelling to totalitarian governed countries: the case of North Korea as a tourist destination. In other words, what challenges and limitations does tourism travelling have and create with the focus on tourism travelling to totalitarian governed countries with North Korea as a case study. To achieve this aim, the following objectives have been developed:
Evaluate the factors that influence the tourism policy- making process.

Investigate and discuss the position and perspective of tour operators

Analyse the destination image of tour operators on countries and their influence on potential tourism travellers.

3.2 Research approach

The methodology is the approach in which research troubles are solved thoroughly, whereas research methods include all the techniques and methods which have been taken for conducting research (Mishra and Alok, 2011). The methodology is a science of studying how research is conducted systematically (Mishra and Alok, 2011).

Furthermore, Mishra and Alok classified two research approaches that are used in natural sciences and social sciences, namely, quantitative and qualitative research approaches. As cited by Mishra and Alok (2011, p.3), "Quantitative is based on the aspect of quantity or extent. It is related to objects that can be expressed in terms of quantity or something that can be counted". Qualitative research is focused on anything related to quality or variety and is concentrated with "qualitative phenomenon" as cited by Mishra and Alok (2011), p.3.

In view of the above-mentioned objectives, the author of this study will conduct a qualitative research for the reason that the values and perspectives of tour operators are something that can hardly be measured in quantity. Moreover, the author needs to understand the opinions and experiences of tour operators, which are in addition to the values and perspectives of more subjective answers that the author wants to research, and therefore a qualitative research approach is more appropriate. In contrast, quantitative research approaches such as surveys lack the ability to collect data where the participants can elaborate their answers which is a key focus in this study.

A study conducted by Liu et al. (2012) also supports why a qualitative research approach is more appropriate in this study than a quantitative one. Liu et al. created a conceptualised framework of a national tourism policy improvement plan. They conducted a questionnaire research with 18 expert-policymakers. With a well-balanced mix of policymakers from each organisation, they were using a questionnaire that resulted in collecting valuable data in the form of opinions, perspectives, thoughts and experiences.

3.3 Sampling

Som (1995) defines sampling as the process by which inference is made to the whole by examining only a part. The purpose of sampling is to provide different types of information of a qualitative or quantitative nature about the whole by examining a few selected units, therefore the sampling method is the scientific process of selecting sampling units that are appropriate for your research. Sampling brings in associated margins of uncertainty because of examining only a partnand not the whole. However, focusing on a sample does have potential advantages over a complete enumeration (Som, 1995). Moreover, Som states the following benefits: greater economy, shorter time-lag, greater scope, higher quality of work and actual appraisal of reliability. In the current study, all of Som's stated advantages are applicable.

Hence, in qualitative research, a small sample can give you a lot of information. Therefore, the quality of work is essential. The participants of this sample were people who were currently, or in the past, employed as a tour operator or in a relevant field. Moreover, judgmental sampling is applied in this study as the author believes it is most effective in situations where there are only a restricted number of people in a population who have qualities that the author is interested in, namely a total of 100 tour operators or people employed in a relevant close field, with experience with challenges and limitation related to totalitarian governed countries (Coleman & Briggs, 2002).

Judgemental sampling is an improvement on convenience sampling and means that the researcher will apply his experience and judgement to select the participants who the author finds relevant and representative (Coleman & Briggs, 2002). Tour operators and people who work in a close field are knowledgeable about tourism policies and could be included in creating the tourism policies. Tour operators and people who work in a close field also have a destination image that needs to be examined, which potentially affects potential travellers, which is essential information. Furthermore, they do have the knowledge about how creating tours and holidays work. Thus, it is worth mentioning that tour operators frequently handle challenges and limitations in their practices. However, by applying judgemental non-probability sampling, the sample will be more representative which can yield more accurate results than if other sampling methods were used.

