Chapter 13
Developing Smart Experiences

Abbie-Gayle Johnson
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong

ABSTRACT

Studies have drawn on single theoretical perspectives to examine smart experiences; however, this chapter proposes a multi-theoretical perspective for understanding the development of smart experiences. This is an alternate perspective to exploring the planning and management processes that precede the formation of smart initiatives. Different theoretical perspectives, focused on stakeholder involvement, are drawn upon to understand the engagement in developing smart experiences. This development has created various smart experiences, which was possible due to core collaboration components and varying factors. The chapter calls for empirical investigations into smart tourism through the lens of tourism collaboration to deepen understanding of this development. Practitioners can also benefit from using this perspective, as it provides insights useful for developing smart experiences at the destination level, which is currently lacking in public discourse.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is significantly influenced by technology. As early as the 1940s, industry practitioners were introduced to reservation and global distribution systems (Buhalis, 2019). Since the 2000s, there have been innovations such as social media, sharing economy platforms, virtual reality and smart destinations (Briciu et al., 2020; Jovicic, 2019; Shen et al., 2020; Xu et al., 2017). These innovations provide smart experiences, which are technology-enhanced tourist experiences resulting from the efforts of tourists, tourism businesses and organisations that indirectly contribute to destination development (Gretzel et al., 2015). Destination practitioners continue to share an interest in developing and providing these smart experiences to visitors. Although there is no available statistical data for tracking the number of smart destinations, smart city indices have confirmed that there are over 100 places globally with smart initiatives (IESE, 2019; IMD, 2020).

While this may seem significant, some destinations have yet to develop interconnected systems of diverse stakeholders, despite their interests in smart development. For instance, in 2017, the Jamaican government announced its desire to develop smart cities and destinations. Four years later, the ambas-

sador of Japan made a call for the government of Jamaica to proceed with developments while offering Japan's expertise (Jamaica Gleaner, 2021). Nevertheless, there is still a lack of stakeholder collaboration, and plans are yet to be implemented in the country. Furthermore, despite the advancements in smart tourism research and ongoing calls for smart tourism research, there remains a lack of empirical data on the development of these initiatives.

The objective of this chapter is to explore the creation of smart experiences through a multi-theoretical perspective of planning and management processes that precede the formation of smart initiatives. By adopting a holistic view centred on stakeholder involvement, this perspective acknowledges that businesses engage as a result of diverse factors associated with the processes and resources of collaborative tourism development. The chapter first outlines the literature on smart tourism to understand the general context and illustrate the need for further research. This is followed by an examination of the literature on stakeholder involvement. Next, the chapter reveals the method that was applied, namely a case study design with data from Ljubljana, Slovenia, a 2019 and 2020 European Capital of Smart Tourism. The chapter continues with a discussion of the findings and the conclusion.

This study represents one of the first to empirically investigate supplier engagement in the development of smart destination experiences. Findings regarding the success factors that enable this process may be beneficial to industry practitioners involved in smart initiative development and those currently considering implementation. This chapter also applies a tourism collaboration lens to smart tourism, which further develops Ivars-Baidal et al.'s (2019) management approach to smart initiatives.

BACKGROUND

There remains a lack of clear understanding regarding the meaning of smart tourism despite its advancements and ongoing calls for research (Gretzel et al., 2015; Mehraliyev et al., 2020). The word 'smart' plays an integral role in shaping how smart tourism is defined. In order to define smart tourism, there needs to be an examination of the word 'smart', which is the common word found in 'smart tourism' and 'smart experiences'. It denotes a device or phenomenon acting independently (Oxford Dictionaries, 2018). When applied to the tourism context, various definitions have been proposed for 'smart', which include an ever-present information system for tourists driven by technology (Li et al., 2017). According to Gretzel et al. (2015), smart tourism is

'tourism supported by integrated efforts at a destination to collect and aggregate/harness data derived from physical infrastructure, social connections, government/organisational 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 (p. 181)'.

The technological perspective of smart tourism has since shifted to a socio-technical one. Scholars such as Ivars-Baidal et al. (2019) define smart tourism as a destination management approach. According to Gretzel et al. (2015), there are three components of smart tourism: smart destinations, smart experiences and smart business ecosystems. Smart experiences are technology-enhanced, personalised tourism experiences (Buhalis & Amaranggana, 2015; Neuhofer et al., 2015). 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 can utilise destination websites, mobile applications, digitised maps, smart cards and social media pages.

