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MASTER`S THESIS

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MASTER`S THESIS
**MANAGING A SUDDEN INFLUX OF CULTURALLY DIFFERENT
TOURISTS: CHINESE TOURISTS IN ICELAND**

Ljubljana, July, 2019   RAKEL SARA HJARTARDÓTTIR

AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT

The undersigned Rakel Sara Hjartardóttir, a student at the University of Ljubljana, School of Economics and Business, (hereafter: SEB LU), author of this written final work of studies with the title Managing a sudden influx of culturally different tourists: Chinese tourists in Iceland, prepared under supervision of William C. Gartner and co-supervision of Tanja Mihalič.

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1. Introduction

The last decade has seen a surge in international travel, with each of the previous eight years seeing steady growth in the number of international tourists compared to the previous year. Overall, tourism has seen a jump from 880 million international travelers in 2009 to 1.4 billion in 2018 (UNWTO, 2010; World Tourism Barometer, 2019). Alongside this increase, more tourists are demanding authentic experiences with locals as part of the touristic experience (Arlt, 2013; Chen, 2005; Engeset & Elvekrok, 2015; Yeoman, Brass & McMahon-Beattie, 2007). Creating a more authentic experience necessitates more one on one communication between tourism suppliers and the tourist, increasing the importance of intercultural sensitivity in these interactions (Franzidis & Yau, 2018; Pearce, 1995; Zhang, Inbakaran, & Jackson, 2006).

Equally important is how a countries product delivery is affected by the relationship between hosts and their guests, whether working in the tourism industry or not. The general perception hosts have of the tourism industry is consequential and how they interact with the tourists can lead to a positive or negative experience for tourists (Reisinger & Turner, 2002; Pizam, Uriely & Reichel, 2000). More specifically, whether a host´s impression of a tourist changes based on their nationality should be examined because of the prevalence of preconceived ideas about the behavior of certain nationalities while traveling (Griffiths & Sharpley, 2012), if these ideas stem from previous interactions, word of mouth, or from how the media portrays certain nationalities in relation to tourism, these impressions could be affecting the tourists' experience. The hosts' perception of the tourism industry or a tourists nationality can thus influence the tourists' experience, either negatively or positively, depending on the hosts' perception. Hosts harboring a negative perception of tourism or tourists poses a problem because if the tourists' experience is lessened because of a hosts attitude, it is less likely that the tourists will leave with a positive image of the destination (Pike & Page, 2014). Tourists satisfaction is also believed to be based on the cultural distance between tourists and hosts (Huang & Crotts, 2019). Woosnam, Norman, and Ying (2009) express that when hosts and tourists manage to share beliefs and customs hosts attitude towards tourists improves. Any destination should be aiming for its guests to have a positive experience in order to make tourism economically sustainable. Thus, the perceptions of hosts towards international guests play a significant role in whether the tourism sector can be viable long term. This means an examination of the hosts' perceptions towards guests is an area of importance when looking at a countries tourism sector.

In view of the fact that a tourist's nationality could influence how hosts perceive them, it is essential to understand how this perception could play out on the tourists' experience. One area for examination that could prove useful is looking at the history of outbound travel in China. As Chinese tourists have contributed to the substantial increase in international travel and with China being a culturally distinct country compared to the rest

of the world, focusing on them may provide insight into how preconceived notions could play out in the touristic experience (*Travel & Tourism,* 2018). China was relatively isolated from the rest of the world for most of the 20th century, and Chinese people did not participate in outbound travel until 1978, with travel for leisure not allowed until the 1990s (Arlt, 2006). The growth of leisure travel has been a slow burn for China as people were restricted as they could only travel to countries deemed acceptable to the government, which granted certain countries Approved Destination Status (ADS). The first three ADS´s were granted in 1990, to Singapore, Malaysia, and Thailand, and slowly this list has grown to 147 countries with the EU being granted status in 2004 (Graff, 2015). Since then, Chinese outbound tourism has grown from 45 million tourists in 2009 to 135 million tourists in 2018 (International tourism, number of departures, n.d.). Not only do Chinese tourist travel in large numbers, but they also appear to be big spenders. In 2017, Chinese tourists had both the highest total expenditure in tourist dollars of any nation, contributing 21% of all tourists expenditure, as well as spending more per person than any other nationality (UNWTO, 2018). This has not gone unnoticed as many journals, books, and news articles have attempted to understand the influx of Chinese travelers and its impact on the tourism market.

Initially, Chinese tourists were considered unique in their travel preferences. It was more common for them to travel in tour groups and stop at as many places as possible, yet today many Chinese tourists follow more international trends of seeking authentic experiences and staying longer in one place, similar to the preferences of western tourists (Arlt, 2006, 2008, 2013; Jin & Sparks, 2017; Kim, Guo & Agrusa, 2005; Sparks & Pan, 2009). This change indicates that there is and will continue to be an increase in front line communication between hosts and guests. However, while many tour operators have a solid understanding of how to deal with Western tourists, they may be at a loss about how to interact with Chinese tourists. This lack of knowledge can be problematic as any issues that arise because of communication issues could negatively affect the tourist experience and also contribute to a negative attitude towards them from the community. Judging by international media portrayals, Americans used to be viewed as the most obnoxious tourists, yet Chinese tourists have been given this title with what many consider 'unacceptable' behavior (Jernigan, 2012). This has led some destinations to take drastic measures such as creating separate public transport for Chinese tourists or creating signs in Mandarin only, instructing them not to defecate in public (Cripps, 2013; Fan, 2015; Haynes, 2013; Koetse, 2016; Pile, 2017). These drastic steps put in place by local governments to avoid 'unacceptable' behavior could be seen as rude by the Chinese tourist, causing unneeded headaches. Furthering the headache is that the perceptions hosts have of tourists can come from various sources, with the mainstream media playing a leading role by reporting on these drastic measures, regardless of whether they represent the norm (Stepchenkova & Eales, 2011). The Chinese government seems to be aware of this negative portrayal and its consequences and issued behavioral guidelines for its citizens when traveling abroad, showing a desire for its citizens to avoid this bad behavior (*Guide to Civilised Tourism*, 2013). Whether or not Chinese tourists merit this title, hosts need to be prepared for

interacting with culturally different tourists, whose behavior may not fit local norms. With Chinese tourists having added awareness of how they are supposed to act, it is possible they also have added awareness of how others are meant to interact with them. As Chinese tourism is still increasing, in both numbers and purchasing power, tourist destinations must understand how to deal with them respectfully. Thus, it is crucial to understand how locals deal with Chinese tourists and vice-versa and how both sides feel during these interactions.

This paper has been undertaken to understand how the relationship between guests and hosts can affect the delivery of tourism services, for better or worse. Although this guest-host relationship has been widely researched, with a focus on both the positive and the negative effects that tourism can have on a local community, less has been done on how intercultural competence plays a role in communication between people of two different cultures (Franzidis & Yau, 2018; Li, Lai, Harrill, Kline & Wang, 2011; Ward & Berno, 2011; Zhang et al., 2006). Tourism is often believed to strengthen international bonds, yet according to Reisinger (2009), this is a somewhat naive and unproven statement made by people that assume that being exposed to new cultures will inevitably broaden people's perspectives. It may lead to narrower perspectives and misunderstandings if people do not possess the needed cultural competency to negotiate the interaction (p.79). The importance of these interactions needs to be recognized in order to have sustainable tourism of any kind as it is paramount to have positive interactions and understanding between the hosts and tourists regardless of cultural divides between them (Pearce, 1995; Tasci & Severt, 2017; Zhang et al., 2006; Zhang, Fan, Tse, & King, 2017). As Chinese tourists are now one of the largest groups of tourists in the world, it is imperative that hosts know how to interact with them rather than assume that the individual Chinese tourist would solely adapt to the local culture or that hosts would intuitively know how to politely interact with them.

For a destination to reach social sustainability locals need to be on board with the changes, both negative and positive, occurring in their area for sustainable development to flourish (Pearce, 1995; Tasci & Severt, 2017; Zhang et al., 2006; Zhang, Fan, Tse & King, 2017). These changes could be seen because of an increase of tourists in local areas, meaning locals are sharing resources with tourists, such as roads, restaurants, and green spaces. This example would inevitably mean an economic benefit for some, but for others, the increased crowding may be seen as unfavorable. Thus, it is not merely enough to have positive economic benefits if the locals are dissatisfied with the interactions with those coming into their community. Otherwise, a negative attitude, which has been created in overly saturated tourists areas, can create severe issues and threaten any economic or social benefits (Maoz, 2006; Martín, Martínez, & Fernández, 2018; Zerva, Palou, Blasco, & Benito, 2018; Zhang et al., 2017). Intercultural competence can ease any potential culture clash before an adverse effect is created. Therefore, a further understanding of the combination of host-guest relationship, nationality, host's intercultural competence, and tourism experience will help facilitate socially sustainable tourism management.

As Chinese tourists will be used as the subject for this study into the role of communication between hosts and culturally different tourists, it is relevant to consider the literature on Chinese outbound tourism. According to scholarly reviews of Chinese outbound literature, there is a need for further qualitative research and theory building, primarily focusing on when Chinese tourist travel outside of Asia (Jørgensen, Law & King, 2017; Law, Sun, Fong, Fong & Fu, 2016). Further reviews of Chinese outbound tourism call for research on how the influx of Chinese tourists impact a destination and the sociocultural impact they have on a local community (Huang, Keating, Kriz & Heung, 2015; Jin & Wang, 2014; Tse, 2015). These reviews suggest that the majority of literature focuses on marketing a destination to attract them but less about how to manage and respond to the unique challenges presented by tourists coming to a culturally different environment. Essentially, everyone is rushing to get them in the door without worrying what to do once inside. This can leave front-line employees who deal directly with Chinese tourists at a loss of how to manage issues when they arise. This paper intends to address the gap in current literature, which places the focus on how to attract Chinese tourists, by outlining how to properly prepare tourism professionals, as well as locals, for their arrival. The hope is that this paper will serve as part of a holistic understanding of how intercultural competence plays a role in mitigating differences between nationalities when played out in a guest-host relationship.

Exploring how locals and tourism professionals should respond to an increase in culturally different tourists in a socially sustainable manner will contribute to existing literature, both regarding Chinese outbound tourism as well as host-guest relationships. Therefore, the main aim of this research is to provide an answer to the following central research question:

RQ: How can cultural clashes between the supply and demand side be mitigated when diverse cultures interact in the tourism industry?

In order to break down and facilitate the process of answering the main research question the following sub-questions will be answered:

SQ1: What are the underlying behavioral differences that are causing issues in communication between people with different cultural backgrounds?

SQ2: What are the elements needed to facilitate cultural understanding between hosts and tourists?

SQ3: What are hosts perceptions of Chinese tourists and how are they responding to challenging cultural situations?

SQ4: What are the different challenges between travel organizers, front line employees, and residents when it comes to incorporating intercultural competence?

These questions are meant to identify behavioral differences and to critically evaluate the elements of intercultural competence needed by using the existing literature. The primary research will be conducted to explore and compare how these behavioral differences between the host, supply side, and the guest, demand side, affect travel organizers, front line employees, and residents. In the paper, these two groups will be referenced mainly as the host and the guest. Three different groups will be examined in order to explore and further understand gaps in the process of implementing intercultural competence as a fundamental component of tourism service. The final objective of this paper is to formulate recommendations for a host community.

Chapter One outlines the importance of Intercultural Communication skills when dealing with culturally different tourists and why further research is needed. The research question and the objectives of the research are laid out and explained here. Iceland, the location where the empirical research is conducted, is introduced in Chapter Two. It offers an understanding of Iceland's current tourism situation, a view of the host-guest relationships and the relevance of the location. Chapter Three examines the relevant literature by analyzing the evolution and quality of the most relevant theories. This literature review is divided into six subchapters; an introduction of basic definitions, Intercultural Communication, Intercultural Communication Competence (ICC), host perception, Chinese outbound tourism research, as well as ICC training and awareness. Chapter Four outlines the chosen methodology, Grounded Theory, the methods used to collect empirical data and how coding and memoing are used in order to analyze the data. The limitations of the research are also discussed here. Chapter Five first lays out the findings of the empirical data gathered and follows with a discussion on how these findings relate to existing literature and their possible contributions. Chapter Six provides practical implications for mitigating cultural clashes. Chapter Seven concludes the paper with the main points from the findings and points out areas for further research possibilities.

2. Study Site

While this paper focuses on the overall skills needed to increase ICC when hosts are dealing with guests that have a high CD, the choice of Iceland as the research destination means that a deep dive into the history of tourism in Iceland is required. Iceland is unique within Europe; as it is a tiny island nation with a population hovering around 359,000 ("Hagstofan", 2019), and yet has its own culture, history, and sense of identity. Though it has been inhabited since 874, for a long time it was a colony of Denmark and only gained full independence from Denmark in 1944 ("History", n.d.). Most of the country is uninhabitable, and two-thirds of the population live in the capital area ("Hagstofan", 2019). During much of the nineteenth century, Iceland was one of the poorest countries in Europe (Ólafsson, 2005), however, with the rise of Iceland's fishing industry Iceland's economy

strengthened and the country developed into a first world country (Jóhannesson, Huijbens, & Sharpley, 2010). As fishing was traditionally the dominant industry in Iceland, the government seldom paid attention to tourism, exemplified by the fact that the very first tourism policy was not implemented until 1996, though there were several failed attempts before this (Jóhannesson et al., 2010). Like many other tourism destinations, especially island destinations, Iceland deals with issues such as seasonality, location-based overcrowding, and difficulties with the implementation of policies (Jóhannesson et al., 2010; "Sóknarfærin í ferðaþjónustu", 2018). Although there are many institutions, such as the Tourism Board, Vakinn (quality standards), the Tourist Site Protection Fund, Research and Statistics, Travel Industry Association (SAF) ("Icelandic Tourist Board", n.d.; "Welcome to The Icelandic", n.d.) that aim to unite, facilitate and monitor tourism in Iceland, there is still an overall lack of central planning. Within the Icelandic population, many citizens complain that these institutions and their policies are not monitored creating a chaotic picture (Hafsteinsson & Steinsson, 2014; Harðarson, 2019; *Stjórnsýsla ferðamála*, 2017).

Additionally, there is an increasing issue with foreign companies working in Iceland, where these companies do not comply with local laws regarding paying salaries and taxes. This has a negative impact as these foreign companies can offer cheaper tourism products and thus decrease the competitiveness for companies that do follow laws, which any local company must do (Harðarson, 2019; Sóknarfærin í ferðaþjónustu", 2018). A lack of an overall coherent policy has led to uncertainty regarding many issues in the tourism industry. People are divided as to whether tourists should have to pay a base fee when entering the country or pay when visiting each sight (Brynjolfsson, Blondal, Helgadottir, & Hlynsson, 2018). As well, there is consternation as to how to best preserve Iceland's pristine nature in the face of increasing tourism (Sheivachman, 2016; Enelow-Snyder, 2016). The protection of nature is of paramount importance because many tourists come to Iceland for the nature (Brynjolfsson et al., 2018), yet most of the country is open, and tourists behavior in more remote areas are unsupervised.