3.4 Data collection

Gillham (2018) believes that a questionnaire has a lot of advantages. Gillham therefore believes that a questionnaire is cost and time efficient, creates less pressure for an immediate response, has better respondents' anonymity, lack of interviewer bias and can provide suggestive answers that can answer your hypothesis. In addition, uniformity is an important factor as everybody will receive the same questions. In contrast with interviews, participants have enough time to think, answer and review their answers. Participants in an interview can perceive discomfort, stress during an interview that can limit their capability to answer the questions. Therefore, by using a questionnaire the inconsistencies in answers will be limited and thus will result in more accurate data. The current study will conduct a qualitative questionnaire as a data collection method. Moreover, it will consist of open-ended questions that according to Gillham (2018) lead to free- ranging and unpredictable responses, which are needed in order to answer the hypothesis. The data that will be collected can be perceived as sensitive data

and therefore, the participants' anonymity plays an essential role. The chronological order of the questions in the questionnaire should be clear, complete and placed in a way to minimise the bias of the author. The participants will be asked to complete the questionnaire with valid information. To avoid misunderstanding in questions, the author will include brief and clear guidelines and information regarding the topic and questions.

Interviews as a data collection method are, in addition to a qualitative questionnaire, also a method to collect qualitative data. They can also be used to uncover social meanings, perspectives and values (McNeill and Chapman, 2005).

The questionnaire will be made and conducted in English as it is assumed that most tour operators, or people in a close field, are able to speak English in order to work with international tourists. Considering the above-stated limitations of an interview, the author is using a questionnaire as a method of collecting data.

3.6 Data Analysis

In qualitative research, perspectives and experiences are crucial data to analyse (Clarke & Braun, 2014). One of the most popular methods of analysing data is by using a thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is defined as a method to look into writings, especially in the field of mass communication and more focused on qualitative aspects in data than in comparison with context analysis (Joffe & Yardley, 2004). Thematic analysis involves coding and looking for patterns that can show differences and may answer the research questions (Joffe & Yardley, 2004). Moreover, according to Joffe & Yardley, in thematic analysis, raw data should be coded, either inductive or deductive, and should be labelled with a theme. As the objectives of this research, as well as the data are qualitative, the author has chosen to make use of a thematic analysis to gain the trustworthiness of answers, it was chosen to do a qualitative questionnaire to avoid any biases from the researchers to the participants. Moreover, if interviews were conducted, the pressure of having human interaction and being questioned 1 on 1, some participants could experience discomfort and thus it would lose the true value of the answers. Given that the information given in the questionnaire is held confidential, it should improve the safety and level of comfort for the participants and thus increase the credibility of answers.

Bennett, (1997) stated that theory triangulation has not received much attention in comparison to other forms of triangulation. Furthermore, Bennett added that theory triangulation can help with theory building and testing. Moreover, theory triangulation helps against biasing effects. Triangulation increases the validity of qualitative research by looking at a variety of data sources (Ma & Norwich, 2007). Considering the benefits of increasing validity and reliability, the author has applied theory triangulation in the current study by analysing various types of theories from various authors. Thereafter, out of these theories possible challenges and limitations were identified.

Tong et al. (2007) mentioned that member checking is a way of rigor. Therefore, they have said that member checking is a way to guarantee that the answers of the participants are represented and does not include any bias from the researcher in any way. Birt et al. states that in qualitative research, the researcher is both a data collector and analyst which brings potential bias within the research. Therefore, as stated by Birt et al., member checking comes into place to minimise this. The researcher of the current study supports this statement and therefore will apply the method of member checking accordingly. The participants of the questionnaire will be contacted and the processed conception of the author ,based on the answers, will be checked and confirmed by the researcher to ensure accuracy of data. A similar method of member checking has been described by Birt et al. (2016) where Birt et al. would return the transcripts of interviews back to the participants to ensure the accuracy of data.

3.7 Ethical issues

Wiles (2012) is stating that the interest in ethical issues is getting more popular due to the "increasing ethical regulation of social research" (Wiles, 2012, p.1). First of all, the identity of participants and data will remain confidential to ensure the protection of private information.
The participants will be beforehand referred to the conditions, which include that the information will be treated confidentially, and participants can withdraw from the study at any time for any reason. Second, Creswell (2014) states that when collecting data, all participants should be treated equally. The author minimises this by using a data collection method that has a consistency of questions, all placed in the same way. By using an interview, the interviewer could

potentially put pressure on the participants or potentially ask questions in different tones that can influence the data and lead to a biased interview. The participants should be in all time treated with the highest level of respect as they play a crucial role in the current research. In addition, the author will therefore disrupt the participants as little as possible. Disrupting the participants on a frequent basis can lead to inaccurate data as the participants can create a lack of trust, interest or create emotional feelings that can influence the data (Creswell, 2014; Wiles, 2012). Lastly, the participants should be rewarded for their participation in the research to avoid any "use and leave" scenario.