The development of smart experiences is dependent on businesses, which are conceptualised as another component of 'smart' – the smart business ecosystem, which involves tourism suppliers and other suppliers who directly exchange resources for the generation of resources and experiences (Gretzel et al., 2015). Del Chiappa and Baggio (2015) utilise the lists offered by destination management organisations (DMOs) to identify stakeholders within smart tourism. These include traditional tourism entities, such as accommodations, restaurants and travel agencies. Koo et al. (2017) identify traditional entities but also include online tourism businesses. While this improves previous studies, this study is limited to online entities and relies solely on the DMOs' perspectives.

The development of smart experiences by businesses in a destination is less researched and understood. Based on Mehyraliyev et al.'s (2020) review of knowledge development in smart tourism, only one study focused on suppliers' views and understandings, while two were based on the adoption of smart tourism. However, these studies shed light based on a single theoretical perspective. For instance, Wang and Cheung (2004), Wang et al. (2016) and Lin (2017) apply technology-related models, such as the technology, organisation and environment (TOE) framework, to examine the factors that influence organisation involvement. Less is known about the influences that affect suppliers' involvement in the formation of these experiences by integrated suppliers. Furthermore, a technological lens limits the ability to examine smart tourism in academic research, as emerging smart tourism initiatives are not all technologically driven in business practice. For instance, in 2018, the European Union (EU) published a list of finalists vying for the title of European Capital of Smart Tourism. Among the winners was Linz, Austria, which showcases art exhibits throughout the city, thus making displays visible beyond art galleries and museums (EU, 2018). The central underpinning of an innovation resulting from a digital ecosystem is collaboration. Thus, in order to build a theoretical understanding of smart tourism within destinations, research should shift its focus to a broader theoretical understanding beyond technology.

Tourism collaboration is a well-established area of research in tourism. However, the traditional context of tourism collaboration differs from that seen in smart tourism, as the latter results from the interconnectivity and interoperability of stakeholders and technologies across physical and virtual environments (Buhalis, 2019). Thus, collaboration moves the smart tourism conversation from technology to the interconnectedness of various stakeholders in a network or system.

TOURISM COLLABORATION

Collaboration is a decision-making process that engages stakeholders of a destination in order to address a problem (Getz & Jamal, 1994; Wood & Gray, 1991). In formulating their collaboration theory, Wood and Gray (1991) outline six elements of collaboration, which are necessary for understanding the collaborative aspect of creating smart experiences. They have provided the foundation for understanding collaboration in tourism settings.

The first element is incorporating stakeholders of a problem domain. This refers to the multiple and diverse organisations and human connections that Gretzel et al. (2015) note in the definition of smart tourism. These can be dynamic, such as hotels, restaurants or sharing economy platforms, or stable, such as Facebook and Expedia (Koo et al., 2017). The second element of collaboration is autonomy. Although

stakeholders act together, they all have independent interests that guide their behaviours and decisions in the group (Wood & Gray, 1991). The third element is shared rules, norms and structures. In Barile et al.'s (2017) study, based on the role of mobile applications in the smart tourism ecosystem, it was revealed that there were two types of institutions: static, which is prompted by technology; dynamic, which is initiated by tourism stakeholders, such as signs and dynamic institutions resulting from monitoring the community, including traffic predictions. The fourth aspect of collaboration is the interactive process (Wood & Gray, 1991), in which smart technologies merge the virtual and physical world to allow interaction to occur. The fifth aspect is action or decision. Interactivity facilitates action by stakeholders. The sixth element of collaboration is domain orientation, which signifies that the collaboration is focused on solving a particular issue that is affecting a common group. Collaboration theory signifies that success depends on stakeholders' involvement across domains (Wood & Gray, 1991).

Collaboration can be established based on Selin and Chavez's (1995) tourism partnership model. The model is built on three phases: problem-setting, which includes establishing a facilitator and a shared vision, as well as discussing a problem collectively; direction-setting; and structuring, which involves designating roles and tasks and executing solutions. Augustyn and Knowles (2000) propose a similar model to Selin and Chavez (1995) but identify critical success factors for public-private partnerships. These factors include having a leader, clear objectives, structure and efficient actors (Augustyn & Knowles, 2000). In addition, each member of this established partnership must act together within the ecosystem to generate a solution for an identified problem (Gray, 1989). Also, members should possess the necessary skills, knowledge and resources to execute the assigned tasks (Jamal & Getz, 1995).