To get a clearer picture of tourism's rapid development in Iceland, the recent data sheds some useful insight. From 1949-2010, over 62 years, Iceland received around eight million tourists. This relatively low number meant that tourism was not a big part of Iceland's economy (Sverrisdóttir, 2017). However, from 2011-2017, a period of just seven years, Iceland received its next eight million tourists. This drastic increase transformed the economy of the country, with tourism becoming the number one export sector, rising above fishery and aluminum (Sverrisdóttir, 2017). In 2017 tourism's export revenue was 42%, a sharp increase from 2013 when it accounted for only 26.4% (Óladóttir, 2018). This rise can be attributed to several factors. First, Iceland experienced an economic crisis in 2008, as many countries did, which led to the devaluation of the Icelandic currency, Krónan, making it cheaper for foreigners to travel to Iceland (Brynjolfsson et al., 2018). Second, in 2010, Iceland became front-page news because of the volcanic eruption of Eyjafjallajökull, which disrupted all flights in Europe (Brynjolfsson et al., 2018). Third, Iceland became a popular

film location for movies and TV shows such as *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty*, *Prometheus,* and *Game of Thrones* (Brynjolfsson et al., 2018; Einarsson, 2014). The stark shots of Iceland's nature served as a giant advertisement for many people. Fourth, and in part due to the first three reasons, there was a substantial rise in the number of airlines offering flights to Iceland, rising from two airlines in 2005 to fifteen in 2017 (Sverrisdóttir, 2017). Taking all of these aspects together, it is clear that the rise in tourism to Iceland was not in response to the government planning it, but rather because of factors largely outside of the government's control. Ever since this initial increase, the government has been attempting to play catch up and implement sound policies and training to support tourism.

With such a rapid increase of visitors in a small island country, Iceland's economy developed a unique relationship with the tourism sector. Tourism greatly helped to re-establish the country after the 2008 economic crisis, and now there is a direct connection between the Icelandic currency, Krónan, and tourism. For better or worse, the stability of the currency is now directly related to the amount of foreign currency in the country, which is mainly dependent on the tourism industry (Sverrisdóttir, 2017). This is a cyclical relationship, where one thing leads to another (Figure 1). This cycle starts with the weakening of the currency, which leads to an increase in tourists who bring with them their foreign currency, which increases the amount of foreign currency in Iceland. As a result of this, the Icelandic currency strengthens leading to higher relative costs for tourists, as their foreign currency does not go as far as when the currency was weak. The increased costs of travel decrease tourism to Iceland and weakens the economy. This weakened economy then devalues the Krónan, which again means foreign currency has a higher purchasing power in Iceland, leading to more tourism (Sverrisdóttir, 2017). At the beginning of writing this paper, the cycle had reached a point in Figure 1 of "Icelandic króna strengthens" and "Tourism decreases". This is evident since all numbers from 2019 point to the decrease of tourists after the recent strengthening of the currency (Gísladóttir, 2017).

Figure 1. The relationship between tourism and economy in Iceland.
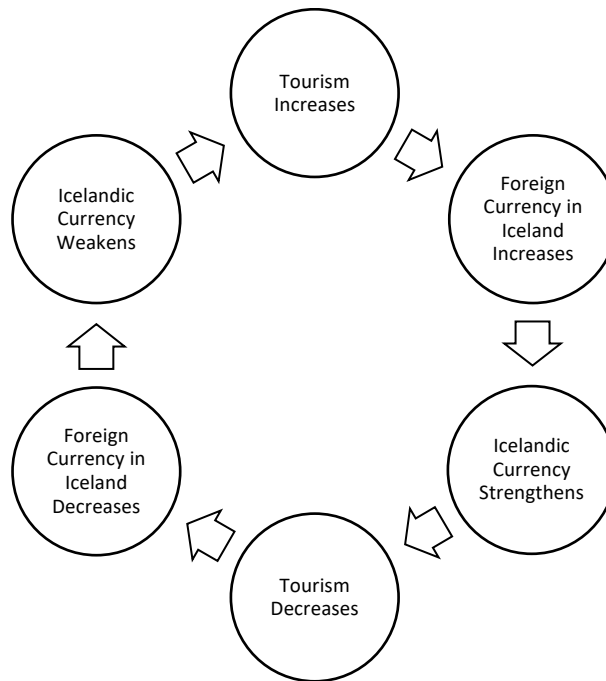
Source: Adjusted from Sverrisdóttir, 2017.

However, because of the relationship between the currency and the tourism industry, Iceland's economy is highly dependent on the tourism industry ("Iceland one of five", 2017). The recent bankruptcy of WowAir, a popular low budget Icelandic airline, has shown how much a change in tourism can affect the economy. In the aftermath of WowAir shutting down, there has been fluctuation in the currency and an increase in unemployment (Sigurdardottir & Rigillo, 2019). The economy's recent shift to being dependent on tourism has made sustainable tourism a focal point, with big questions being asked like 'how can Iceland keep tourism as one of the largest industries?' or 'Can Iceland even receive more tourists?' (Sigurdardottir, 2017). In order to answer these important sustainability questions, environmental and social elements of sustainability need to be considered when planning long term decisions that would affect tourism. Recent data indicates that Chinese tourists may be a market that could help increase the sustainability of tourism in Iceland. According to statistics, Chinese tourists tend to behave differently than other tourists. First, they visit consistently throughout the year and not just during peak times ("Farþegar um Keflavíkurflugvöll", 2019). Second, they generally spend more money per person than other nationalities ("Kínverjar eyða mest", 2019). These characteristics indicate that Chinese tourists would be a good group of tourists to attract in terms of combating issues like seasonality, location-specific over-crowdedness, and support for the local economy. In fact, *The Plan for Nordic Tourism Cooperation 2019-2023* states that there is potential for a unified effort from the Nordic countries in marketing to areas such as China. It also states that this marketing needs to be done sustainably, attracting high spending travelers that will stay longer and travel wider (*Plan for nordic tourism*, 2019). However, the plan fails to

mention the social part of sustainable marketing, preparing the locals and tourism industry for how to deal with these tourists adequately, and focuses mainly on attracting them. When preparing to solve one problem, a secondary problem could arise. As this paper is suggesting, culturally different tourists can impact the social elements of sustainability as well as hosts attitudes in general. By specifically attracting culturally different tourists without preparing for them could create new problems instead of achieving sustainability. While economically, it could provide a boon, if hosts and guests are not able to achieve sustainable interactions, the boon could be short-lived.

In looking at the data, it becomes apparent that Chinese tourism to Iceland has been a recent development. In 2007, the main visitors to Iceland came from the UK, USA, Germany, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden respectively. During that time the Chinese market was just starting as Iceland only received 7,447 Chinese tourists (*Tourism in Iceland*, 2009). Fast forward to 2015 and the biggest markets in Iceland were still from USA, UK, Norway, Denmark and Sweden but China had become a major contributor as well (Sheivachman, 2016). This rise can be appreciated from the fact that from 2013-2015 Chinese tourists increased by 270% or up to 47,643 (Sheivachman, 2016). This upward trend continues and from May 2018 to April 2019, Iceland received 92,368 Chinese tourists (*Tourism in Iceland*, 2019) which points to a rapid increase of tourists with a high CD. An increase as drastic as this can put pressure on the local tourism infrastructure. However, as the tourists came from an area with a high CD there were more interactions with a higher potential for miscommunication or a negative outcome. This has only spurred the need for more ICC training for those on the frontline.

With these rapid changes and relatively little preparation from the government, it is interesting to look at how the locals' attitudes towards tourism and how tourists feel about their experience when traveling in Iceland. Generally, hosts overall attitude towards tourism in Iceland has been positive although exact numbers are unclear. According to Market and Media research, this positive attitude decreased slightly from year to year from 80% positive attitudes in 2015 to 68% in 2018 ("Jákvæðni gagnvart", 2018). According to Maskína, 71.7% of those surveyed had positive attitudes, 20.8% in the middle, and 7.5% with a negative attitude (Íslendingar jákvæðir gagnvart ferðamönnum, 2018). These numbers represent a broad view of the locals' general attitude towards tourism as there are no studies explicitly showing attitudes towards a specific type of tourist depending on nationality, age, class or the type of tourism they participate in. Therefore, these numbers, while painting a broad picture, do not really help with understanding nuances in hosts attitudes and perceptions towards tourists and their nationality. It does, however, imply that attitude towards tourism is slightly declining and could improve. More research into understanding these nuances would result in useful data that could be used to inform future policies on socially sustainable tourism.

On the other side of the coin, it is necessary to look at tourists attitudes towards Iceland. According to a Gallup poll, Chinese tourists are the least satisfied with their trip to Iceland of all tourists, with an average score of 74.7 points out of 100, this can be compared to Americans who are the most satisfied tourists, scoring an 84,5 out of 100 (Ólafsdóttir, 2018). This study of overall satisfaction is based on five elements distributed among 69 nationalities (Ólafsdóttir, 2018). These five elements are; if the trip met tourists expectations, whether they would recommend traveling to Iceland, the value of the trip compared to its costs, the hospitality of Icelanders, and overall satisfaction of the trip (Ólafsdóttir, 2018). Chinese tourists relative dissatisfaction compared with other nationalities could be because tourism is a new industry, and there is a lot to be learned.

> These are the nuances here because the Icelandic travel industry is not ready for Chinese tourists at all. We are decades behind other Scandinavian countries. For example, Copenhagen, if you go on visitcopenhagen they have a toolkit, whether it is for hotels or other companies in the tourism industry. It is quite basic but useful nonetheless. (Interview 7, G1)

According to this participant, Iceland is about twenty years behind other Nordic nations when it comes to adapting a product for various nationalities. There is no toolkit from the tourism board that private stakeholders can use in order to better communicate with tourists, which would be the first basic step in the direction of welcoming tourists with a high CD. Like previously stated, *the plan for Nordic Tourism Cooperation 2019-2023* aims to market the Nordic countries jointly towards China but they do not seem to be jointly preparing for the increase of tourists with a high CD. Overall, Iceland's relatively new tourism sector combined with a more recent influx of tourists with a high CD, in this case, Chinese tourists, leaves it as a good research destination to study the ways to mitigate cultural clashes.

3. Literature Review

In the Literature Review, the focus is on addressing some of the research objectives introduced in Chapter One by examining the existing literature. This is done in order to critically evaluate the elements of ICC needed for successful cultural exchange between a guest and a host, especially when there is a cultural gap between the nationalities involved. Further, an understanding of the host-guest relationship is needed to help focus existing research on ICC towards tourism. This chapter also aims to explore the development and current status of employee training regarding ICC as it contributes to the overall understanding of ICC in tourism. The Literature Review intends to inform the reader on previous research made in this field, to create a clear focus of what the consensus is regarding ICC, justify the empirical research on this topic and explain how this paper will contribute to the existing literature. To accomplish this, a few relevant definitions will be explored,

followed by the examination and critical review of Intercultural Communication, ICC, hosts perception, Chinese outbound tourism research, and ICC training and awareness.

3.1   Definitions

For clarity, an explanation of a few central definitions; culture, cultural distance, and ethnocentrism are presented, since all of these concepts are relevant to the understanding of the topic and are perceived in many different ways. These definitions or constructs are important to outline as any difference in their meaning could affect the reader's understanding of the research and results.

3.1.1   Culture

For decades scholars have exerted great effort into defining culture, yet up until the 1990s, they were unsuccessful in coming to a consensus of what culture is (Spencer-Oatey, 2012). Reisinger (2009) believes it is impossible to produce a simple definition of culture because of its complexity and how it is approached differently depending on the discipline. She does, however, summarize that:

> Culture, as these definitions suggest, represents a system of tangible and intangible components. Tangible components of culture represent material culture and comprise productive forces and physical elements necessary to support human life, such as clothing, tools, food, buildings, paintings, and many other cultural objects and artifacts. Intangible elements of culture represent non-material culture and refer to values, beliefs, attitudes, morality, ethics, spirituality, traditions, and customs. (2009, p.90)

The intangible elements that Reisinger (2009) speaks of are the main focus of this study, seeing that they are harder to grasp and may lead to misunderstandings in communication. There is a multitude of ways to understand a culture, whether as generational culture, industry culture, or regional culture. However, when discussing 'culture', this paper will be referring to national culture, which consists of cultural aspects shared by a country (Reisinger, 2009). This form of culture was selected because of the study's aim to understand how individuals from different countries with different cultures can communicate efficiently within a tourism setting. However, as stated by many (Reisinger, 2009; Jørgensen et al., 2017), nationality is not the only variable in an individual's culture. Many things can affect the way people behave and make decisions; age, gender, race, family, or social status. Although the intangible elements of national culture are the axis of this study, the intention is merely to explore how cultures with different non-material aspects interact and to search for the best way to develop ICC to avoid a culture clash regardless of nationality. This paper uses nationality as a tool to explore these differences in order to pinpoint strengths and weaknesses. This study is by no means grouping all individuals into

one national culture to understand their preferences or peculiarity but instead exploring the communication differences between tourists and hosts from countries with a high cultural distance.

3.1.2   Cultural Distance

With an understanding of culture, we can accept that countless different cultures exist around the world with variances in behavior, traditions, and perspectives. The extent to which cultures differ is classified as Cultural Distance (CD). In other words, a high CD exists when the culture of the host country is vastly different from that of a tourist, whereas a host country welcoming tourists from a similar culture means a low CD (Reisinger, 2009). A Canadian going to Australia may have a low CD because of the shared history as a British colony, whereas a Brazilian going to Finland would result in a higher CD because there is no shared history or culture. While there are many scales used in determining the CD of nations or other cultural groups, most researchers today support Hofstede's model (Hofstede, 1980, 2001, Samovar, & Porter, 1991). In 1991, Samovar & Porter concluded that, in general, the two cultures with the highest CD were Asian and Western cultures. When thinking of CD and communication between hosts and guests, social contact is considered to lessen perceived CD while service contact is considered to increase perceived CD (Fan, Zhang, Jenkins, & Lin, 2017). Social contact consists of two cultures interacting for a social interaction, generally as friends. A service contact consists of two groups, in the case of this paper a guest-host, interacting to facilitate a transaction. As there is a larger expectation of getting something out of the service contact, any misunderstandings lead to a greater negative outcome than if a misunderstanding arose from a social contact. So, a social contact between two different cultures over a longer period is more likely to create an understanding of certain behaviors rather than someone providing a service over a short period. In these short-term service communications, there is no need to build up trust, the communication remains superficial and is unlikely to facilitate any further understanding of the cultures involved (Fan, Zhang, Jenkins, & Lin, 2017).

3.1.3   Ethnocentrism

Initially, the term ethnocentrism centered on the notion of an inner and outer group relationship. Ethnocentrism is described as a large group of people that have characteristics and attitudes in common, such as race or culture (inner group), and see these common characteristics as more important than another group's culture (outer group) and consequently compare these other groups to their standards (Bizumic, 2015). In this relationship, the intergroup feel they are superior to the outgroup, and their feelings towards the outer group range from pity to hatred (Bizumic, 2015). This is a comprehensive definition that can apply to any group in any situation, no matter the size or circumstances. In recent years, a less emotionally fueled definition has emerged, moving from hatred and focusing solely on comparison and superiority in order to narrow the scope of the definition.

For this paper, as it is guided towards tourism research, ethnocentrism is defined as a person believing their culture is superior to another person's, such as a tourist, as a result of an uninformed comparison between the different cultures (Reisinger, 2009, p.192). Observing differences in one's culture to another is a common practice and a natural process of understanding the world around you. However, when one continually compares other's culture to one's own, believing that their culture is a set standard that others should try to measure up to, chances of misunderstandings between locals and tourists increases.