According to Creswell (2014), falsifying authorship, evidence, data, findings, and conclusions is an ethical issue in research. However, the author must respect the participants' answers and opinions for the purpose of the research. Conducting research with false information is unacceptable and does not have any contribution to research.

3.8 Limitations

The current research does have limitations. Limitations are, according to Price & Murnan (2004, p.66) a form of "a systematic bias that the researcher did not or could not control" that impacts the results in an inaccurate way. Simon and Goes (2013) defined limitations as uncontrollable restrictions that could have an impact on the research outcomes. The current study has 3 limitations that could impact the outcomes, other outcome inefficacious limitations will not be mentioned. One of the limitations of the current study is the unwillingness of participation. Given the controversial topic, participants may be unwilling to give their opinion related to North Korea. The second limitation is that the study is about North Korea, a country where information is not published, thus available. Therefore the researcher would need to gather macro information in order to research the challenges and limitations to make assumptions. Hence, the access to literature is a limitation. Last, using accredited tour operators as a sample is impossible as the accredited tour agencies are state owned.

Therefore, by sampling tour operators, who are not accredited to North Korea, this may give less accurate results.

Chapter 4: Discussion

4.1 Introduction

The popularity of travelling to totalitarian governed countries, such as North Korea, increased significantly in recent years (Slade, 2014).

Previous researchers have investigated the direct internal/external challenges and limitations of totalitarian governed countries (Tosun, 2000; Elliott & Neirotti, 2008). Moreover Wassler & Schuckert (2017, p.123) are stating that travelling to North Korea is limited by "entry bans, visa restrictions, and stringently controlled itineraries". However no research has been done on the indirect underlying challenges and limitations such has the potential of tour operators influencing potential travellers (Tosun, 2000; Elliott & Neirotti, 2008). Hence, as there is a lack of empirical research, the author will explain the following objectives with support of its findings.

4.2 Evaluate the factors that influence the tourism policy-making process

The tourism policy is the main key of regulating your tourists. The underlying reason how this policy is created and implemented is one of the biggest limitations in travelling to totalitarian governed countries such as North Korea. Murison (2016) is stating that the government has direct power on the tourism industry. Thus assumed also the tourism policy. Moreover Airey and Chong (2011) have the ideology and international and domestic environment combined as an input when it comes to the policy-making process. Given these arguments it can be derived that the government, in this case a totalitarian government, has a lot of power and inputs when it comes to policy-making, and therefore it may be assumed that the policy-making process is too one sided and unpredictable, which is the first underlying challenge. Secondly, if the policy-making process is too government based, the other inputs, mentioned in Airey and Chong's (2011) model, may be ignored due to the highly powered government. Thus, it may be assumed that the ideology and thus the government has a big factor on influencing the policy-making process. Wang and Ap (2013) stated that macro environment plays a factor in the policy making process. Therefore the economic and societal perspectives are taken into account. However, it may be derived that, on a totalitarian perspective, the international demand of tourism is too small and thus not that relevant for the economy. Moreover, as some totalitarian countries have full

control over accommodation businesses, the country would not look attractive for tourists and the risk of building more hotels for the expected increase of tourists would not be attractive for a totalitarian country to open up the tourism industry. Furthermore, Wang and Ap (2013) mentioned the social factor in influencing the tourism policy.

International relations between countries may play a significant role in the tourism policy. E.g. the relationship between the U.S. and North Korea could lead to either an improvement or deterioration to the tourism industry.