Collaboration among public, private and local residents leads to the development of tourist experiences (Jovicic, 2019). These stakeholders, specifically tourism suppliers, can be influenced to participate by a variety of reasons. A review of the tourism collaboration literature results in the following common factors: governance, legitimacy, benefits, resources (Jamal & Getz, 1995; Sigala, 2013; Waddock, 1989; Zemla, 2014) and relational ties (Beritelli, 2011; Jamal & Getz, 1995). While the factors are specific to the context of tourism collaboration, this chapter reveals insights for understanding those that emerge within the context of smart experiences. In order to do this, Fyall et al. (2012) propose the following theories for examining collaborations: transaction cost economics, relational exchange, resource dependency and institutional theory. Transaction cost economics theory acknowledges that organisations vertically integrate to ensure cost minimisation in production (Beritelli, 2011; Williamson, 1985; Zach & Racherla, 2011). Smart initiatives offer businesses the opportunity to reduce transaction costs for operations by sharing goods (Tedjasaputra & Sari, 2016).

Resource dependency theory emphasises that collaborations emerge due to suppliers' need to acquire resources (Fyall et al., 2012; Salancik & Pfeffer, 1977; Wang & Xiang, 2007). This is also applicable to smart tourism, since stakeholders continuously engage in a process of resource exchange (Gretzel et al., 2015). Meanwhile, relational or social exchange theory emphasises relationships (Ahmed et al., 1999; Macneil, 1980; Thibaut & Kelly, 1959). While previous tourism collaboration studies have applied these theories separately, very few studies have drawn on the needed multiple theoretical frameworks to examine the factors of engagement in destination collaboration contexts (Beritelli, 2011; Fyall et al., 2012; Wang & Fesenmaier, 2007; Wondirad et al., 2020). Against this background, the research was guided by the collaboration theories: transaction cost economics, resource dependency and social exchange.

METHOD

Data was compiled based on a case study methodology in order to understand the development of smart experiences within destinations from stakeholders' perspectives. This research design is known for generating insights in under-researched phenomena (Yin, 2014). Case studies are common in examining tourism collaborations; therefore, they are useful for this study (Lin & Simmons, 2017). This section will continue with a discussion of the site of the study, the sample and the data collection methods used.

Site of Study

The research design employs a case study approach to examine smart development in Ljubljana, Slovenia, a 2019 and 2020 European Capital of Smart Tourism. The destination has over 45 smart initiatives. In order to make the analysis more manageable, the following was taken into consideration when choosing the smart initiatives. Gretzel et al. (2015) suggest that smart experiences bridge the gap between digital and physical environments based on advanced technologies. The result is 10 initiatives being reviewed in order to ascertain their lists of suppliers and an understanding of smart development and engagement. Suppliers include the Green Supply Chains web platform, Taste Ljubljana, the Ljubljana by wheelchair mobile application, multisensory museum guided tours, mobile audio guides, mobile parking, a digital city guide, electric car-sharing, the tourist card Urbana and a bike-sharing scheme.

The following provides a brief explanation of each initiative. The Green Supply Chains web platform connects local food growers to potential buyers via an online platform. The Green Supply Chains web platform is complemented by the Taste Ljubljana initiative, which was designed to spread awareness of authentic local food in hotels and restaurants by offering dishes to tourists. It has been further promoted on DMOs' websites. Ljubljana by wheelchair is a mobile application that provides details of wheelchair-accessible locations. Multisensory museum guided tours enable interactive tourist experiences through technologies that connect with the environment to enable personalised engagement for museum visitors. Mobile audio guides are digital guides located in museums. The mobile parking application is designed to show the availability of parking spaces within the city through the integration of sensors. The digital city guide is a mobile application that promotes sightseeing routes. Electric car-sharing enables access to electric cars when not in use. Availability is detected through technologies that sense the environment, such as cameras and sensors. The tourist card, Urbana, is a city card that gives access to attractions, as well as shows the availability of parking spaces and bicycle-sharing. Last, the bike-sharing scheme is an initiative that enables tourists to access bicycle-sharing, which is 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.

Sample

The smart initiatives were reviewed individually to ascertain a list of their stakeholders in the absence of a smart supplier database. Sixty-one businesses were contacted, resulting in a range of responses: no response (16), decline with a reason (14) and accept (31). The study's 31 interview participants were from nine hotels, eight attractions, four restaurants, three destination marketing and tourism consulting organisations, three transportation service providers, two educational institutions, one technology company and the municipal government.

During the period of February to September 2019, fieldwork provided the opportunity to capture online data and documents and conduct semi-structured interviews to provide insights into suppliers' views and behaviours; interviews and documents are mainly used within tourism collaboration studies (Reed, 1997; Xue & Kerstetter, 2018). Interviews were conducted at the various businesses and took twenty minutes to approximately one hour and six minutes. Documents include tourism reports, planning documents, presentations, brochures and promotional material. Online data was based on details garnered from the online platforms of the smart initiatives. These were stored in a protected bag that could only be accessed by the researcher.