3.2   Intercultural Communication

Communication consists of both verbal and nonverbal symbols as well as signs that are communicated for an intended purpose and understanding (Reisinger, 2009, p.168). Intercultural Communication is then generally perceived as two individuals or groups, from different cultures, understanding how these different symbols and signs affect behavior and ultimately reaching a shared meaning, an agreement of some sort (Steiner and Reisinger, 2004). However, this process is very unreliable since the interpretation of symbols and signs can vary. When there is a high CD between the communicators, miscommunication is likely because of a difference in the meaning of symbols (Reisinger, 2009, p.168). It is in the space of the different interpretation of symbols and their meanings where a negative interaction between a host-guest can take place. If both sides are not aware of the possibility of miscommunication and not able to negotiate this miscommunication, then problems will arise.

When it comes to Intercultural Communication, Hofstede is widely recognized for his theories and developments in the field, and his Cultural Dimension Theory is still frequently used in today's tourism research (Reisinger, 2009; Reisinger, & Crotts, 2010). Hofstede created a framework that explains how values and beliefs vary between cultures and how it influences people's behavior. Today his framework consists of six dimensions; first, the Power Distance Index measures the acceptance of social hierarchy within society between individuals. Countries with a high amount of hierarchy, such as Asian countries, would score high while countries with less rigidly accepted hierarchy, such as Nordic countries, would score low. Second, Individualism vs. Collectivism, which represents the extent of perceived group formation versus individualistic behavior in countries, differentiates between people from collectivist countries who have strong ties to their family group and community as a whole (group formation) while people from individualistic countries are more concerned with themselves and their immediate family and do not see their community as one unit (individualistic behavior). Third, Uncertainty Avoidance measures the extent of how comfortable people are with interacting in uncertain situations and taking risks. Fourth, Masculinity vs. Femininity demonstrates how countries value certain beliefs, with masculine societies valuing competitiveness and feminine societies valuing cooperation and keeping the peace. Fifth, Long-Term Orientation vs. Short-Term Orientation outlines that people from countries that score high on long-term orientation

prepare for the future are thrifty, persistence and believe that the future is more important than the present while short-term orientation represents respect towards immediate gratification. Sixth, Indulgence vs. Restraint, differentiates between indulgence, where societies can freely enjoy their wants and needs, and restraint, where people feel restricted in their consumption of materialistic goods as well as their behavior (Hofstede, 1980, 2001; Reisinger, 2009). Using these six dimensions to view and compare cultures, Hofstede highlights the large differences existing between typical Western and Asian cultures (Hofstede, 1980, 2001). These are essential indicators when it comes to applying ICC, and they can point to certain situations where an awareness of Intercultural Communication is perhaps more significant. If two cultures score differently in this model, it implies that their values and beliefs are quite different. If tourists and hosts are unaware of this discrepancy in values, it can lead to unintended misunderstandings and confusion.

Although being the most prominent and frequently cited theory, Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory has been critiqued in recent literature. The primary basis for these critiques is the simplicity of the term culture. Grouping a culture based on geographic terms can be useful but limiting since many different cultures can exist within a country (Baskerville, 2003; Fang, 2003, 2010). Baskervill (2003) and Fang (2003, 2010) feel it is simplistic to predict behavior for a large group of people based solely on their nationality or country of residence. It is possible to identify characteristics of national culture and use it to compare culture between nationalities; however not every individual fits into the national culture of their country (Reisinger, 2009). Although we cannot generalize about nationality as a whole because people are diverse with each individual having their own perspective or belonging to various cultural subgroups influencing their opinions and behaviors, Hofstede has managed to point out general differences in culture as a result of nationalities in a simple and clear manner which can be useful for practitioners in the tourism industry. Although Hofstede's cultural dimensions are predominantly used to situate nations, either high or low on the cultural dimensions, they could also be used to situate sub-cultures within one nation, counteracting the critique.

While Hofstede's and most of the other Intercultural Communication theories are highly regarded, it should be acknowledged that they are based on Eurocentric views, where European theories and ideas of normality form the basis of comparison to other cultures (Baldwin, 2017; Fang, 2003, 2010). In order to attain a nuanced understanding of Intercultural Communication theories and research, it is vital to consider non-Eurocentric views, such as those theories with an Asiacentric perspective. Miike outlines in chapter three of *Intercultural Communication* (2017) some of the most critical Asiacentric theories, such as the Taoist I-Ching Paradigm and the Chinese Harmony Theory. The stark contrast these theories have with Hofstede's theory helps explain why the concept of Intercultural Communication does not fully match up between Easterners and Westerners. The Taoist I-Ching Paradigm is based on the idea of Yin and Yang, which are two opposite energies, that are always changing. When it comes to communication, individuals are forever seeking the

perfect balance between those two energies. This flow of energy, from Yin to Yang, is called Chi and can apply to anything in one's life, including communication. Chung (2011) states that this balancing act goes back and forth; when Yin has maximized, Yang starts to increase and take over (as cited in Miike, 2017). An example of why this theory does not fit with Hofstede's theory can be seen in the elements of long-term orientation and short-term orientation of Hofstede's theory, where either preparing for the future or seek short-term gratification is valued. In Eastern cultures, the need to find balance through the Chi going back and forth from Yin to Yang is what makes the idea of being either on the side of long-term orientation or short-term orientation inconceivable (Fang, 2003). The Chinese Harmony Theory is related to the Taoist I-Ching Paradigm in the sense that the purpose of communication is to reach harmony by trying to balance both Yin to Yang. Finding this harmony is what constitutes a successful interaction, different from Western theories that usually perceive successful interaction as an exchange or as a negotiation, creating shared meaning or common ground (Chen, 2009; Miike, 2017). This can be as simple as a 'yes' meaning I agree for Westerners, and they would specifically seek out that agreement while for Easterners 'yes' could mean I hear you, where it is acceptable to hear someone but not necessarily agree (Nazir, Sibylle, Mei Yii, Aylett & Cawsey, 2009). Westerners need to neatly classify national culture is, therefore, an unrealistic standard that is difficult for Easterners to meet. This difference in how communication and communication theories are viewed can lead to further misunderstandings regarding direct communication, as well as a limited perspective when it comes to education and training if the differences are not understood. This creates a need to have a balanced or nuanced approach when considering Intercultural Communication between different cultures.

The need to have a nuanced approach has existed since Robert Oliver's 1930 criticism of the domination of Eurocentric views, though his ideas were generally overlooked at the time (Shuter, 2011). Miike (2017) and Oliver (1959) (as cited in Shuter, 2011) presented the problem that earlier Eurocentric theories have been overly represented while Asiacentric theories, even today, have been overlooked by the majority of Western scholars. So, either Western Intercultural Communication theories need to be improved, or studies using these theories need to be aware of how the theories perspectives can be fundamentally biased towards a particular culture. In a literature review of Chinese culture in tourism from 1993-2012, it was noted that western articles frequently used Hofstede's theory for cross-cultural examination, but Chinese articles focused on cultural value systems such as Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism (Li & Lu, 2016). This can be understood as a form of Ethnocentrism occurring on both sides of the Intercultural Communication research community, where the West focuses on Eurocentric theories while the East focuses on Asiacentric theories. While both sides can be aware of their own biases and the difference in the Eurocentric vs. Asiacentric theories, there is still a tendency to view things from their cultural perspective. This was observed as there were apparent differences based on culture in how fundamental concepts were defined in the papers reviewed (Chen, 2017), which

means, that both Eurocentric and Asiacentric theories set unrealistic standards based on their views of communication.

In response to these contradicting communication theories, Steiner and Reisinger (2004) propose a new theoretical concept when it comes to Intercultural Communication. They believe that by fundamentally altering how we think of Intercultural Communication we can create successful outcomes. This theory involves abandoning the idea that Intercultural Communication has the purpose of reaching common ground, a mutual understanding or agreement and instead incorporating a new, more accepting thought process. That does not mean that being open-minded towards other cultures prevents cultural clashes but suggests that individuals should adjust their expectation towards Intercultural Communication, showing an acceptance that there will be moments of miscommunication. Steiner and Reisinger (2004) further state that with this acceptance, contact in a cross-cultural setting is more likely to have an overall positive outcome. This is a refreshing outlook on how to conduct successful Intercultural Communication and would undoubtedly solve various problems when it comes to issues with CD, just accepting misunderstanding sounds appealing. Going into Intercultural Communication with an open mind, anticipating disagreement and differences can avoid this discrepancy in the fundamental understanding of Intercultural Communication. However, the extent to which people are willing to accept differences in culture, and consequently misunderstandings, is unclear. For this paper, this newer view of Intercultural Communication will be used.

3.3   Intercultural Communication Competence

The addition of competence to Intercultural Communication changes the meaning from merely describing the act of sending and receiving messages through signs and symbols to the ability to carry out that communication (Chen, 2017). Competence is usually divided between effectiveness, appropriateness, and ethics (Chen, 2017). The meaning of effectiveness, using communication to reach a particular goal, is however embedded into Western culture and therefore is Eurocentric like many of the Intercultural Communication Theories. In Eastern cultures, the effectiveness of communication is measured by the ability to create harmony, not the ability to reach a goal. Therefore, this discrepancy in understanding the effectiveness of communication between the East and the West is misleading since neither one of them can live up to the standards of the other (Chen, 2017). Because of this discrepancy in understanding, the concept of appropriateness and ethics have become an essential part of competence as there is more common ground for understanding (Chen, 2017; Chen, & Starosta, 1996). Appropriateness is the ability to recognize cultural differences and act in a certain way according to a specific context or situation (Chen, 2017; Chen, & Starosta, 1996). Ethics goes beyond a person's awareness of others' cultures but their ability in showing understanding and respect for values held by people of different cultures (Chen, 2017; Nakayama, & Martin, 2014). In understanding the meaning of competence in Intercultural Communication, effectiveness alone cannot define competence

since there are multiple understandings of the concept of effective communication. Appropriateness and ethics assist in explaining the deeper understanding of not only being aware of cultural differences but also accepting those differences (Chen, 2017).

Although most theories regarding Intercultural Communications and ICC have been created in other disciplines and then incorporated into the tourism discipline, scholars have been increasing their efforts of creating theories with a focus on the tourism aspect of Intercultural Communication. The importance of ICC within tourism studies is acknowledged by the majority of the academic community within tourism studies (Sulaiman, Jahwari, Sirakaya-Turk, & Altintas, 2016; Sharma & Wu, 2015). ICC has been acknowledged in order not only to understand how to market a product to tourists, for policymaking or managing a destination but for overall sustainability (Pearce, 1995; Tasci & Severt, 2017; Zhang et al., 2006; Zhang et al., 2017). Some of the other benefits noted in the literature regarding ICC are its ability to decrease stress and perceived cultural difference while increasing perceived service quality between tourists and hosts (Sharma & Wu, 2015; Suthatorn, & Charoensukmongkol, 2018). Thus, it seems that although most theories do not originate in the tourism industry, ICC should, in fact, be the cornerstone of tourism ideology, sustainability, and tourism training.

Reisinger (2009, p.378) suggests four elements that are necessary to become proficient in ICC; cognitive, affective, behavioral, and environmental. These elements can be viewed as the different stages of understanding needed to increase ICC. First, the cognitive element calls attention to cultural awareness, the act of learning about and understanding a different culture (p.379). Second, the affective element alludes to the emotions developed towards a different culture, such as being able to show empathy towards other cultures when adapting your behavior to their values (p.381). Third, the behavioral element refers to specific abilities needed for a specific culture in order to fully function and behave in said culture (p.382). Fourth, the environmental elements call attention to the connection of an individual to their environment while in a new culture and their ability to integrate into it (Reisinger, 2009, p.383). Hosts need to be aware and understand these four stages of acquiring ICC in order to be able to welcome tourists with a high CD (Reisinger, 2009, p.378). Misunderstandings and conflicts might arise when a country receives tourists that do not possess these four elements or are oblivious to them as well as when the people of the host country perhaps do not either, which is a recipe for cultural clashes.

Even though there have been many studies that show how vital ICC is for successful international tourism, few studies have been conducted on how these interactions are structured and how they impact hosts and tourists (Yu & Lee, 2014). Yu and Lee (2014) studied the structure and meaning of Intercultural Communication as well as the effect it has on the tourists' perception and attitude towards locals. Importantly, they created a model that is built on the tourism relationship between hosts and tourists instead of using theories or models from other disciplines. Their model identifies that Intercultural Communication can

happen either within a touristic setting or a more natural setting and they encourage tourists to experience travel in a natural setting as it is more likely to change their perception of their own culture and also that of the culture they are experiencing. This is an example of how tourists can benefit from contacts with locals by changing their attitude; however, there is very little research on how hosts could benefit from further contact with tourists. This push to experience tourism in a natural setting is compatible with Fan, Zhang, Jenkins, & Lin's (2017) theory that without a deeper social contact that facilitates understanding and learning, interactions will be superficial and increase perceived CD. This is a valid point; however, not every tourist has the opportunity to experience tourism in a natural setting, and not every host has the opportunity to receive those types of tourists.

There is a growing belief that current Intercultural Communication and ICC theories do not match the requirements needed to function in the 21st century and require modification in order to fully encompass the economic, technological and social changes that have been caused by globalization (Chen, 2005; Fang, 2003; Shuter, 2012; Sorrells, 2014). Shuter (2012) suggest that scholars need to increase their understanding of how new forms of media affect Intercultural Communication and incorporate them into current theories. A particular focus needs to be paid on theories regarding culture shock, conflict, intercultural competence, and stereotyping (Shuter, 2012).

In response to rapid globalization, individuals need to develop global communication competence skills rooted in cognitive abilities such as empathy, openness, and cultural awareness, as well as behavioral abilities such as flexibility, interaction management and language ability (Chen, 2005). One way that this can be accomplished is by rethinking how we look at ICC theories. A process of understanding global communication competence that can help us rethink ICC theories comes from Sorrells (2014). Sorrells (2014) states that before we can consider creating or participating in global communication, four main aspects need to change in ICC theories. First, the concept of culture needs to expand from shared meanings towards a more complex concept where meaning does not have a rigid definition and therefore does not have to reach a consensus, similar to Steiner and Reisinger (2004) views regarding communication. Second, we need to take into consideration the distorted power relationship that historically exists between cultures and nations and how that relationship has been affecting Intercultural Communication. Third, as the world is increasingly connected, we need to consider ICC skills on a micro, meso, and macro level with a continuous connection between local and global communication. Fourth, we need to foster an activist approach and use Intercultural Communication as a tool for social justice, such as creating an intercultural community of people willing to fight for equal economic distribution (Sorrells, 2014). These fundamental changes in viewing Intercultural Communication then need to be put into practice using intercultural praxis, a process of critical thinking, reflection, awareness, and responsible actions (Sorrells, 2014). The first two elements of Sorrells 21st century ICC skills have already been mentioned by Steiner and Reisinger (2004), suggesting they recognized a need for fundamental change in ideology,

and more recently by Baldwin (2017) regarding the overwhelming amount of Eurocentric theories in the literature and the lack of other perspectives. The third and fourth aspects that Sorrells (2014) mentions refer to the need to understand communication along a local-global scale, as well as encourage socially aware practitioners fighting for economic justice. With a clearer understanding of what constitutes ICC, precisely what it was and how it is viewed now, it is easier to understand the role it has in leading to positive interactions for host-guest relationships. The next step is to look at the hosts' perceptions of guests arriving on their doorstep.