4.3 Investigate and discuss the position and perspective of tour operators

According to Borowiec (2014), only North Korean accredited tour operators are allowed to sell tours to tourists. Therefore, the position and perspective of tour operators are crucial to investigate and discuss. According to Baloglua and Mangaloglub (2001), the destination image of tour operators plays an important role when it comes to influencing the tourist destination. Thus, it can be expected that tourists may be limited or challenged from travelling to totalitarian governed countries. Therefore, it is vital to understand the perspective of tour operators in this process. Lawton and Page (1997) state that tour operators are opinion formers and believe that tour operators have a significant impact on potential traveller's decision-making process. This enhances the position that tour operators have noteworthy power to decide where tourists are going to. Hence, it is meaningful to investigate and discuss the position and perspective of tour operators.

Analyse the destination image of tour operators on countries and their influence on potential tourism travellers

As mentioned above that the perspective and positioning of tour operators are crucial factors, it is necessary to further analyse the destination image of tour operators on countries and the influence it has on potential travellers. In context, Baloglua and McCleary (1999) developed in their destination image framework which factors play a role in creating a destination image. According to Baloglua and McCleary (1999), the destination image is separated into (1) personal factors and (2) stimulus factors. Noted from the personal factors, the psychological values, motivations and personality are into place. It may be derived that tour operators' destination image is generated by subjective factors, e.g., the values and the

personal view from family or close people could be passed on to a tour operator that affects the psychological factors which ultimately will have an impact on the destination image that may influence potential tourists positively or negatively. Furthermore the social factors, such as age, education, marital status, may influence the destination image additionally.

Hereby, it may be assumed that having a partner can change your views and therefore ultimately your destination image. In the stimulus factors, the information source is along with the psychological factors a crucial factor. The information about totalitarian governed countries such as North Korea is generally perceived as negative due to the current war , state of politics and inhumane acts. Considering the negative information about North Korea, it may be assumed that this could affect the personal factors. As education could be based on the available information sources, it could be expected that the information sources factor mentioned in Baloglua and McCleary (1999) destination image framework, could be a base for the education factor. The factors that create a destination image may not be applied to tour operators in case the tour operators are too controlled by a totalitarian state associated with the tour agency. In this case, the destination image may not be perceived as a challenge. As the destination image of tour operators on totalitarian governed countries can be perceived as generally negative, it may be derived that this could potentially promote or increase the motivation for those who are interested in extreme adventure travelling and dark tourism, as dark tourism is related to places where strategies happened and extreme adventure travellers are interested in places that are unlikely to travel to.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

5.1 Conclusion

The aim of the current research was to investigate the challenges and limitations of tourism travelling to totalitarian governed countries: the case of North Korea as a tourist destination. This study is evaluating the factors that are influencing the making of a tourism policy in relation to totalitarian countries by looking at various studies done by Wang and Ap (2013) and Airey and Chong (2011). Wang and Ap, Airey and Chong both created a framework on how tourism policies are implemented. As in both of these studies, the government plays an important role, we can suggest that the political situation in a

country can impact tourism travelling very strongly. In the case of totalitarian governed countries, the political situation is very autocratic, and thus the input as a government is very powerful in comparison to the other considered factors and thus has a lot of power on governmental organisations that also include the NTO's. The government, with its tourism policy, therefore can potentially lead to a limitation or challenge for travellers. With these strict tourism policies in place, it will result in little income from the tourism industry. Furthermore, the role, position and perspective of tour operators in tourism travelling is investigated and discussed. Moreover, the study by Baloglua and McCleary (1999) about forming a destination image has been analysed to see if and how tour operators' destination image can influence the travellers' decision- making process. Both from the perspective of travellers and tour operators, the destination image could be influenced by the type and amount of information from sources on totalitarian governed countries. Mostly, information about totalitarian governed countries is placed in a negative way. Thus, the potential traveller would be aware of this and create a destination image accordingly. Therefore, as totalitarianism is perceived by many people as negative, on a personal psychological factor, the destination image would automatically also be negatively affected subsequently. Considering these two effects, promoting the destination image of totalitarian governed countries is, therefore, a challenge. These challenges and limitations will result in less travel to totalitarian governed countries as potential travellers would not be attracted nor interested in these countries.