The data was collected and uploaded to NVivo, a data analysis software. The interviews were also transcribed and uploaded on NVivo. Data was thematically analysed, which is a common procedure in tourism collaboration studies. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis is a method for locating patterns in data. Steps are as follows: familiarisation with data, generation of initial codes, search for themes, reviewing of themes, definition of themes, naming of themes and formulation of report. Thematic analysis allowed the researcher to unravel the main stakeholders and factors that were associated with supplier engagement. The names of documents, websites and participants were assigned pseudonyms in order to aid the anonymity of organisations and individuals, as well as the researcher's ease of identification during data analysis.

FINDINGS

A case study methodology provided understandings from suppliers in Ljubljana, thereby filling the lack in depth and in practical views of the development of smart initiatives (Zuzul, 2019). The findings that emerged from the thematic analysis show that the development of smart experiences requires a variety of resources and is influenced by different factors associated with the multi-theoretical framework. Influences that emerged in this study were the DMOs and suppliers from social interactions as well as previous formal arrangements, familiarity through business networks and social groups and ongoing daily and monthly interactions. Prior to examining these factors, a brief overview is given regarding the individuals involved in developing Ljubljana's smart experiences.

Getting to Know the Suppliers Creating Smart Experiences

Smart tourism suppliers have been discussed within different typologies that aim to identify organisations within the local tourism industry (Del Chiappa & Baggio 2015; Gajdosik, 2018; Gretzel et al., 2015; Koo et al. 2017). The case of Ljubljana revealed that traditional tourism businesses were involved in smart tourism as expected; however, findings built upon previous studies highlighted that other local entities were involved in the process of development. Participants in smart tourism initiatives emerged from two groups: the city's group for urban development, which focused on sustainable initiatives, and tourism businesses, such as hotels and attractions. While diverse stakeholders can create challenges in collaboration (Czernek, 2013), this was not the case in Ljubljana due to the separation between the two groups.

Ljubljana's smart tourism ecosystem of suppliers is not new, as observed by Gretzel et al. (2015). Rather, the city has 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 previ-

ous empirical studies on smart tourism suppliers, the findings indicate that there were other participants involved in smart development that were further afield. This is not usually the case with destination collaborations, as they mainly consist of local community stakeholders (Beritelli et al., 2013). The development of smart initiatives was influenced by regional countries and entities. In this instance, the EU can be considered an example of what Gretzel et al. (2015) call 'other suppliers', as it influenced the city's smart ecosystem but was not directly involved in its operation (p. 561). Representatives from the local municipality in Vienna were also stakeholders of and external influences on the development of Ljubljana's smart experiences. Both destinations share a historical relationship and regional proximity. Having identified the main participants in the development of the city's smart initiatives, the next section focuses on the factors that influence local business involvement.

Supplier Engagement for Developing Smart Experiences

A variety of factors are acknowledged as influences of supplier engagement and will be discussed below to illustrate the benefit of drawing on a multi-theoretical approach. The main themes, DMOs and collaboration between suppliers through social interaction, are associated with three dominant theories: resource dependency, relational exchange and transaction cost economics.

Relationship and Resources Through the DMO

Like tourism collaborations (Fyall et al., 2012; Sigala, 2013), the DMO was recognised as a key influencer by suppliers in smart tourism. The organisation develops relationships with tourism businesses through previous industry collaborations and maintains tourism networks to further promote destinations, 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).

Apart from tourism collaboration studies, the DMO's power to influence stakeholders is based on its resources due to a unique occurrence in Ljubljana. Some local tourism operators could not fund or attend regional and global travel tradeshows to promote their organisations and instead chose to continue their engagement with the DMO. Their confidence in the DMO to ensure successful initiatives is unlike that of businesses in other European destinations, such as Greece and Spain, which view the 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 its lack of recognition by some smart tourism studies, such as Zhu et al. (2014).

The details of these smart initiatives were promoted by the DMO in the form of marketing collateral at these events, which gave local suppliers added exposure. Suppliers were denied the networking opportunities these events provided, which have been identified as one of the main factors that influence suppliers' participation in destination collaboration events (Menon et al., 2017). However, Ljubljana's suppliers were more interested in driving awareness of their businesses. Based on this, the DMO provided them with exposure and expertise resources; hence, this can be attributed to 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 in smart tourism (Gretzel et al., 2015). Nonetheless, it is important to note here that this scenario differs from the type of resources that smart tourism is known for, namely data sharing (Baggio et al., 2020). In Ljubljana, businesses are provided with marketing opportunities through exposure and knowledge of the industry.