3.4   Hosts Perception

Numerous studies on Intercultural Communication focus on tourists, their experience and the attitude change they go through because the results of these studies have a significant impact on tourists and how they perceive the tourism product (Tasci & Severt, 2017). Tourists' perceptions are important, but what creates and influences that perception? One aspect is the perception and attitude of the hosts (Reisinger & Turner, 2002), which, according to Sharma, Tam & Kim (2009) has not been thoroughly studied. Therefore, researching how the host country, employees, and locals can prepare for tourists with a high CD will result in methods that can ensure they go through intercultural interactions with confidence and ease rather than discomfort and uncertainty, ultimately making the interaction more successful, from both a Western and Eastern perspective. The effect of successful Intercultural Communication would then positively impact the tourists' perception, enhancing their experience (Reisinger & Turner, 2002). Many theories have been developed in the research of host-tourist relationships such as Social Exchange Theory, Integrated Threat Theory, and Social Contact Theory. These host-tourist theories are similar to the linear process Reisinger (2009) proposed in order to acquire ICC skills; although, they are more specific and attempt to pinpoint and solve specific areas of misunderstanding within ICC (Sharma et al., 2009). It is helpful to take a moment and explore some of these ideas as they relate to this paper.

Social Exchange Theory (SET), a well-known and frequently cited theory, refers to separate groups or individuals interacting, communicating and negotiating some type of request that can be fulfilled (Homans, 1961). It seeks to explain the relationship between two individuals involved in an exchange where these two individuals can benefit from the interaction in a materialistic or non-materialistic form. A potential situation to demonstrate what is considered a successful interaction is when a tourist wants something and a host is able to provide it. There is a base assumption within the theory that the more hosts can benefit from this interaction, the more positively they perceive tourism (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). SET has received some criticism for its simplicity, and Ward & Berno (2011) conclude that SET, on its own, is not sufficient to understand hosts perceptions. However, when combined with Integrated Threat Theory and Social Contact Theory, Social Exchange

Theory becomes more dynamic and can be a theoretical framework for understanding hosts perceptions of tourism or tourists (Ward & Berno, 2011).

It is appropriate to use Integrated Threat Theory because it can apply to anyone, no matter how little contact that person has with tourists, they are still able to perceive a certain level of threat from tourists. Integrated Threat Theory is four-dimensional, the first two dimensions being realistic threat, concerning materialistic elements such as limited resources, and symbolic threat, concerning non-materialistic elements such as values and beliefs (Stephan & Stephan, 2000). When two different cultures come together, one in the form of a visitor and the other as a host, these values and beliefs could collide. Since the basis of this study is to understand how to lessen the chances of these clashes, symbolic threats are crucial when it comes to implementing ICC. The other two dimensions are negative stereotyping when hosts expect certain lousy behavior from tourists, and intergroup anxiety, when hosts are scared of failing in interaction with tourists and associate negative feelings towards those interactions (Stephan, Ybarra, Martínez, & Tur-Kaspa, 1998). Hosts that perceive any of these four types of threats are inclined to develop prejudice, ethnocentrism, and stereotyping towards tourists (Stephan, & Stephan, 2015; Soldatenko, & Backer, 2019). These theories and the different ways groups or individuals can perceive each other help to develop an understanding of hosts perceptions. This perception is affected by the different ways hosts and tourists come into contact.

Given that the relationship hosts have with tourists is not the same as expatriates or immigrants, as an example, it is essential to examine the unique relationship structure between hosts and tourists. Fan, Zhang, Jenkins, & Tavitiyaman (2017) used Social Contact Theory to examine five different types of contact between tourists and hosts and then divided tourists into five different typologies. Depending on the type of tourists, different types of contact with hosts are chosen. The five tourist types examined included dependents, conservatives, criticizers, explorers, and belonging seekers, with each one seeking different social interactions with hosts. Dependents have minimal contact with locals and are not interested in increasing it, they travel in a group and rely on others to communicate for them, resulting in superficial contact. Conservatives have limited travel experience and superficial contact with locals, mostly with service people in the tourism industry or to ask locals for directions. Criticizers have more travel experience and seek contact with service employees and locals not only for superficial information, such as where a good restaurant is, but also to gain further knowledge about the destination. Criticizers are aware of differences and might compare them to their own country. Explorers have more experience and seek contact with locals, attend cultural events, and have the possibility of improving their ICC skills. Belonging Seekers interact with locals for social purposes, searching for authentic experiences, and being a part of locals social groups (Fan, Zhang, Jenkins, & Tavitiyaman, 2017). These different types of tourists, who behaved differently or had different desires and motivations, were all identified within a group of Hong Kong tourists, which reinforces the notion that even though national cultures are similar, individuals within them vary greatly

(Fan, Zhang, Jenkins, & Tavitiyaman, 2017). From this study, it is possible to see that if hosts have little or/and superficial contact with tourists, it is hard for them to learn about tourists culture and thus attain a better understanding of the tourist. This implies that it is beneficial to have a longer deeper connection between hosts and tourists with a high CD or that those hosts that only participate in short superficial communication need more information on the tourists to facilitate understanding. So, in theory, it would benefit the hosts to have tourists who are closer to being Explorers or Belonging Seekers as this will create more interaction.

It is one thing to understand the above three theories in practice and understand what each means on their own. However, to truly get a sense of how hosts are feeling in light of the huge rise in tourist numbers, the theories need to be applied together in order to create a clear picture. Ward & Berno's (2011) study is a great example of the need to mix the three theories together and use them to get a more holistic view of hosts perception, not only based on the exchange between tourists and hosts but also based on the various levels of contact tourists have with hosts as well as the threat people perceive from tourists. This mix is necessary since SET does not fully encompass the complexity of understanding the host's attitude because, in SET, hosts are assumed to be a homogeneous group and that interaction between hosts and tourists is planned and voluntary (Sharpley, 2014). The above-mentioned theories tend to focus on tourism as a unity or as an industry and how hosts perceive the development of this industry. This mindset is leaning a little towards the hosts' perceptions, leaving room for more development on the individual perception of tourists (Sharpley, 2014). It is essential to understand individual attitudes towards tourists since people communicate with tourists on an individual level and do not necessarily see the tourism industry as one homogenous group.

It is at this point that a tourists nationality can play a significant role in how a hosts' attitudes are created or influenced. Nationality affects hosts attitude towards tourists, how they perceive them, and how they behave towards them. Of course, tourists should never be judged solely based on their nationality, given that many factors influence tourists behaviors such as class, gender, personality, and age. That being said, nationality plays a big role in tourists behavior and how hosts perceive and predict tourist behavior (Griffiths, & Sharpley, 2012; Özdemir, & Yolal, 2017; Soldatenko, & Backer, 2019; Pizam, & Reichel, 1996; Pizam & Sussmann, 1995). The perception of nationality could be construed from direct contact, word of mouth, or media. Media can have a broad reach since it is readily available for everyone and if the media consistently portrays an outgroup in a certain way people tend to perceive it as reality (Mutz & Goldman, 2010). As much as media can create or perpetuate a particular image or stereotype, it can also change it in a relatively short period with positive exposure of an outgroup (Zhang & Tan, 2011). In considering the hosts' perceptions, stereotyping plays a role in destination image (Chen, Lai, Petrick, & Lin, 2016) and could play a similar role in tourist image.

The combination of perceived threat, level of contact, nationality, stereotyping, and media could all contribute to the perception of the tourist, which could then influence the attitude of the hosts. This specific combination has not been previously studied, and there is a need for a more holistic view of how ICC tourism theories can work together.

3.5   Chinese Outbound Tourism Research

As this paper is looking at Chinese tourists because of the large CD they have with Western tourist destinations, the various research on Chinese outbound tourism is explored below. Jørgensen et al. (2017) state that researchers have put too much weight on the importance of culture when it comes to researching Chinese tourist behavior. Many studies talk about how unique and different Chinese tourists are from other tourists, when, in fact, Jørgensen et al. (2017) believe that Chinese tourists are just as culturally different from the West as others, such as Indian tourists. Therefore, this study refrains from looking at specific ways Chinese tourists are different from other cultures but rather to explore how the CD of the incoming tourist to a destination matters. This paper is not seeking to understand the amenities different types of tourists need or how companies or destination management organizations (DMO's) can attract tourists as one homogenous group. Instead, this paper seeks to understand how to prepare tourism professionals and locals for an increase of culturally different tourists in a sustainable manner.

As mentioned in the introduction, Chinese outbound tourism literature has focused heavily on researching motivation, and how to attract tourists, yet recently many scholars are encouraging inquiry into the impact Chinese tourists have on the destinations they visit and the locals they interact with (Tse, 2015; Shen, Luo, & Chau, 2017). There is a further need for studies on the environmental and social sustainability of Chinese tourists based on Intercultural Communication (Huang, Keating, Kriz, & Heung, 2015; Jin & Wang, 2014). Jin & Wang (2014) point out that more research that is not based on a Western perspective is required and that future research should be more philosophical versus overly scientific in its search of underlying values and knowledge on the topic. Huang et al. (2015) suggest that Westerners perspectives are obsolete at this point, given the reversed host-guest relationship, since most studies used to focus on how Easterners could serve Westerners and how that perspective is of no value when it comes to Westerners serving Easterners.

After having explained some of the more prominent Eurocentric and Asiacentric theories above, it is important to explore theories used to understand the behavior of Chinese tourists or their non-material values to comprehend what makes the CD between them and other Western nations high. Chinese tourists place importance on specific values, such as harmony, face, trustworthiness, respect for authority and pragmaticism as well as working hard and taking care of the family (Cai, Cohen, & Tribe, 2019). These values, as well as saving money, are a motivator for them to get good deals (Ren & Qiu, 2019). All of these values are interrelated; 'face' is considered to show respect and harmony, while harmony

can be considered respect for authority, building relationships, and conformity (Cai, Cohen, & Tribe, 2019; Kwek & Lee, 2015). These values correlate with the Confucian values, which are believed to strongly influence the behavior of Chinese tourists (Kwek & Lee, 2010). Studies on Chinese tourists' values coincide with the Asiacentric Intercultural Communication research explained above, which emphasize the value of understanding and using a mix of both Eurocentric and Asiacentric theories when it comes to an understanding host-guest relationship between Western and Eastern cultures. Li & Lu (2016) mention two issues when it comes to researching Chinese tourists and culture, firstly that the Western and Chinese cultural studies are independent instead of co-constructed which creates a gap of an understanding. Secondly, the most frequently mentioned values of Chinese tourists are collectivism, harmony and 'face' which is considered an oversimplification of Chinese cultural values. There seems to be a fine line between creating something clear and straightforward and oversimplification and stereotyping. Researchers seem to be trying to tread that line, with the slightest misstep in either direction occasionally resulting in their theories being considered invalid or irrelevant.

An essential aspect in understanding Chinese tourists experience is that the media's portrayal of Chinese tourists in Western countries has been quite negative (Cripps, 2013; Fan, 2015; Haynes, 2013; Jernigan, 2012; Koetse, 2016; Pile, 2017), which can affect the perception locals have of them (Mutz & Goldman, 2010). Given that around 130 million Chinese tourists traveled in 2017, it is hard to assume that all of them behaved in a way that disrespects the local culture. Xu, Wang, and Song (2018) state that Chinese tourists that behave according to Western standards are not identified as Chinese tourists by the hosts but rather Japanese or Korean because they are not behaving according to how the hosts think Chinese tourists behave. When it comes to this negative media portrayal, it is not only the Chinese tourists who have caused it, as Chinese businesses operating outside of China in business to business (B2B) relationships have contributed to this image (Guo, Kim, & Timothy, 2007; Xu, Wang, & Song, 2018). These negative perceptions could be affecting the image locals, front line employees, as well as B2B partners, construct of individuals from China. However, a recent study showed that well educated middle-class Chinese tourists are incredibly aware of their image and portray constrained behavior while traveling in order to keep 'face' (Tolkach, Pratt, & Zeng, 2017; Zhang, Pearce, & Chen, 2019). This indicates an awareness that could be more nuanced than the hosts, who may not be able to look past the media portrayal unless experiencing positive face to face contact with Chinese tourists. Whether or not the 130 million Chinese tourists are judged fairly or are judged by the actions of a few bad apples, the public image of Chinese outbound tourists has become quite negative (Zhang et al., 2019).

Recent studies show that Asian tourists are now more sensitive towards equality in Intercultural Communication, expecting hosts to treat them the same as they would other tourists from different nationalities (Yu & Lee, 2014). This increased sensitivity has been mentioned by other scholars such as Liu, Choi, and Lee (2008) who showed that some

tourists perceive that when hosts do not prepare for, show attention to or appreciation for the Chinese market, by providing price tags in Chinese or having Mandarin-speaking staff, the tourists feel they are not being shown respect. Another study concluded with the above statement and further added that Chinese tourists, more so than other nationalities, are highly concerned about whether or not they are being discriminated against and want to be treated with authentic respect (Li et al., 2011). This concern is not surprising since many scholars have found that respect is an integral part of ICC (Chen & Starosta, 1996; Lustig & Koester, 2006; Steiner & Reisinger, 2004). This concern of being treated with respect and perhaps fear or assumption that they would be treated with disrespect might create extra attention and focus on this among the tourists. This could lead to interactions between hosts and guests having higher stakes than the exchange of services, but rather serve as a mechanism to determine whether adequate respect is being given.

3.6   Training and Awareness

Turning Intercultural Communication theories into practice is done by understanding potential areas of miscommunication or negative outcomes of communication between hosts and guests, and training the hosts to be more aware of the pitfalls. Pearce (1995) stated that in order for tourism to fully reach social sustainability, tourism professionals, as well as locals, need to be trained in Intercultural Communication by being taught different ICC skills. However, more than twenty years later, training and education for ICC skills are still at a basic level. Knowing that both increased intercultural contact and increased explanations for certain outer group behavior reduces anxiety, and reduces negative stereotypes, training at all stages within all social groups is crucial (Stephan & Stephan, 2015). The training of whole societies, service people, organizers, and locals poses issues and needs to be done with the help of the government (Pearce, 1995). Appropriate training for hosts is crucial both for the tourism experience and especially for the employees of the service industry (Sulaiman et al., 2016). A great deal of the literature regarding ICC training in tourism is focused on training tour guides, which is logical as they are the people that are in most contact with tourists, but everyone needs some form of training for the community to be on the same page. Therefore, self-evaluation could be beneficial for hosts after initial training to sustain the knowledge and skills acquired (Sulaiman et al., 2016). This self-evaluation could create awareness and understanding of cultural differences between hosts and tourists by reminding employees of their positionality and getting them to reflect on their current ICC skills.

In understanding why hosts would seek out training, we need to consider their motivation. Motivation is the primary driver when it comes to seeking out the context of a situation and then behaving accordingly, which shows competence (Chen & Starosta 1996; Chen, 2017). It is what drives people to seek understanding in the first place, so there has to be some motivating factor to drive the acquisition of competence skills, whether it is a job, curiosity or something else. Historically, competence was categorized as a personality trait, either you had it, or you did not. Weinstein (1969) countered this belief with the view that

competence is a skill that can be acquired through training, just like any other skill (as cited in Chen, 2017). It is this dated fundamental belief that either you are good at ICC or not, that can lead to misunderstanding and limit the initiative for education and training in the field. The act of learning and acquiring skills is, however, inherent in the concept of competence (Chen, 2017), making education and training a fundamental requirement for reaching competence. The best way of acquiring said education and training, whether it is learning from doing or at an institute, is uncertain.