5.2 Recommendations

As the government in totalitarian governed countries has major power in the tourism policy and therefore leads to little income to the tourism industry, it is recommended that the government should have an equal power to the other inputs in order to create a welcoming tourism policy. Furthermore, it is recommended that tour operators should be aware of their destination image and its influence on potential tourists. Accordingly, tour operators should respect their clients' destination

image to prevent any influence in the clients' decision making. Nevertheless, to recommend, tour operators should mention any (possible) restriction that could impact the clients' safety or travel experience negatively. Controversies can

lead to non-participation, therefore, for future studies it is recommended to primarily focus on gaining the participants' trust, safety and comfortability, in order to protect and increase the participants' identity, safety and willingness to participate in the study. Furthermore, to improve access to literature about a totalitarian governed country, it is recommended to make use of studies done in a similar country. Furthermore, special databases for controversial topics are also recommended to increase access to literature. Lastly, to increase the accuracy of data, it is preferable to specialise in tour operators that have experience in any way about the researched destination.

References

Agence France-Presse (2019) SCMP. South China Morning Post.Available at: www.scmp.com/news/asia/east-asia/article/3021600/us-revokes-visa-free-entry-foreigners-who- visit-north-korea [Accessed 28 Sep 2019].

Airey, D. and Chong, K. (2011) Tourism in China. Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon, Routledge. Available from: https://books.google.ch/books?hl=en&lr=&id=M3isAgAAQBAJ&oi=fn d&pg=PR5&dq=airey+and+chong&ots=6q5U gT3Sjk&sig=rmfpRxvr1 HS9yP8YndNl-usbm4w&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=airey%2 0and%20chong&f=fa lse [Accessed 16 May 2021].

Albert, E. (2019) What to Know About Sanctions on North Korea.
Council on Foreign Relations. Available at: www.cfr.org/backgrounder/what-know-about-sanctions-north-korea [Accessed 28 Sep 2019].
Almeida Garcia, F. (2014) A comparative study of the evolution of tourism policy in Spain and Portugal. Tourism Management Perspectives, 11, 34–50.

Aryal, S. (2019) Questionnaire method of data collection. Available at: https://microbenotes.com/questionnaire-method-of-data-collection/ (Accessed: 16 May 2021).

Baloglu, S. and Mangaloglu, M. (2001) Tourism destination images of Turkey, Egypt, Greece, and Italy as perceived by US-based tour operators and travel agents. Tourism Management. 22 (1), 1-9.
Baloglu, S. and McCleary, K. (1999) A model of destination image formation. Annals of Tourism Research. 26 (4), 868-897.

BBC News. (2019) Hong Kong tourism falls 40% as protests continue. Available at: www.bbc.com/news/business-49630610 [Accessed 17 Sep 2019].

Beerli, A. and Martín, J. (2004) Factors influencing destination image.Annals of Tourism Research. 31 (3), 657-681.

Bennett, J. A. (1997) A Case for Theory Triangulation. Nursing Science Quarterly, 10(2), 97–102.

Bigné Alcañiz, E., Sánchez García, I. and Sanz Blas, S. (2009) The functional-psychological continuum in the cognitive image of a destination: A confirmatory analysis. Tourism Management. 30 (5), 715-723.

Birt, L., Scott, S., Cavers, D., Campbell, C., & Walter, F. (2016) Member Checking. Qualitative Health Research, 26(13), 1802–1811.

Borowiec, S. (2014) Despite Warnings, More Western Tourists Are Traveling to North Korea. Los Angeles Times. Available from: <www.latimes.com/world/asia/la-fg-north-korea-tourists- 20140912-story.html> [Accessed 28 November 2021].

Byman, D. and Lind, J. (2010) Pyongyang's Survival Strategy: Tools of Authoritarian Control in North Korea. International Security, 35(1), 44-74.

Camprubí, R., Guia, J. and Comas, J. (2013) The new role of tourists in destination image formation. Current Issues in Tourism. 16 (2), 203-209.
Causevic, S. and Lynch, P. (2013) Political (in)stability and its influence on tourism development. Tourism management, 34, 145-157.

Chandra, Y., & Shang, L. (2019) Inductive Coding. Qualitative Research Using R: A Systematic Approach, 91–106.

Coleman, M. and Briggs, A.R.J. (2002) Research methods in educational leadership and management. London, Sage Pub. Available at: https://books.google.ch/books?hl=en&lr=&id=92TJlyvAKFwC&oi=fn d&pg=PA93&dq=judgemental+sampling&ots=h6cYFvWah-&sig=4nTGwBHt6xMECusEIUGzIqwrArQ&r edir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=judgemental%20sampling&f=false [Accessed 16 May 2021].