The DMO's move to gain exposure for businesses facilitated the inclusion of stakeholders, which is a core principle for achieving justice in smart destinations (Choi et al., 2021). In addition, 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 illustrates their commitment to tourism practitioners, as seen in previous tourism collaborations (Pansiri, 2013; Waddock, 1989).

Transactions with Suppliers

Ljubljana's physical and social structure provides suppliers with the ease of frequently interacting 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 is the continuous acknowledgement of the DMO. Nonetheless, other stakeholders were deemed necessary for technical support in the development of smart initiatives. Based on transaction cost economics theory, the frequency of interactions for transactions 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 previous formal agreements, social groups and daily interactions, which are discussed below. These three aspects account for the main ways in which stakeholders perceive the 'frequency' of interactions; hence, the number of exchanges were not fixed.

Previous Formal Arrangements

In Ljubljana, some tourism suppliers confirmed that they engaged in collaborations with the same stakeholders that were involved in formal agreements, whether as a past employee or a supplier, and this 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 key entity in smart development, Participant 7 had no reservations about engaging in smart initiatives due to having prior positive working experiences with this stakeholder. Stakeholder engagement based on previous business interactions resonated with the findings of other cases of tourism collaboration (Beritelli, 2011; 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 company's arrangements with stakeholders 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:

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

246

Long-term engagement was tied to contractual agreements. These arrangements were made after public entities issued requests for proposals via national tender, and interested suppliers responded. For instance, an invitation to tender was sent out by the government to solicit technical expertise for a smart initiative. 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 stakeholder results in equity of value based on a relational exchange perspective (Fyall et al., 2012; Macneil, 1980). However, these exchanges do 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 the preference of those in authority:

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

There was little regard for the issue of favouritism despite its negative effects, such as the exclusion of stakeholders. 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 decreased nepotism; this is a possible area for future research.

Familiarity Through Business Networks and Social Groups

Stakeholders will choose to do business with those with whom they have personal relationships rather than based on the nature of transactions (Fyall et al., 2012), which was the case in Ljubljana. As a small destination, stakeholders were familiar with each other through tourism networks and chose 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 stakeholders allowed for acts of nepotism, which requires the use of power to advance interactions with those favoured by the one in the authority position. Participant 17 recalled that the destination was considered for smart initiatives due to one of its nationals being employed in the EU:

'The last initiative which I presented, maybe one month ago, was from the EU Commissioner; she's from Slovenia and she's responsible for the infrastructure. She's responsible, I think, for the traffic and the infrastructure in the European community, and from her cabinet they send me initiatives'.

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 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 decisions, which is the underlying assumption of relational exchange theory (Fyall et al., 2012). A similar sentiment was shared by Participant 23, who noted that their business decisions were also influenced by 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 easily do business. You combine fun and pleasure with business'.

The arrangements between suppliers took the form of informal agreements rather than signed contracts. This aligns 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 were a necessity for future collaborations. Engaging in smart initiatives at the destination level did not require formal arrangements from his organisation and were therefore favourable. Informal relations are not new to tourism collaborations (Beritelli, 2011; Wondirad et al., 2020) but enhance De Wit's (2017) work, illustrating a link between the frequency and 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:

'Uhmm, there were some changes also in the last 22, 3 years. A lot of people have changed, so there are new people. So this could be also a bigger challenge for us but, in the end, this hotel and other companies stayed in the partnership'.

Engagement with those from familiar social groups may have led to the exclusion of some stakeholders, but this requires further investigation. Nevertheless, stakeholders 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).

Ongoing and Regular Interactions

Ljubljana suppliers regularly interacted with neighbouring businesses, which led to the sharing of resources, from staff to parking facilities and rooms needed to accommodate hotel 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'* (Website 1). This has resulted in *'events between 500 and 1,500 people'* (Participant 1). The highest room capacity for one hotel is 214 rooms; therefore, a block

of rooms provided by multiple hotels is usually needed to successfully host large event groups in the city, which offers a total of 2,975 hotel rooms that are within walking distance from the city centre or five kilometres from it. Hotel partners from these conference collaborations are contacted in situations of overbookings, when businesses rely on each other for resources such as staff and accommodations, signifying resource dependency (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978).

However, Participant 9 recalled that this is not always possible during peak seasons. This is 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 with a question by the researcher regarding meeting attendance. Many of the suppliers responded in the negative or dissociated from the process. For instance, Participant 2, who was active in Taste Ljubljana, stated,

'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'.