As mentioned before, while most literature on training ICC skills in the tourism industry is focused on guides or front-line employees that deal directly with Chinese tourists, the literature on training ICC skills for any other individuals is scarce. There have only been a few studies on the B2B relationship between hosts and foreign organizers. De Sausmarez, Tao, & Mcgrath (2012) studied the relationship between a Chinese tour operator and a British tour operator and found that ICC training for B2B employees in the tourism industry would be beneficial. De Sausmarez et al. (2012) mentions some discrepancies between the British and Chinese tour operators when it came to communication, planning, canceling plans, and expectations that could be narrowed with ICC. These discrepancies are the reason why Chinese tour agencies prefer to work with companies that have Mandarin-speaking staff and knowledge of specific Chinese cultural aspects (Breakey, Ding, & Lee, 2008; De Sausmarez et al., 2012). Another difference in cultures is the soft power the Chinese government has been known to assert, as they have some control over tourism companies whereas Western business owners are more accustomed to a free market (Xu, Wang, & Song, 2018). These differences are known to harm B2B relationships if employees are not culturally aware of them (Lindsay, Kriz, Johns, & Keating, 2018). These negative impacts can manifest in the pace of which companies do business, Western companies preferring to move fast, where each employee has more decision power whereas Eastern countries prefer to move slowly, where employees are more likely to need approval for their decisions (Lindsay et al., 2018). Lindsay et al. (2018) state that focusing on relationship building instead of transactions, providing the needed time to develop professional relationships and making sure that employees possess cultural intelligence, are vital in B2B relationships between Western and Chinese tourism suppliers.

Regardless of which group of hosts need training the most, be it front line employees, organizers or locals, Reynisdóttir (2019) explains the overall importance of being prepared for tourists with a high CD in the book, *Cultural Impact on Service Quality*. Educating employees and creating awareness of different cultures prior to the arrival of the visitors is crucial when it comes to service quality. She also points out that when training and educating, it is most useful to start by understanding one's own culture and how different it may seem to others before you start exploring other cultures (Reynisdóttir, 2019). This method creates awareness and decreases the likelihood of ethnocentrism. If you can find the idiosyncrasies of your own culture, you are more likely to accept those of other cultures. It also alludes to the first element of Reisinger's (2009, p.379) four elements to acquire ICC skills, the

cognitive apprehension of others culture. Reynisdóttir's (2019) point of understanding one's own culture before understanding others touches on one of the elements of Sorrells (2014) Intercultural Praxis, the process of critical thinking, reflection, awareness and responsible action, which poses questions forcing you to consider your positionality. Where in the world is your culture positioned compared to others? How is the power relationship between your culture and others? Whose perceptions are considered as facts and whose are considered crude? Sorrells (2014) also considered this positioning of one's own culture and oneself as one of the first steps of Intercultural Communication. Another element in the Intercultural Praxis is reflection, which is based upon reflecting on the reason behind one's behavior. This element is vital because it forces you to think about the reasons behind your behavior, instead of assuming that your actions and the thought processes behind them are a universal standard (Sorrells, 2014). Compared to the importance researchers give to the ICC training of hosts, the actual literature on the importance of exploring one's own culture is scarce. Although ICC literature on training mainly focuses on tour guides, the tourism industry is dynamic and involves people from many sectors, including locals. The lack of literature on how to prepare or train those other than tour guides on ICC towards guests with a high CD is alarming.

In previous years, destination management organizations (DMO) have primarily focused their attention on marketing (Volgger & Pechlaner, 2014). Yet recently, academics have been suggesting that DMO's need to move past a purely marketing focus to a managerial one. More importantly, their role should not only involve proposing structures and rules but also giving directions and taking action, thus taking on a leadership role (Beritelli & Bieger, 2014; Hristov & Zehrer, 2015). Destination leadership needs to be systemic, guiding the tourism industry and the whole community in the right direction, with coordination between private and public institutions as well as locals (Beritelli & Bieger, 2014). The tourism industry permeates all levels of society through its environmental impact, the interactions between tourists and locals, as well as the product delivery by the service provider. Because of this, the destination must be managed on a holistic level with all stakeholders involved (Hristov & Zehrer, 2015). While DMO's are in the transition of shifting their effort from mainly marketing towards management or even leadership, the literature on Chinese outbound tourism is still mainly focused on marketing and attracting tourists instead of preparing destinations as a community for tourists with a high CD (Jin & Wang, 2014).

Looking at the literature, ICC does not seem like an overly important part of tourism research, and most studies on ICC have been done within other disciplines. However, recently, the host-tourist relationship has garnered more attention from researchers and many theories on this topic have, in turn, been created. These theories look at specific areas of communication, how a mutually beneficial exchange between two people can affect individual's perception of tourism, the amount of contact between hosts and tourists, the type of tourist and the way they travel, and the threat that hosts perceive of tourists or vice

versa. While these theories significantly contribute to the discussion on ICC within tourism, they cannot explain hosts perception on its own (Ward & Berno, 2011). An overall understanding of how these theories can work together to create an understanding of ICC within a host community is needed. The literature on Chinese outbound tourism and the literature on ICC both point to a need for more studies on the impact of host-tourist relationships in order to facilitate social sustainability. This can come about with a fundamental change in how we view the concept of Intercultural Communication, from a shared meaning to an understanding of our differences (Reisinger & Turner, 2002). Unfortunately, there is not much literature on how best to train hosts for Intercultural Communication as the current literature focuses on the need for ICC and less on how to successfully acquire the skills needed for ICC.

4. Methodology

As outlined in the introduction, the research objective for this paper is to answer the overall research question of: "How can cultural clashes between the supply and demand side be mitigated when diverse cultures interact in the tourism industry?" It being easier to formulate the question than come up with an answer, in order to unpack the complexities embedded in the question and fully understand the moving parts, four sub-questions were designed to help answer the overall research question. The first and second sub-questions, which are intended to identify behavioral differences and to critically evaluate the elements needed for ICC, were examined and answered through a review of the relevant literature. The first sub-question being 'What are the underlying behavioral differences that are causing issues between people with different cultural backgrounds?', and the second framed as 'What are the elements needed to facilitate cultural understanding between hosts and tourists?'. Sub-question three explores hosts perceptions of Chinese tourists, while sub-question four tries to determine the challenges they face when incorporating ICC. The third sub-question being, 'What are hosts perceptions of Chinese tourists and how are they responding to challenging cultural situations?' and the fourth being 'What are the different challenges between travel organizers, front line employees, and residents when it comes to incorporating intercultural competence?'. In attempting to adequately answer these last two sub-questions, a review of the relevant literature did not provide enough evidence as it did for the first two sub-questions. Instead, further data collection and analysis were needed, and this data was gathered from interviews with three different groups with differing levels of involvement in Iceland's tourism sector; travel organizers, front line employees, and residents. It is important for this study to understand the connection between these three groups as well as the differences in order to understand what each group needs to mitigate cultural clash. These three groups were chosen because each of the groups participants engage in different types of communication with tourists and can offer different perspectives on the host experience. In doing so, the hope is to obtain a variety of perspectives on the same subject to create a deeper insight as well as to understand the overall process of

acquiring ICC skills. This chapter describes the paradigm, epistemological, and ontological foundations for this paper. The overall research strategy and the methods used in gathering data, analyzing data and sample selection are explained. Additionally, the limitations of the research are discussed.

4.1 Research Strategy

The research strategy for this paper is influenced by the call for more exploratory approaches using qualitative methods to help understand Chinese outbound tourism and the role of ICC in mitigating negative interactions (Franzidis & Yau, 2018; Jørgensen et al., 2017; Law et al., 2016; Tse, 2015), and as part of an overall increase in tourism research on the subject in general (Stumpf, Sandstrom, & Swanger, 2016). Most recent studies on this topic are quantitative in nature, and although useful and contributing greatly to the discussion on ICC they lack the deeper understanding that comes with qualitative studies. Given that this study is exploratory in nature, seeking to understand and explore the main issues in Intercultural Communication between tourists and hosts as influenced by host's behavior and perspective, Grounded Theory was chosen as the lens through which to conduct the study. Grounded Theory is an appropriate strategy as it provides an opportunity to explore the topic with an open mind and avoid the influence of preconceptions (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Avoiding these possible preconceptions on the topic is useful because the objective is to explore a certain topic, not to test a hypothesis. Therefore, keeping an open mind helps prevent tunnel vision when collecting data, where a researcher focuses on one question and misses the surrounding connections. Although Grounded Theory has mostly been used in the medical and educational fields, it has recently been used to uncover and explain new phenomenon in tourism (Matteucci & Gnoth, 2017), specifically, it has helped to shed light on topics concerning sustainable tourism (Kensbock & Jennings, 2011; Kornilaki & Font, 2019; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2013; Stumpf et al., 2016; Stumpf & Swanger, 2015) and tourist behavior (Martin, 2007; Martin & Woodside, 2008). Before moving forward, it is important to understand the specifics of what Grounded Theory is and what it is not, as it is still a relatively new theory in tourism based research.

Grounded Theory as a research strategy aims to use the data collected to guide the research along the way before a theory is ultimately constructed. As an inductive research strategy concepts and theories are created from data, which differs from deductive research where the themes are predetermined and tested (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This inductive strategy is preferential because of the exploratory nature of the research. The lack of previous research on ICC involving Chinese outbound tourism where a high CD is present means there is a lack of predetermined themes to be tested. While, the original creators of Grounded Theory, Glaser and Strauss (1967), claimed that the researcher needed to be objective, this paper does not claim that the researcher is objective with all preconceived notions are removed from the research. This is because the researcher is unable to disregard their own interactions with Chinese tourists and experience as a resident of Iceland, the country

selected as the research destination. Therefore, this research follows the more recent evolution of Grounded Theory known as Constructivist Grounded Theory, developed by Charmaz (2006), where the researcher is aware of their own bias. The aim of this methodology is to construct a theory which is co-created between data and researcher (Charmaz, 2006). The researcher needs to interpret and represent the collected data, opposite to Glaser and Strauss who claim that the data objectively speaks for itself (Charmaz, 2008). I recognize that my preconceptions, e.g. experience, age, and nationality all form part of my ideology that affects how I interpret and view the data (Charmaz, 2006). As an example, the fact that I have lived in Iceland for twenty-four years might affect how I understand and interact with participants, as would the fact that having lived in China for two and a half years would impact my perception of Chinese tourists or how I interpret the data. Another reason that Constructivist Grounded Theory is suitable is that it allows me to respect the participants different conceptual ideas of what culture, attitude and communication are (Bramwell & Lane, 2014; Stumpf et al., 2016). While it could be argued that bringing in a subjective view of the data could taint the research results, Constructivist Grounded Theory allows for a more nuanced understanding of the data by including the researchers perceptions rather than attempting to claim that the research done is completely objective, which is difficult to verify. Keeping an open mind towards different realities, experiences and feelings is paramount when it comes to understanding others perspectives in order to allow room for exploring and gaining an in-depth understanding on the topic, which is the point of this research.

There are a few different variations of Grounded Theory that have developed since Glaser and Strauss initially created it in 1967. Depending on who developed them, these variations differ slightly in epistemology, ontology, and methods. Stumpf et al. (2016) state that it is paramount to choose a specific variance instead of simply stating that Grounded Theory is the overall strategy. As mentioned previously, Charmaz's (2006) variance of Constructivism Grounded Theory is being used for this paper and as such the methods suggested by Charmaz were followed when analyzing the data. One of the elements so unique to Grounded Theory is that data gathering and analysis happen concurrently. As soon as one interview has been completed and the data collected, the analysis starts. The result of this analysis from previous interviews are then used to guide the direction of upcoming interviews. This means that questions could be added later on in the interview process (Charmaz, 2006). The continual adding and reconfiguring of the interview questions allowed for new areas of interest to be revisited with subsequent participants. This helps to create constant comparison, which is an integral part of Grounded Theory.

A core concept of Grounded Theory when it comes to generating theory is constant comparison (Charmaz, 2006; Kelle, 2011; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This comparison needs to take place at all stages of the analysis. This requires that interviews need to be compared to other interviews, categories to other categories, theoretical ideas to other theoretical ideas and then all of those need to be compared with each other (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss,

1967; Kelle, 2011). This is done until the comparisons have reached saturation, meaning that no new information is learned by further comparisons (Holton, 2011). This process of constant comparison is aided by a method called memoing. Memoing involves the researcher writing down thoughts and ideas on interviews, codes and eventually theoretical codes. It is during this writing process that conceptualization of the data occurs by constantly writing down these memos and comparing them to each other (Charmaz, 2006; Holton, 2011; Lempert, 2011). Much like the constant comparison, memoing takes place throughout the whole analysis process and helps the researcher compare data and conceptualize ideas, concepts, and theories (Charmaz, 2006; Lempert, 2011). This memoing process also encourages reflexivity of the researcher which is a crucial component of Constructivist Grounded Theory (Roulston, 2008).

When it comes to Grounded Theory, there is debate as to whether the literature review should be done prior or after data collection. Many scholars claim that the literature review should be done after data collection in order to avoid forcing a theory on the data and allow for the theory to emerge on its own (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Others recognize that familiarizing yourself with the literature in a broad sense helps in gathering data in order to position your study in the existing literature and to better know where further research is needed (Charmaz, 2006; Ramalho, Adams, Huggard, & Hoare, 2015). I agree with the latter position, as completely ignoring the literature prior to data collection could result in ambiguity about the importance of the data collected and negatively affect the overall research. Therefore, I started the research by getting a strong grasp of Intercultural Communication to familiarize myself with previous research and developments. During this process, I refrained from creating my own preconceived notions based on what previous literature has stated the issues are in an attempt to keep an open mind. Given that I am an inexperienced researcher, it is beneficial to utilize categories with high empirical content in the coding process so that data is not forced in a specific direction but used to provide a foundation to assist with analyzing when presented with a high quantity of raw data (Kelle, 2011). Therefore, being familiar with previous research helps to conceptualize categories in the coding process.

It is important to understand that Constructivist Grounded Theory is not simply a set of methods used to collect and analyze data. Rather, Constructivist Grounded Theory, as a mindset, is implemented from the moment the research process begins until the end and is intertwined with epistemological and ontological worldviews (Charmaz, 2008). It affects how the world is considered by both the researcher and the participants, encourages reflexivity and the positioning of oneself in the research. It spurs the questions what, how and why to be asked when thinking about the methods, strategy, data and analysis used (Charmaz, 2008). It encourages flexibility and improvisation in collecting and analysing data and affects how participants actions are interpreted to create a theory. Constructivist Grounded Theory's methods are simply the techniques used to collect and analyse the data and are but a small part of the whole Grounded Theory process (Charmaz, 2008). Therefore,

this paper is based on a Constructivist Grounded Theory strategy for allowing a subjective view while relying on the foundational ideas of Constructivist Grounded Theory for how to frame the analysis and data collection.