Clarke, V., & Braun, V. (2014) Thematic Analysis. Encyclopedia of Critical Psychology, 1947–1952.
Creswell, J. W. (2014) Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches. 4th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE. Available at: https://hisp.htmi.ch/pluginfile.php/35298/mo d_resource/content/0/ Ethical%20issues%20for%20qualitative%2C%2 0quantitative%2C%

20and%20mixed%20approaches.pdf [Accessed 16 May 2021]

Dwyer, L., Forsyth, P. and Dwyer, W. (2020) Tourism economics and policy. 2nd edition. Bristol, Channel View Publications. Available from: https://books.google.ch/books?id=S3LKDwA AQBAJ&printsec=frontc over&hl=nl&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad= 0#v=onepage&q&f=f alse [Accessed 16 May 2021].

Ebers, M. (2015) Interorganizational Relationships and Networks. International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences, 621– 625.

Elliott, S. M., & Neirotti, L. D. (2008) Challenges of Tourism in a Dynamic Island Destination: The Case of Cuba. Tourism Geographies, 10(3), 375–402.

Gillham, B. (2008) Developing a Questionnaire. London, Bloomsbury Publishing. Available at: https://books.google.ch/books?hl=en&lr=&id =EpKvAwAAQBAJ&oi=f nd&pg=PP1&dq=questionnaire&ots=A7BuLF 2ZOa&sig=Fvdsrovj1vcP dSoiZOWVj2rPfjU&redir_esc=y#v=onepage& q=questionnaire&f=fals e [Accessed 16 May 2021].

Hall, C. (2009) Archetypal Approaches to Implementation and their Implications for Tourism Policy. Tourism Recreation Research. 34 (3), 235-245.

Henderson, J. C. (2003) The Politics of Tourism in Myanmar. Current Issues in Tourism, 6(2), 97-118.
Hong, S., Kim, J., Jang, H. and Lee, S. (2006) The roles of categorization, affective image and constraints on destination choice: An application of the NMNL model. Tourism Management. 27 (5), 750-761.

Human Rights Watch. (2019) World Report 2019: Rights Trends in North Korea. Available at: www.hrw.org/world-report/2019/country-chapters/north-korea [Accessed 7 Oct 2019].
Insights Association. (N.d.) Pre-Test | Insights Association. Available at: www.insightsassociation.org/issues-policies/glossary/pre-test [Accessed 28 Sep 2019].

Joffe, H. & Yardley, L. (2004) Research Methods for Clinical and Health Psychology. London ; Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage.

Krutwaysho, O. and Bramwell, B. (2010) Tourism policy implementation and society. Annals of Tourism Research. 37 (3), 670-691.

Kubickova, M. (2016) The impact of government policies on destination competitiveness in developing economies. Current Issues in Tourism, 22 (6), 619-642.

Kumar, R. (2011) Research methodology: A step-by-step guide for beginners. Los Angeles: SAGE.
Lee, K., Lee, J., Lee, K., Lew, Y. and Hahn, B. (2019) Korea, historical nation, Asia. Encyclopedia Britannica, [Place of publication not identified] Available at: www.britannica.com/place/Korea [Accessed 17 Sep 2019].

Lew, A., Hall, M. and Williams, A. (2004) A companion to tourism. Malden, Mass: Blackwell Pub.

Liu, C., Tzeng, G. and Lee, M. (2012) Improving tourism policy implementation – The use of hybrid MCDM models. Tourism Management. 33 (2), 413-426.

Ma, A., & Norwich, B. (2007) Triangulation and Theoretical Understanding. International Journal of Social Research Methodology, 10(3), 211–226.

Mak, B. (2013) The Influence of Political Ideology on the Outbound Tourism in China. Journal of China Tourism Research, 9 (1), 1-26.
McKercher, B. (2000) Triangulation – A Methodological Discussion.

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF TOURISM RESEARCH, 2, 141-146.

McNeill, P. and Chapman, S. (2005) Research methods. 3rd edition.