CONCLUSION

This chapter provides an understanding of creating smart experiences by adopting a multi-theoretical perspective based on tourism collaboration. These smart initiatives are possible due to the presence of core collaboration components and the influences of supplier involvement. Traditional tourism businesses are involved in the development of smart experiences. However, findings built upon previous studies highlight that other local entities are involved in the process of development, such as those from the city's group for development. There are also entities further afield, such as regional organisations. Factors include the relationship and the resources from DMO as well as transactions with suppliers, namely previous formal arrangements, familiarity through business networks and social groups and ongoing daily and monthly interactions. These factors align with theories associated with tourism collaboration, such as resource dependency, transaction cost and relational exchange theories. Industry practitioners can gain further knowledge of smart tourism as they seek to develop destinations to create smart experiences. This offers knowledge to destination and government officials who are faced with the challenge of furthering involvement in current smart destinations. The chapter also shares relevant findings to practitioners who wish to generate interest and participation in prospective smart destinations.

Findings from this chapter build upon the work of previous tourism scholars, as smart tourism is conceptualised as a management approach (Ivars-Baidal et al., 2019). Findings extend current understandings on the formation of smart experiences beyond the main acknowledgement of technology-related influences. Following these findings, the chapter calls for empirical investigations of smart tourism to be conducted through the lens of collaboration. Future studies can draw on other newly emerging theoretical lenses from collaboration studies that are better fit to examine smart initiatives. Other similar destination contexts can also be considered by scholars for exploring the development of smart experiences. Nonetheless, this chapter provides useful and relevant empirical insights that can contribute to the development and implementation of smart experiences.

REFERENCES

Ahmed, F., Patterson, P., & Styles, C. (1999). The determinants of successful relationships in international business. *Australasian Marketing Journal*, *7*(1), 5–21. doi:10.1016/S1441-3582(99)70197-7

Augustyn, M. M., & Knowles, T. (2000). Performance of tourism partnerships: A focus on York. *Tourism Management*, *21*(4), 341–351. doi:10.1016/S0261-5177(99)00068-0

Baggio, R., Micera, R., & Del Chiappa, G. (2020). Smart tourism destinations: A critical reflection. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology*, *11*(3). Advance online publication. doi:10.1108/JHTT-01-2019-0011

Barile, S., Ciasullo, M. V., Troisi, O., & Samo, D. (●●●). The role of technology and institutions in tourism service ecosystems: Findings from a case study. *The TQM Journal*, *29*(6), 811–833. doi:10.1108/TQM-06-2017-0068

Beritelli, P. (2011). Cooperation among prominent actors in a tourist destination. *Annals of Tourism Research*, *38*(2), 607–629. doi:10.1016/j.annals.2010.11.015

Beritelli, P., Strobl, A., & Peters, M. (2013). Interlocking directorships against community closure: A trade-off for development in tourist destinations. *Tourism Review*, *68*(1), 21–34. doi:10.1108/16605371311310057

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *3*(2), 77–101. doi:10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Briciu, A., Briciu, V., & Kavoura, A. (2020). Evaluating how 'smart' Brasov, Romania can be virtually via a mobile application for cultural tourism. *Sustainability*, *12*(13), 1–17. https://do.org/10.3390/su12135324. doi:10.3390u12135324

Buhalis, D. (2019). Technology in tourism- from information communication technologies to eTourism and smart tourism towards ambient intelligence tourism: A perspective article. *Tourism Review*, *75*(1), 1–4. doi:10.1108/TR-02-2020-405

Buhalis, D., & Amaranggana, A. (2015). *Smart tourism destinations enhancing tourism experience through personalisation of services*. Information and Communication Technologies in Tourism. doi:10.1007/978-3-319-14343-9_28

Choi, J., Lee, S., & Jamal, T. (2021). Smart Korea: Governance for smart justice during a global pandemic. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, *29*(2-3), 541–550. doi:10.1080/09669582.2020.17777143

Czernek, K. (2013, January). Determinants of cooperation in a tourist region. *Annals of Tourism Research*, *40*, 83–104. doi:10.1016/j.annals.2012.09.003

De Wit, B. (2017). *Strategy- an international perspective*. Cengage Learning.