A question relative to this strategy is 'what is a theory?'. There are many variations and definitions of what constitutes a theory and researchers focusing on Grounded Theory have different opinions on the matter. Some claim that a theory is an inherent part of all qualitative research (Maxwell & Mittapalli, 2008, p.876). Others take a different view as Holton (2011) talks about the necessity for the researcher to transform their view from simple description to conceptual understanding in order to create a theory. He explains that the real purpose behind using Grounded Theory is "a conceptual explanation for the phenomenon under study" (Holton, 2011, p. 273). For this paper, this means that the goal is to create a conceptual understanding of how to mitigate cultural clashes as opposed to simply detailing the results or outcomes of these cultural clashes. Recently, many scholars have been critiqued for using Grounded Theory simply as instructions regarding what methods to use in their analysis but failed to use it as an overall research process. Thus, the outcome becomes a descriptive theory rather than a conceptual one (Barbour, 2001; Pidgeon & Henwood, 2004). Obviously, there are different standards when it comes to what constitutes a theory. Regardless, Charmaz (2008), the creator of Constructivist Grounded Theory, concludes that Constructivist Grounded Theory has "the purpose of developing middle-range theories" (p.397). This implies that the variation of generalizability for a theory created using Constructivist Grounded Theory would not be very high, rather, using empirical data to focus on a specific phenomenon (Maxwell & Mittapalli, 2008, p.878). This means that this paper explores a specific phenomenon, in this case, Intercultural Communication within a touristic setting, specifically focusing on hosts and what they can do to improve their communication skills with guests having a high CD. This theory is not generalizable for cultural clashes or communication skills within all situations.

4.2 Paradigm

A qualitative approach is most appropriate for this research since the goal is to understand a process that determines human behavior (Goodson & Phillimore, 2004, p.32). Using a qualitative approach allows for the meaning of the data to be fully comprehended and opens the possibility for new discovery (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Considering that the research strategy is based on Constructivist Grounded Theory, it is natural that the ontological and epistemological views follow a Constructivist Paradigm. Before going further, the specifics of ontological and epistemological views should be unpacked for clarity.

An Ontological view follows the idea that there is no fixed reality, rather, reality is based on each and every individual's perception (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Each participant, as well as the researcher, has their own reality or realities which is used to try and understand the world around them. The idea of multiple realities fits well with the attempt to understand

the nuances of attaining ICC skills, as each participant in the communication may have different ways of seeing or understanding the communication. As culture clashes can result from either a lack of communication or miscommunication between two or more individuals, the Constructivist Grounded Theory allows for exploration on how people construct and understand communication. Additionally, the ontological view allows the research to not only understand how communication is constructed but also understand the process of constructing these relationships (Holstein & Gubrium, 2008). Epistemologically, reality is co-constructed, as there is no way for the researcher to be objective (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). This co-constructed reality corresponds with Constructivist Grounded Theory, where my views and previous experience will inevitably become a part of the reality constructed in the research. Seeing that this form of inquiry is personal, it requires strict ethics. Therefore, this research provides anonymity to the participants and I do my best to stay true to the data in the analysis (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

To recap, the ontological view is that each participant brings into the communication their own ideas and beliefs about how they view and understand the communication. Epistemology is used to get a secondary understanding of the interaction and views participants ideas and beliefs as co-constructed between the two people in the interaction. Together, they help give a more rounded understanding of where realities in communication come from by viewing these realities in different perspectives.

4.3   Data Collection

A total of twenty-six interviews were conducted, with twenty of them being conducted in Iceland, the research location. Of the twenty, eighteen were conducted face-to-face and two conducted over the phone. One participant did not fall within any of the three research groups mentioned previously, but the participant is a key researcher on Intercultural Communication in tourism. She was interviewed to gain further knowledge on the current situation of Intercultural Communication in Iceland. I stayed at the research location for two weeks as Constructivist Grounded Theory requires constant and consistent analysis during the research process. Two weeks allowed for twenty interviews to be done while concurrently analyzing the data from each interview. The constant analysis allows for the comparison of data and the discovery of new areas that could influence and change the questions used for each subsequent interview (Charmaz, 2006). In order for me to have enough time to do preliminary analysis after each interview, six interviews were conducted over Skype or on the phone before and after the two-week research period in Iceland, to allow for sufficient time for analysis between interviews. The length of the interviews varied greatly depending on the time participants had to offer, their interest in the topic and what they were willing to share. The shortest interview was 12 minutes and the longest was one hour and five minutes, however, most interviews were between 25 to 40 minutes.

In order to gain further understanding of the topic researched, participants were divided into three groups. Group One are those participants that work at an organizational level in the tourism industry and are in contact with Chinese people also working at an organizational level. Here organizational level is understood as participants who are usually in a 'behind the scenes' job or in some sort of managerial position. This group was formed separate from others as the relationship between people at an organizational level is different, with scarce research on this relationship, than those in a direct service contact (Guo, Kim, & Timothy, 2007; Xu, Wang, & Song, 2018). Their contact is mostly based on long-distance communication through emails or phone calls. These participants often have knowledge of how the company stands and where it is heading in terms of the Chinese market. It is therefore useful to include their perspective in order to understand the big picture. Group Two are those participants that work directly with Chinese tourists, this communication is usually based around some sort of service interaction conducted face-to-face. Participants from this group are mostly in direct contact with tourists in some sort of service contact, e.g. tour guides, hotel receptionists, small boutique hotel owners or anyone that draws their experience from working directly with Chinese tourists. The nature of these interactions being carried out face-to-face provides a different perspective from Group One. Group Two participants are the people working 'on the ground', dealing with various situations that come up in Intercultural Communications. Group Three are locals that live in Iceland but have no working relationship with Chinese tourists. This provides a third perspective since there is a different relationship between locals and tourists. These participants might not have much direct contact with Chinese tourists or tourists in general yet their perspective comes from how the increase of Chinese tourists impacts their lives, whether directly or indirectly. The comparison between these three groups is intended to enrich the data gathering and give a more holistic view of the challenges confronted. This triangularization fits well with Constructivist Grounded Theory in terms of facilitating exploration. Initially, participants considered for the third group were only those located in the capital of Iceland, Reykjavík. This was done to ensure that the participants were living in close proximity to tourists since most tourists stay in Reykjavík. However, in interviewing the first two participants of Group Three, it became clear that people all over the country are affected by the increase in tourism and that people outside of Reykjavík could offer an important perspective as well. Therefore, the geographical scope of Group Three was widened to include participants living at any location in Iceland.

Figure 2. List of participants.

Date	Group 2	Form	Number	Profession
20th March	2	Skype	1	Hotel cleaner
25th March	No Group	In person (F2F)	2	ICC Trainer
26th March	1	F2F	3	Hotel manager
26th March	1	F2F	4	Tour agency
27th March	2	F2F	5	Hotel receptionist
28th March	1	F2F	6	Hotel sales
29th March	1	F2F	7	Tour agency
29th March	2	F2F	8	Guesthouse
1st April	1	F2F	9	Hotel manager
2nd April	1	F2F	10	Tour agency
2nd April	2	F2F	11	Guesthouse owner
3rd April	3	F2F	12	Network planner
3rd April	2	Phone	13	Guesthouse owner
3rd April	3	F2F	14	Clothing store
4th April	2	F2F	15	Restaurant waiter
4th April	1	F2F	16	Tour agency
4th April	1	F2F	17	Tour agency
5th April	1	F2F	18	Tour agency
5th April	2	F2F	19	Guide
5th April	2	Phone	20	Guide
5th June	3	Phone	21	Unemployed
12th June	3	Skype	22	Nurse
17th June	3	Phone	23	Teacher
6th July	3	Phone	24	Grocery store
6th July	3	Phone	25	Doctor
7th July	3	Phone	26	Carpender

Source: Own study.

Purposive sampling was adopted for this research, specifically Maximum Variation Sampling, to allow for a wide range of perspectives within the topic of ICC skills (Palinkas et al., 2015). Maximum Variation Sampling is used to gather as much diversity as possible, and in this paper specifically, this sampling method is not intended to represent the whole population but rather to get a comprehensive understanding of the phenomena. Therefore, within the three groups mentioned, participants were chosen from a wide variety of fields within the tourism community, with different backgrounds and experiences. Participants with tourism experience in hotels, restaurants, and tour companies were all contacted for either Group One or Group Two, as well as those not within the tourism sector for Group Three. Having separated them into the three groups means that participants come from different types of positions which helps to facilitate a deeper understanding by introducing

more perspectives on communication between hosts and tourists with a high CD. This variety of perspectives is especially helpful when it comes to encouraging new areas of research as part of the inductive research practices. Charmaz (2008) states that a core part of Constructivist Grounded Theory is gathering enough data on the participants to fully understand the world they live in. To help build this wholly encompassing understanding, having three different groups and using Maximum Variation Sampling is meant to get this broad perspective while also gathering sufficient amount of data. Participants were initially selected by sending emails to various companies (See Appendix A), yet, as this method alone was not sufficient in finding all the participants needed, snowball sampling was also used. This was done by contacting a person that is quite knowledgeable regarding the tourism industry in Iceland and another that is an expert on cultural behavior in service in tourism. I interviewed those 'insiders' and they helped point out possible participants that align with the requirements of the study. Additionally, most participants were asked if they could point to someone that could be interviewed which resulted in several interviews.

Data was gathered using semi-structured in-depth interviews that allows for flexibility, as an interview guide is made beforehand but it is not always strictly followed. This flexibility is important and was the reason that semi-structured interviews were used, as according to Bowers (1988) they are necessary when using Grounded Theory (as cited in Duffy, Ferguson & Watson, 2004). An interview guide is prepared because it provides structure and an initial plan throughout the interviews but allows for the interview to flow freely if topics of interest pop up that are acceptable to probe further, using spontaneous questions. This fits well with Constructivist Grounded Theory because it is based on the notion of discovering new topics and following the data by adding new questions as the interviews go on. These new questions would be added because according to Constructivist Grounded Theory, the researcher begins with a relatively open mind with no fixed ideas of what exactly is being sought after. Therefore, these spontaneous questions help to focus the researcher on relevant information that emerges from the data. With every interview emerges new data and therefore it is important to keep exploring the topic and adding questions if necessary. Semi-structured interviews are also useful in encouraging participants to reflect on their answers through follow-up questions (Charmaz, 2006). In commenting on the participants answers in the paper, the names of the participants will be kept anonymous to maintain confidentiality. Instead, each participant has been given a number depending on the sequential order of how the interviews were taken.

The interview guide was loosely based on the main research question and knowledge from previous literature. The interview guide for Group One and Two is slightly different from Group Three since participants in both Group One and Two work in the tourism industry and have considerably more direct contact with Chinese tourists. For Group One and Two, the questions focus on the participants perspective and experience of Intercultural Communication, Chinese tourists or organizers and training (See Appendix B). For Group Three, the questions are similar except they do not cover the training aspect and focus more

on how or if the increase of Chinese tourists impacts the lives of the participants (See Appendix C).

4.4   Framework for Data Analysis

Starting off, the interviews were recorded using the computer program *Voice Memos* and a phone recorder. They were then transcribed in Icelandic in a Microsoft Word document, according to Intelligent Verbatim Transcription technique. This means that not every single sound or word was written down exactly as it was said, but that the key points essential to the research were written down while unrelated text or extra sounds were left out and slang modified (Chege, 2019). The interviews were then printed and analyzed by hand where each stage of coding developed from description or action into theoretical ideas in order to create a theory (Charmaz, 2006). The stages used form a process that ultimately leads to theory creation, those are initial coding, focused coding and theoretical coding (Charmaz, 2006). The analysis process started with line by line coding and paragraph coding which falls under the initial coding and often generates descriptions and actions (Charmaz, 2006). The next stage was axial coding, which falls under focused coding and is intended to group together the most important initial coding by identifying commonalities and differences thus creating fewer umbrella codes (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Focusing on these main categories, the data is analyzed by asking questions regarding those categories such as 'How often do they come up?', 'What is the connection between interviews?', 'Who is saying what and why?' (Benaquisto, 2008). In Figure 3 you can see an example of how initial coding is grouped together to create a category that is then used to ask questions of the data. The last stage, theoretical coding, is where theory is generated from the data and the codes evolve from description to concepts (Charmaz, 2006).

Figure 3. The process of creating a category.
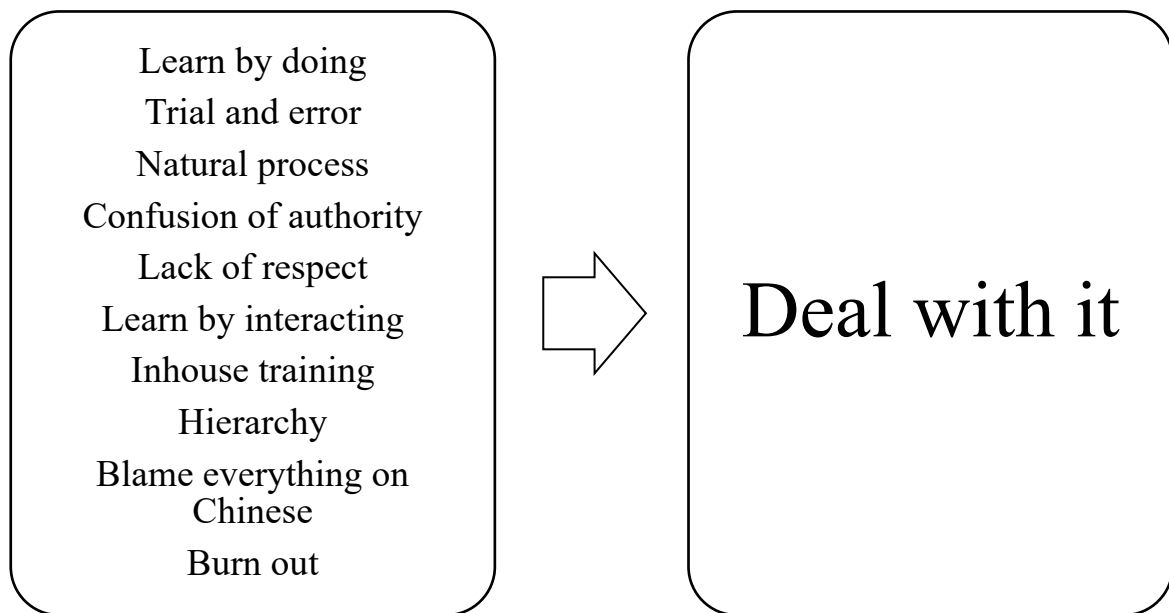
Source: Own study.

A computer software, *Nvivo*, was used in analyzing the data alongside the manual coding process. This software was used to give an overview of the data already analyzed in order to achieve a holistic understanding of the analysis with visual representation (Hutchison, Johnston, & Breckon, 2010). *Nvivo* was useful in visualizing the data and assist with creating diagrams. Diagrams are an essential part of Grounded Theory because they create the necessary distance between the researcher and the data needed when it comes to conceptualizing codes (Lempert, 2011). *Nvivo* assisted in axial coding and theoretical coding since it helped point out connections between codes. This visual data was also compared to the memos which assisted in theorizing the data.