London, Routledge. Available at: https://books.google.ch/books?id=sPyVza7qf mgC&printsec=frontco ver&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=on epage&q&f=false [Accessed 16 May 2021].
Mishra, s. and Alok, S. (2011) Handbook of Research Methodology: A Compendium for Scholars & Researchers. New Delhi, Educreation Publishing. Available at: https://books.google.ch/books?id=O54wDwA AQBAJ&printsec=frontc

over&dq=methodology&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2a hUKEwjf3kvbPwAhV tBhAIHWmKA5AQ6AEwAnoECAUQAg#v= onepage&q=methodology& f=false [Accessed 16 May 2021].

Murison, M. (2016) Why Tourism and Politics Go Hand in Hand | Travelshift. Available at: https://travelshift.com/tourism-politics-go-hand-in-hand/ [Accessed 24 Sep 2019].
Novelli, M. (2007) Niche tourism. 2nd edition. Londen, Routledge. Available from: https://books.google.ch/books?id=X7knnn2iX 5QC&printsec=frontco ver&dq=niche+tourism&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2 ahUKEwjmvID6vs7wAh WLPOwKHfYgAecQ6AEwAHoECAMQAg# v=onepage&q=niche%20tou rism&f=false [Accessed 16 May 2021].

Nowell, L. S., Norris, J. M., White, D. E., & Moules, N. J. (2017) Thematic Analysis. International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 16(1), 1-13.

Nunkoo, R. and Smith, S. (2013) Political economy of tourism: Trust in government actors, political support, and their determinants. Tourism Management, 36, 120-132.

Pikkemaat, B. (2004) The measurement of destination image: the case of Austria. Economics and Business Review EBR, 4(1), 87-102.

Pollack, J. (2011) No Exit: North Korea, Nuclear Weapons and International Security. [Place of publication not identified]: Routledge.

Price, J. H. and Murnan, J. (2004) Research Limitations and the Necessity of Reporting Them. American Journal of Health Education, 35(2), 66-67.

Richter, L. K. (1989) The politics of tourism in Asia. Honolulu: Manohar

Shin, Y.-S. (2004) Tourism Development in North Korea: Economical and Geopolitical Perspective. Anatolia, 15(2), 150–163.

Simon, M. K. & Goes, J. (2013) Dissertation and Scholarly Research : Recipes for Success : A

.

Practical Guide to Start and Complete Your Dissertation, Thesis or Formal Research Project. College Grove: Dissertation Success LCC.
Slade, V. (2014) Tourism in the Most Reclusive Country on Earth. Honors College Theses, 1-36.

Som, R. (1995) Practical sampling techniques. 2nd edition. Boca Raton, CRC Press. Available at: https://books.google.ch/books?id=vZl_EAkR-QMC&printsec=frontcover&dq=sampling+met hods&hl=en&sa=X&ve d=2ahUKEwjF_oagtcLwAhXSvosKHb1jBRU Q6AEwAHoECAEQAg#v=o nepage&q&f=false [Accessed 16 May 2021].

Sugars, B. (2010) How to Test Your Business Idea. Entrepreneur.

Available at: www.entrepreneur.com/article/217563 [Accessed 24 Sep 2019].

Tosun, C. (2000) Limits to community participation in the tourism development process in developing countries. Tourism Management, 21(6), 613–633.

Wang, D. and Ap, J. (2013) Factors affecting tourism policy implementation: A conceptual framework and a case study in China. Tourism Management, 36, 221-233.

Wassler, P., & Schuckert, M. (2017) The lived travel experience to North Korea. Tourism Management, 63, 123–134.

Wiles, R. (2012) What are qualitative research ethics?. 2nd edition.

London, Bloomsbury Academic. Available at: https://books.google.ch/books?id=UNfHVWL EstoC&printsec=frontco ver&dq=research+ethics&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2 ahUKEwiLmZ_mzMbw AhUKtaQKHfnyDn04ChDoATADegQIBRAC #v=onepage&q=research %20ethics&f=false [Accessed 16 May 2021]

Worldometers. (2019) North Korea Population. Available at: www.worldometers.info/world-population/north-korea-population/. [Accessed 4 Sept 2019]