Del Chiappa, G., & Baggio, R. (2015). Knowledge transfer in smart tourism destinations: Analysing the effects of a network structure. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, *4*(3), 145–150. doi:10.1016/j.jdmm.2015.02.001

EU. (2018). *European Capital of Smart Tourism*. Retrieved from https://smarttourismcapital.eu/

Femenia-Serra, F., & Ivars-Baidal, J. (2018). Do smart tourism destinations really work? The case of Benidorm. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research, 26*(4). doi:10.1080/10941665.2018.1561478

Fyall, A., Garrod, B., & Wang, Y. (2012). Destination collaboration: A critical review of theoretical approaches to a multi-dimensional phenomenon. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, *1*(1-2), 10–26. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2012.10.002

Gajdosik, T. (2018). Smart tourism: Concepts and insights from Central Europe. *Czech Journal of Tourism*, *7*(1), 25–44. https://doi.org/10.1515/cjot-2018–0002

Gajdosik, T. (2020). Smart tourists as a profiling market segment: Implications for DMOs. *Tourism Economics*, *26*(6), 1042–1062. https://doi.org/10.1177/1354816619844368

Getz, D., & Jamal, T. (1994). The environment-community symbiosis: A case for collaborative tourism planning. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, *2*(3), 152–173. https://doi.org/10.1080/09669589409510692

Gretzel, U., Sigala, M., Xiang, Z., & Koo, C. (2015). Smart tourism: Foundations and developments. *Electronic Markets*, *25*(3), 179–188. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12525-015-0196-8

IESE. (2019). Retrieved December 31, 2020, from https://blog.iese.edu/cities-challenges-and-management/2020/10/27/iese-cities-in-motion-index-2020/

IMD. (2020). Retrieved December 31, 2020, from https://www.imd.org/smart-city-observatory/smart-city-index/

Ivars-Baidal, J., Celdran-Bernabeu, M., Mazon, J., & Perles-Ivars, A. (2017). Smart destinations and the evolution of ICTs: A new scenario for destination management. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 1-20. doi:10.1080/13683500.2017.1388771

Ivars-Baidal, J., Mazon, J., & Perles-Ivars, A. (2019). Smart destinations and the evolution of ICTs: A new scenario for destination management? *Current Issues in Tourism*, *22*(13), 1581–1600. https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2017.1388771

Jamaica Gleaner. (2021). *Jamaica Gleaner*. Retrieved August 31, 2021, from https://jamaica-gleaner.com

Jamal, T., & Getz, D. (1995). Collaboration theory and community tourism planning. *Annals of Tourism Research*, *22*(1), 186–204. https://doi.org/10.1016/0160-7383(94)00067-3

Jovicic, D. (2019). From the traditional understanding of tourism destination to the smart tourism destination. *Current Issues in Tourism*, *22*(3), 276–282. https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2017.1313203

Koo, C., Park, J., & Lee, J. N. (2017). Smart tourism- traveler, business, and organisational perspectives. *Information & Management*.

Li, Y., Hu, C., Huang, C., & Duan, L. (2017). The concept of smart tourism in the context of tourism information services. *Tourism Management*, *58*, 293–300.

Lin, D., & Simmons, D. (2017). Structured inter-network collaboration: Public participation in tourism planning in Southern China. *Tourism Management*, *63*, 315–328. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2017.06.024

Lin, S. W. (2017). Identifying the critical success factors and an optimal solution for mobile technology adoption in travel agencies. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, *19*(2), 127–144. https://doi.org/10.1002/jtr.2092

Macneil, I. (1980). *The new social contract: An inquiry into modern contractual relation*. Yale University Press.

Martins, C., Carneiro, M., & Pacheco, O. (2020). Key factors for implementation and success of destination management systems. Empirical evidence from European countries. *Industrial Management & Data Systems*.

McCabe, S., Sharples, M., & Foster, C. (2012). Stakeholder engagement in the design of scenarios of technology-enhanced tourism services. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, *4*(October), 36–44. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2012.04.007

Mehraliyev, F., Chan, I., Choi, Y., Koseoglu, M., & Law, R. (2020). A state-of-the-art review of smart tourism research. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, *37*(1), 78–91. https://doi.org/10.1080/10548408.2020.1712309

Menon, S., Edward, M., & George, B. (2017). Inter-stakeholder collaboration in event management: A case study of Kerala Travel Mart. *International Journal of Leisure and Tourism Marketing*, *5*(4). https://doi.org/10.1504/IJLTM.2017.087493

Neuhofer, B., Buhalis, D., & Ladkin, A. (2015). Smart technologies for personalised experiences: A case study in the hospitality domain. *Electronic Markets*, *25*, 243–254. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12525-015-0182-1

Oxford Dictionaries. (2018). *Oxford Dictionaries*. Retrieved from http://www.oxforddictionaries.com

Pansiri, J. (2013). Collaboration and partnership in tourism: The experience of Botswana. *Tourism Planning & Development*, *10*(1), 64–84. doi:10.1080/21568316.2012.723039

Pfeffer, J., & Salancik, G. R. (1978). *The External Control of Organizations: A Resource Dependence Perspective*. Harper & Row.