4.5   Limitations

In considering the validity of the research and analysis of this paper, several limitations should be noted. First, as mentioned above, this study is not generalizable to all intercultural situations, it is a middle range theory focused on a specific phenomenon within the tourism industry. Though the location of the study is Iceland and Chinese tourists are chosen as an example of a tourist with a high CD, this study could be repeated with other cultures as examples or at other locations. However, the results for this study might be unique for this example. Second, the sample size could have been bigger but due to time restrictions it was limited to 25 participants and one key researcher. As the paper is seeking a broad perspective, it would have been useful to interview Chinese tour guides operating in Iceland as well as Chinese tourists. This would have shed light on their perspective and further assisted in facilitating communication. Despite not hearing from Chinese tourists and

Chinese tour guides, having three different groups with the people interviewed coming from all sorts of professions within the tourism industry helps ensure a broad perspective is represented by the hosts. Third, a possible limitation is that the discussion of culture and different types of culture can be a sensitive topic for some. Therefore, it is hard to tell what participants were willing to share during the interview and what they kept to themselves based on the fear that they might be perceived as ignorant or intolerant. However, as I am a native Icelander, being able to conduct the interviews in the participants native language allowed for a stronger connection to be made during the interview which led participants to be open in sharing their ideas.

5. Analysis

In this chapter, the findings from the interviews conducted with the three different groups (G1, G2, G3) are presented and compared to the findings of the Literature Review. This part of the paper alludes to sub-questions three and four. Sub question three asks 'What are hosts perceptions of Chinese tourists and how are they responding to challenging cultural situations?'. In order to answer this question, I had to understand the process participants go through when acquiring Intercultural Communication Competence (ICC) skills, such as 'where does their perception of Chinese tourists come from?', or 'why do hosts respond in a certain way in challenging cultural situations?'. In considering these various questions, it became clear that more information would be needed for a deeper analysis, which led to the creation of sub-question four; 'What are the different challenges between travel organizers, front line employees, and residents when it comes to incorporating intercultural competence?'. This question is answered by constantly comparing the challenges each group faces, which indicates what aspects of communication are needed when training each group. Here it is worth restating what the makeup is of each group. Group One are participants that work at an organizational level in the tourism industry and are in contact with Chinese people also working at an organizational level. Group Two participants are the people working 'on the ground' dealing with various situations that come up in Intercultural Communications, such as, hotel receptionists, waiters, guesthouse owners or tour guides. Group Three are locals that live in Iceland but have no contact with Chinese tourists in a professional manner. As mentioned in the Methodology Chapter, the analysis of the data involves initial coding, focused coding and theoretical coding. The main categories that came from this analysis process have been divided into five sub-chapters. The first two chapters allude to the need of a fundamental change in viewing successful communication and training in ICC skills. The third chapter discusses the need to prepare for tourists in the private and public sector. The fourth chapter addresses the existence of a negative community attitude (NCA) and its influence on the participant's perception. The fifth chapter explores the type and quality of tourism products offered to Chinese tourists.

5.1 A Fundamental Change in Viewing Intercultural Communication Competence

How exactly does one become competent at ICC? According to the Literature Review, the answer depends on each person's own culture and how they view the purpose of communication. After examining the data, it is clear that individuals with Eurocentric perspectives define successful communication as reaching a common ground. Asiacentric perspectives do not necessarily align with this view since their main priority is to reach a state of harmony (Chen, 2009; Miike, 2017). That each culture has its own way of judging whether a communication is successful complicates the quest to mitigate cultural clashes. From the research, we can see a clear example of how these two different views collide:

> I try to make sure that they know. I repeat the story in different ways to make sure they understand but also when we do the snorkeling in the morning and we drop them off for horseback riding or lava cave tour you drop them off and just tell them stay here o'clock someone from the company will come and pick you up. They just go away and just do not, I do not know exactly why but they do not ask you if they are not sure what you tell them, they do not test you more information (Chinese tourists do not ask questions to clarify). Also if you explain them three-four times in different ways just to make sure they understand. They do not express that they do not understand but they will never tell you no. So that is the biggest problem because of course if they tell you yes you basically trust them, that they know what you mean but it is not always like that. (Interview 19, G2)

This comes from a tour guide discussing an interaction he had with a Chinese tourist, where during the interaction the guide is speaking in English and willing to repeat himself as many times as it takes until the tourist understands him. For the tour guide, a successful interaction is accomplished when he is being understood. However, the Chinese tourist is, in this instance, nodding his head and implying that he understands what the guide is saying when it is later revealed that he did not understand. This tour guide was not alone in his opinion as five participants mentioned having difficulties with Chinese tourists because they do not express themselves if they have a question or are confused. The Chinese tourist might have been following his understanding of successful communication by keeping harmony which could be disrupted if he stated that he does not understand the importance of the interaction (Chen, 2009; Miike, 2017). The tourist may have done this either to avoid embarrassment for himself by not understanding or embarrassment for the tour guide who is incapable of explaining their ideas. Either way, the different goals for the communication leaves both parties confused with what is happening and why.

This difference in understanding the meaning of successful communication was identified as a stress factor among G1 and G2. An initial code, 'Ability to perform a request' was voiced by six participants and was identified as a big part of how they comprehend successful communication. Hosts employed in the tourism industry feel immense pressure

when it comes to their own ability or inability to accomplish a task, such as giving directions, booking activities or simply answering questions to help the tourists. Not being able to assist, whether it is because of language barriers or other reasons, leads to stress and frustration in the workplace for the hosts, especially when they have trouble understanding why the communication did not work. This inability to comprehend why communication is not successful is closely related to Integrated Threat Theory, mentioned above in the literature review (Stephan et al., 1998). One of the four dimensions of Integrated Threat Theory, intergroup anxiety, was identified as a specific problem related to cultural differences in understanding Intercultural Communication. For Westerners, there is a need to be able to be understood, in order to accomplish a task or to come to an agreement, and when they are unable to do so it creates intergroup anxiety, the fear of failing in these interactions with the tourists (Stephan et al., 1998). As a result of the different views of successful communication, neither the host (G1 and G2) nor the tourist manages to successfully communicate during the interaction because they are looking for different outcomes. This means that a simple awareness of the difference between Eurocentric and Asiacentric views of Intercultural Communication is important in understanding behavior. As suggested in the Literature Review, Intercultural Communication does not have to stand for agreement or common ground but should be an open concept of exchange where misunderstandings are to be expected (Chen, 2017; Reisinger & Turner, 2002; Sorrells, 2014). Despite the existence of a relatively simple solution, the data suggests that there is little awareness of the possibility of viewing successful communication in more than one way. Looking at successful communication as an open concept of exchange where misunderstandings are to be expected is a good start. However, it is important to separate and understand why an open concept of exchange is better than reaching a common ground. It is evident that many of the hosts interviewed do not recognize that successful communication is a concept that can be perceived in more than one way. This inability to understand the multiple perspectives that exist in conceptualizing communication goals often leads hosts to see tourist behavior as stupid, equating tourists to children who need constant attention (See Appendix D). Building on a false foundation leads to further misunderstandings and frustration, which is a significant problem because it further perpetuates NCA and ethnocentrism. In order for Hofstede's dimensions or any other ICC theories to be useful, there needs to be a fundamental change in how ICC is viewed. One solution is that before training programs use theories such as Hofstede's framework to explain CD, the difference of Eastern and Western communication ideologies needs to be taught. Hofstede's theory, which categorizes nationalities according to five different dimensions, should be one small tool in a larger toolkit when it comes to ICC. Making sure that individuals working in the tourism industry (G1 and G2) have an understanding of this difference would facilitate communication as well as alleviate NCA. Therefore, conceptualizing successful communication should be the foundation of any training course.

5.2   A Fundamental Change in Viewing Training

One area with a large potential for positive change in relation to the host-guest relationship is how training is viewed, both within academia and also in the tourism industry. As mentioned by Weinstein (1969), competency in Intercultural Communication has, until recently, been seen as a personality trait (as cited in Chen, 2017). Although this view of competency has changed slightly in the world of academia, it seems to have stayed static in the workplace. Based on the interviews, ten participants expressed that if you apply for a job in the tourism industry, you know what you are getting into. This includes dealing with many different nationalities and the consequences that can arise from miscommunication. The prevailing notion in the workplace is that there is no specific way of learning ICC skills other than through trial and error, years of experience or from coworkers. Overall, it is something that comes with time and personal experience as opposed to training courses or literature. While learning through trial and error, years of experience or from coworkers is beneficial up to a point, the data shows that learning through these methods can lead to frustration, annoyance, misunderstandings, and confusion for the host, which can lead to intergroup anxiety as mentioned above (Stephan et al., 1998). It can be emotionally straining when people do not understand why communication with someone is going wrong, as one participant expressed:

> I am immune to this now, I have been doing this for so long now haha. But I remember how uncomfortable it made me at first. My feelings were actually a bit hurt. I got hurt because I interpreted it as a lack of interest. And I was like, why are you here if you are not interested in the country? (Interview 16, G1)

This participant organizes tours and feels that her opinion and recommendations are not taken into consideration when communicating with Chinese organizers. This lack of appreciation for why communication goes wrong could foster a NCA since people may talk negatively about their experience to others, both inside and outside the tourism sector, before they gain an understanding of why the interaction was unsuccessful. If the host feels the communication was unsuccessful because of the high cultural distance (CD), which cannot be overcome, rather than an awareness of the different views towards successful communication, which can be overcome, negative portrayals can be simplified and spread. In seeking to avoid miscommunication, learning from trial and error or personal experience can take a long time, leaving learning from coworkers as the most appealing solution. However, while learning from coworkers can be helpful and speed the initial process of understanding, it could result in coworkers spreading their own misconceptions and annoyances if they lack an awareness of the complexities of how and why the communication did not work out.

This lack of awareness was an important discovery during the research process as thirteen of the seventeen participants from G1 and G2 interviewed were not aware of the

possibility or benefits of training. They had little to no knowledge about the courses available to them e.g. at Gerum Betur, which offers intercultural training for companies working in the tourism industry. The participants that did not previously know about this option were most often very interested in the possibility of training and confident of its positive benefits. One participant explained that he had not thought much about this type of training but he did have knowledge on the increasing Chinese market and a need to prepare:
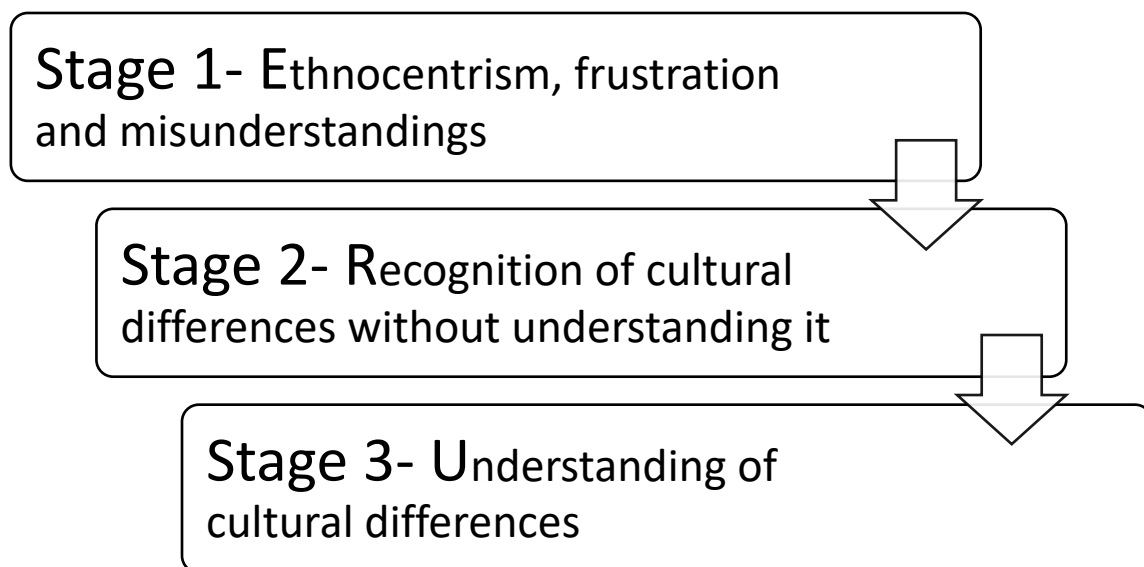
> But from a cultural point of view, how to deal with all sorts of cultural worlds, it is not only Asians. It has kind of.....been left out. No, there is no training [...] There really has not been a reason for it, in a way. I am actually contradicting myself but we have not done any training because there has not been a good enough reason yet to train people in dealing with people from these countries and not just these countries but all of them [...] I understand that Chinese tourists spend on average much more money than other tourists. So, in general, it has a positive impact on Iceland's economy. That is why we should celebrate the increase of Chinese tourists and we need to learn how to welcome them. Although I have not done anything like that with my staff, but I do not even know how to do it myself, how to deal with them. (Interview 18, G1)

The ending of the quote is telling, as it highlights an awareness of the need to increase ICC skills to better interact with tourists with a high CD, without even being aware that ICC skills can be taught and trained. While older studies saw Intercultural Communication as a personality trait more recent literature has seen it as a skill that can be trained. The separation between recent literature on the benefits of ICC training and the perspectives of the interviewees indicates the benefits should be advertised and utilized more. This is especially true when a company is built upon interacting with people from various cultures. However, according to two participants that are trainers in cultural competence, this is not the case, with them having received very little support from either the public or private sector (Interviews 2 & 7). According to G1 and G2, ICC skills are not seen as a fundamental part of any operation since they did not mention training being a part of their work experience. This lack of recognition pales in comparison to other skills that need training, as one participant states that their company has extremely thorough training when it comes to preparing employees for working in their office, however, none for ICC skills. The participant had not thought about ICC training and did not know that it was a possibility, stating "it is just this, you do it, you learn something every day so it is not something you do, you cannot take a course in college you know, to compensate for the missing part" (Interview 19, G2). Their employer is a company that takes training seriously and sees the value in it, yet they were completely oblivious to ICC training. This points to a lack of awareness of the validity of ICC training compared to other types of training, both within G1 and G2.

In order to understand how training can be an effective part of acquiring ICC skills and how to expedite and improve the process, it is necessary to understand how it is acquired

by someone naturally through years of experience. Based on the participants' responses during the interviews, this process takes time and happens without one's knowledge, usually in three stages (Figure 4). To help visualize this, the Three Stages of Acquiring ICC Skills Without Training diagram helps to conceptualize the different stages (Figure 4). The end goal of these three stages is similar to the four elements needed to acquire ICC skills explained by Reisinger (2009) in the Literature Review Chapter 2.3, however, these three stages represent the development of acquiring those skills. Stage Two aligns with the cognitive element as it is a beginning state of heightened awareness for other cultures. Stage Three aligns with the affective element, the behavioral element and the environmental element because they represent a deeper understanding and the capacity for empathy. While there are three stages, the level of understanding that is needed to get to Stage Three is far greater than is needed to get to Stage Two, and Stage One is more of a starting point for anyone involved in acquiring ICC skills. The first stage begins by perceiving a particular nationality negatively because they do not live up to hosts idea of how to properly behave. This constant comparison with one's own culture is an example of ethnocentrism, which was explained earlier (Reisinger, 2009). As common with an ethnocentric view, there are many negative perceptions, misunderstandings, and frustrations that arise when comparing one's own culture to one with a high CD. This increases the workload for G1 and G2 and negatively affects the hosts attitude. At this stage, there is often little direct contact and any contact is quite superficial.

Figure 4. Three stages of acquiring ICC skills without training.