Reed, M. (1997). Power relations and community-based tourism planning. *Annals of Tourism Research*, *24*(3), 566–591. doi:10.1016/S0160-7383(97)00023-6

Salancik, G. R., & Pfeffer, J. (1977). An examination of the need: Satisfaction models of job attitudes. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *22*, 427–456. https://doi.org/10.2307/2392182

Selin, S., & Chavez, D. (1995). Developing an evolutionary tourism partnership model. *Annals of Tourism Research*, *22*(4), 844–856.

Selin, S., & Myers, N. (1998). Tourism marketing alliances: Member satisfaction and effectiveness attributes of a regional initiative. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, *7*(3), 79–94. https://doi.org/10.1300/J073v07n03_05

Shen, S., Sotiriadis, M., & Zhou, Q. (2020). Could smart tourists be sustainable and responsible as well? The contribution of social networking sites to improving their sustainable and responsible behaviour. *Sustainability*, *12*, 1–21. https://doi.org/10.3390/su12041470

Sigala, M. (2013). Examining the adoption of destination management systems: An inter-organisational information systems approach. *Management Decision*, *51*(5), 1011–1036. https://doi.org/10.1108/MD-11-2012-0800

Tedjasaputra, A., & Sari, E. (2016). Sharing economy in smart city transportation services. *Proceedings of the SEACHI 2016 on Smart Cities for Better Living with HCI and UX*.

Thibaut, J. W., & Kelly, H. H. (1959). *The social psychology of groups*. Wiley.

Waddock, S. (1989). Understanding social partnerships: An evolutionary model of partnership organisations. *Administration & Society*, *21*(1), 78–100. https://doi.org/10.1177/009539978902100105

Wang, S., & Cheung, W. (2004). E-business adoption by travel agencies: Prime candidates for mobile e-business. *International Journal of Electronic Commerce*, *8*(3), 43–63. https://doi.org/10.1080/10864415.2004.11044298

Wang, Y., & Fesenmaier, D. (2007). Collaborative destination marketing: A case study of Elkhart county, Indiana. *Tourism Management*, *28*, 863–875. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2006.02.007

Wang, Y., & Xiang, Z. (2007, August). Toward a theoretical framework of collaborative destination marketing. *Journal of Travel Research*, *46*, 75–85. https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287507302384

Wang, Y. S., Li, H., Li, C., & Zhang, D. (2016). Factors affecting hotels' adoption of mobile reservation systems: A technology-organization environment framework. *Tourism Management*, *53*, 163–172. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2015.09.021

Williamson, O. (1985). *The economic institutions of capitalism*. The Free Press.

Wondirad, A., Tolkach, D., & King, B. (2020). Stakeholder collaboration as a major factor for sustainable ecotourism development in developing countries. *Tourism Management*, *78*, 104024. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2019.104024

Wood, D., & Gray, B. (1991). Toward a comprehensive theory of collaboration. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, *27*(139). https://doi.org/10.1177/0021886391272001

Xu, K., Zhang, J., & Tian, F. (2017). Community leadership in rural tourism development: A tale of two ancient Chinese villages. *Sustainability*, *9*, 1–22. https://doi.org/10.3390/su9122344

Xue, L., & Kerstetter, D. (2017). Discourse and power relations in community tourism. *Journal of Travel Research*, *57*(6), 757–768. doi:10.1177/0047287517714908

Yin, R. (2014). *Case study research design and methods*. Sage.

Zach, F., & Racherla, P. (2011). Assessing the value of collaborations in tourism networks: A case study of Elkhart County, Indiana. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, *28*(1), 97–110. https://doi.org/10.1080/10548408.2011.535446

Zemla, M. (2014). Inter-destination cooperation: Forms, facilitators and inhibitors –The case of Poland. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, *3*(4), 241–252. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2014.07.001

Zhu, W., Zhang, L., & Li, N. (2014). Challenges, function changing of government and enterprises in Chinese smart tourism. *ENTER 2014 Conference on Information and Communication Technologies*.

Zuzul, T. (2019). Matter battles: Cognitive representations, boundary objects, and the failure of collaboration in two smart cities. *Academy of Management Journal*, *62*(3), 739–784. https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2016.0625

KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Collaboration: A decision-making process that engages stakeholders from a destination in order to address a problem.

Smart: Intelligence for autonomous actions.

Smart Business Ecosystem: Tourism suppliers and other suppliers who directly exchange resources for the generation of resources and experiences.

Smart Experiences: Technology-enhanced tourist experiences.

Thematic Analysis: A method for locating patterns in data.