Stage 1- Ethnocentrism, frustration and misunderstandings

Stage 2- Recognition of cultural differences without understanding it

Stage 3- Understanding of cultural differences

Source: Own study.

The second stage is recognizing the cultural differences that are responsible for the tourists behavior and recognizing that this behavior is not meant to intentionally annoy hosts or to be difficult. At this stage, participants indicate they understand that there is a difference in behavior based on culture, however, they do not understand the nuances of the cultural

differences, and question the reasons for the tourist behavior. This is when people start making assumptions about nationalities and tourists and in general there is a lot of guessing as to why tourists behave the way they do. These guesses are well intended efforts meant to reach an understanding but imply that some assumptions are being made:

> Then it could be that there are strict rules in China, that we see as sort of tyranny so perhaps it could be that the lack of discipline emerges when they reach freedom and then all of a sudden the culture is that you can do whatever you want. I do not know. (Interview 3, G1)

Guessing arises at Stage Two because the hosts understand there is a cultural difference that causes the different behavior but do not know how those cultural differences lead to different behavior. At this stage, if a hosts seeks out other hosts to try and come up with an explanation for the guests behavior, they are likely to get answers that are based on guesses which would confirm their own ethnocentric views. This guessing can be negative as there is a tendency among participants to assume that all Asians are Chinese. Hosts often guess the nationality of a tourist and draw their understanding for their behavior from these misconceptions. Therefore, any Asian tourists behaving abnormally would be considered Chinese, and thus Chinese nationals take the rap for bad behavior from a variety of nationalities. In one interview, a participant explains the behavior of a Chinese tourists and then realizes that she is not sure if the tourist was Chinese or not: "He was assisting this Chinese tourist and the tourist refused to speak English, or, or, was it a Chinese person…. I do not know" (Interview 1, G2). At this point, hosts are in the process of moving from comparing guest behavior against their own culture to accepting that there are many different cultures which could lead to different behaviors. This is still a stage of moderate frustration, annoyance, and misunderstanding as most of their understanding is coming from guessing rather than actual knowledge. At this stage participants engage more frequently in Intercultural Communication over a longer period of time.

Stage Three is characterized by an understanding of the cultural difference between hosts and guests. At this stage, not only is the cultural difference recognized but the reason behind certain behavior and misunderstandings is understood. As an example, a participant from G1 was much better equipped to deal with organizers from Asia having had the opportunity to go to Thailand and Cambodia to meet with an organizer and expressed how much it helped her:

> I would say so, yes, it helped me a lot. Especially because we were e.g. selling trips to Thailand and Cambodia and Vietnam and then I went for meetings in Thailand and Cambodia. I entered these offices where they were selling trips, usually you just meet them on shows and you have no idea how an operation and everything they do works. So I know their side as well and you know there is just a cultural difference. (Interview 4, G1)

While this experience was not directly related to tourists with a high CD coming to Iceland, it opened her eyes to the differences between the East and the West in the workplace. One specific difference was in the size and hierarchy of the company. The woman from Iceland worked in a small company and had the autonomy to make decisions on her own. In comparison, the Thai woman worked in a company that employed thousands of people, and because of its size there was a strict hierarchy which limited her ability to make decisions without consultation. As a result of these two different experiences, the Icelandic woman realized why foreign organizers would not believe that she had the authority to make decisions on her own. She now knows that she needs to explain her position and authority when she is in communication with someone from a country where hierarchy is important. Having this understanding has made her job considerably easier than before (Interview 4, G1). Another participant, also from G1, expressed how long it took her to understand that hierarchy was contributing to misunderstanding in communication:

> But we are all called project managers, there is a flat management in this cute company so there are no titles. That can, unfortunately, we have discussed it, that it can be very distracting for Asian countries. They do not realize that I have, what is it called, authority to make decisions. Because I am only titled as project manager I have been hinting that we need to change these titles just so people understand that I am allowed to make decisions. (Interview 16, G1)

This knowledge usually comes only after years of experience and perhaps by working abroad or asking foreign coworkers for advice. At this stage participants have gained ICC skills and have moved on from only incorporating effectiveness into their communication skills, which can be misunderstood between cultures, including ethics and appropriateness (Chen, 2017). Meaning that they show respect for cultural differences (Chen, 2017; Nakayama & Martin, 2014) and have the knowledge to react appropriately in different cultural situations (Chen, 2017; Chen & Starosta, 1996). This stage should be the goal for all three groups because it comes with empathy and usually makes the job easier for G1 and G2. At this stage there is usually consistent communication between the host and guest over a long period of time, and while the communication is consistent most of the time it is at a superficial level rather than a genuine social interaction.

Reaching Stage Three requires years of experience with different levels of contact. The importance of the different levels lines up with Social Contact Theory, which states that deeper and longer social connection between hosts and tourists increases Intercultural Communication (Fan, Zhang, Jenkins, & Tavitiyaman, 2017). Despite the preference for consistent social interactions to increase Intercultural Communication, the data shows that even with superficial service encounters there is a possibility of reaching Stage Three, as the hosts understanding of the tourist does not necessarily have to come from a deep social connection but can be acquired through years of experience or by learning from coworkers.

This implies that it is possible to significantly improve superficial communication between tourists and hosts, with superficial communication meaning a service interaction when the main reason for the interaction is to accomplish a task and not for social purposes. So while not ideal, there is a need to develop Intercultural Communication theories to better fit the situations of the 21st century and the fact that communication may be superficial (Chen, 2005; Fang, 2003; Shuter, 2012; Sorrells, 2014). Consequently, it is essential to focus on superficial communication and how to improve it, especially for G1 and G2. More specifically in B2B communication, which is based primarily on email communication and not face-to-face interaction, as well as for the front-line employees that do not have the possibility of a deeper social connection.

The belief that ICC skills are naturally occurring, either as a born talent or gained overtime time, combined with the hosts awareness of communication issues in the industry has led to a sort of 'deal with it' attitude, which was noted in ten interviews. This attitude is common with organizers (G1) that do not frequently participate in face to face communication. They believe that front line employees (G2) that participate in face to face communication know what they have gotten themselves into and should simply deal with it. Rather than feel responsible for training their front-line staff how to adequately deal with customers from a range of countries, G1 felt that those in G2 had to deal with these multiple communications in their own way. Yet, the organizers lack of belief or awareness in the power to increase ICC skills through training limits the ability of front-line employees to treat all customers equally. This leads to tourists having different levels of service based only on the culture they come from because of a lack of preparedness from G1 and G2. Indeed, all customers should be treated equally and anyone that is a paying customer has the right to get equal service. A person with a high CD should not get worse service because the company does not understand how to adequately deliver services to them.

Treating everyone according to their cultural values is based on an open minded and accepting approach, however, it is easier said than done. If employees have negative experiences and negative attitudes towards one culture or nationality because they are stuck at Stage One or Two in their ICC development, this could negatively affect their service and the experience for the tourist (Pizam, Uriely & Reichel, 2000). Understanding that the sooner employees can progress to Stage Three the better the communication between the host and tourist will be, this should be a crucial component of any company involved in the tourism industry since twenty-one out of twenty-five participants showed a positive attitude towards the economic benefits that come from Chinese tourists. There is an overall understanding that Chinese tourists are increasing and that they are a positive benefit for the economy. However, there is a lack of knowledge that Chinese tourists were the most unsatisfied when visiting Iceland which is problematic and indicates a need for more preparation.

5.3   Preparation

A common theme noticed in the data is the lack of preparation for Chinese tourists, both within the private and public sector. The interviews showed a general lack of knowledge towards the possibilities of how to prepare for tourists with a high CD. In G1 and G2, there was no mention of a systematic effort to do any sort of preparing that would assist the host's ability to work with them in the tourism industry, such as ICC training, websites or instructions for tourists in Mandarin. With Iceland experiencing a change in which Chinese tourists are becoming a major tourist group, some companies are making some small changes as a result of Chinese tourists behavior while others are waiting for Chinese tourists to adapt to Icelandic norms. Some participants are not overly upset by this change and consider it a part of development in tourism, as one participant from G3 stated, "I am kind of just more aware of where I go, there are certain restaurants that I do not go to because I know that they will be packed with tourists" (Interview 12, G3). This view was in line with other participants from G3 who presented a neutral view of having to somewhat adapt their behavior without it bothering them much. G2 participants also represent a neutral opinion, "You just learn how to adapt to different people, you might behave a bit differently with the Chinese tourists and then you behave differently when the French tourists come" (Interview 5, G2). Despite this neutral approach, it is evident that most companies have not started preparing for Chinese tourists as they are not a part of their main market. These examples present a neutral view, as the participants are not overly concerned about adapting their own behavior and do believe in the overall economic benefits from Chinese tourists. Others are not as happy about having to change their own behavior to accommodate visitors as a participant from G1 explains:

> It is just a completely different mentality, when they set a price they usually set it four times higher than what they want and they assume that it is the same around the world and they are just relentless when they haggle for price. So, now we have learnt to set a higher price from the beginning so that we can lower it [...] but we find it a dreary way to do business. (Interview 6, G1)

The way Chinese tourists are known to haggle for prices could be related to the values of pragmaticism, working hard and taking care of the family which motivate them to get good deals (Ren & Qiu, 2019). It seems that G1 prepares even less than G2 because of a prevailing view that ICC skills only involve face-to-face communication. When G1 participants communicate for business purposes, their ICC skills are viewed as an inherent personality trait that either makes them successful or not. Since organizers usually have a desk job with emails being their main mode of communication it is not necessarily considered that they are taking part in Intercultural Communication. The common view is that since the communication is not done face to face, it should not affect the product. However, this email communication is just as difficult as any other kind of communication as working together to organize tours have proven to be a difficult task for some:

This manner of communication is exhausting, it is extremely exhausting. And it is so much work, I can understand it because I know it, I know how this business is. But the colleagues that I had to work with and delegate assignments to and ask for help were annoyed and sad. They hated it and just said: "damn Chinese people" and all that. It ended up with me having to have a lecture at work about Chinese people just to lower the level of annoyance a little bit. (Interview 7, G1)

These examples represent that G1 participants understand the difference in culture but simply do not like it or agree with it. While these initial ideas of adapting their behavior can be beneficial in the tourism industry, it only scratches the surface of Intercultural Communication issues instead of tackling the root of the problem. The two quotes show that identification of a problem is only part of the solution, and in addition there needs to be adequate preparation for G1 participants in dealing with Chinese tourists. Although the literature on ICC training almost exclusively focuses on training tour guides, the interviews show that it is important to include organizers in the training process. Other participants also reported difficulties, especially during their first years on the job. Progressing to Stage Three seems to have taken them a long time and they had little help.

5.3.1 The Public Sector

It is not only private companies that need to prepare but government agencies as well. This is a substantial issue and while it was only mentioned by two participants, its effect was noticed during further analysis in all interviews. When it comes to dealing with tourists with a high CD Iceland is lagging behind other countries. Part of the reason is due to the lack of preparing and implementation by the government as mentioned in Chapter Two. According to one participant from G1:

These are the issues here because the Icelandic travel industry is not ready for Chinese tourists at all. We are decades behind other Scandinavian countries. For example, Copenhagen, if you go on visitcopenhagen they have a toolkit, whether it is for hotels or other companies in the tourism industry. It is quite basic but useful nonetheless. (Interview 7, G1)

This participant talks about the government being decades behind other Scandinavian countries when it comes to providing simple toolkits that instruct how to welcome a certain type of tourist. In exploring the participants example of visitcopenhagen there is a special part of the webpage called Chinavia, dedicated to helping different sections of the tourism industry to welcome Chinese tourists e.g. restaurants, hotels, retailers and cultural institutions. It also has crash courses, city maps in Chinese and market approaches among other things (Chinavia, n.d). This is an easy and efficient way to demonstrate to everyone within the tourism industry that not only is it important to now be prepared but also how to

do it. It might not teach ICC skills but it can alleviate negative feelings such as stress, annoyance, and frustration for employees if there are more instructions in Chinese they can point the guest to and if companies are in some ways aware and preparing for Chinese tourists. In the interviews, twelve out of seventeen participants from G1 and G2 were not aware of the possibility of training ICC skills. Most were very interested in having training but did not think it existed or even that training ICC skills were possible since for them it was just a natural process. The fact that there are a few (although limited) training options available in Iceland but that no participant from G1 or G2 are aware of them shows the government's lack of organization and preparation. At the moment, there is no systematic plan or effort from the government to deal with tourist with a high CD. Seeing that tourism is the largest export revenue in Iceland at the moment, actions in improving and increasing tourism should be a priority.

Illegal operations were identified as an example of the lack of preparation from the government, though Iceland is not alone in this as this issue has come up in other countries as well (Jackman, 2014). Due to the intense competition in China, Chinese tour companies are taking measures to lower their prices in order to stay competitive by cutting corners and participating in illegal activities (Interview 7, G1). According to one participant, tour leaders are sent with every tour group from China and they do not get paid a salary, which is illegal in Iceland ("Vinnuréttarvefur", n.d.). Incredibly, these tour leaders sometimes even pay to join the trips and then work on commission if they bring the Chinese tourists to small shops offering products popular in China and then encourage Chinese tourists to buy products from them. These products are usually something very desirable in China but at a fraction of the cost, such as fish oil or sea cucumbers. One participant's response indicates the level of frustration felt by these cost cutting methods:

> To cut costs, they have the tour leader in charge of thirty people. They always send a tour leader from Approved Destination Status (ADS), he flies from China, goes on the trip and then goes home. The tour leader does not get a dime paid. The only thing he gets is commission, this is the monkey business I was talking about. And sometimes they pay to be on the trip, because let's say it is a good group, and he takes them to some luxury stores to shop or something, then he is getting a cut, without paying taxes. (Interview 7, G1)

Because they already have this tour leader they skip the guide to cut costs. This dynamic has become very problematic, it is represented in twelve of the interviews in a code named 'language barrier', as a tour organizer explains;

> Yes, I communicate with them but I often get a phone call from the tour leader because the driver complains to me and because they cannot communicate and because the tour leader cannot speak English very well and the driver also sometimes has a problem communicating in English. And they just tell me [...] we have a

problem so okay I ask the staff in Germany or London and I just explain how the problem is and they contact the tour leader. (Interview 17, G1)

The initial desire to cut costs leads to a tour leader being used in place of a trained tour guide. So while the overall cost for the tourist is lowered, their experience is also negatively affected because of the communication issues that arise. Essentially, there is no guide on these trips, because these tour guides are called tour leaders and they are not required to have any knowledge about the country they visit. According to two participants, the tour leaders' job is to direct tourists to a bus, tell them that they stop at a location for thirty minutes and so on. This does not exactly create interest among Chinese tourists because they do not receive any knowledge about the culture, nature or history. This language barrier also makes it difficult to communicate safety issues as mentioned above. Among G1 and G2 'language barriers' was one of the most noted issues in initial coding. This language barrier should be addressed in the preparation stage, either by hiring a middle man that can speak Mandarin or by providing more information in Mandarin before and during the trip. According to one participant there was a problem with the Mandarin speaking tour guides living in Iceland because they actually did not know much about Icelandic history and culture and Chinese tourists complained about this lack of knowledge. The company then trained twenty-five Mandarin speaking tour guides which was beneficial for them. However this is a part time job for most implying that there is not enough demand for a guide since most tours now arrive in big groups where they cut costs by skipping the tour guide or individual travelers or in small groups of friends and family that do not hire guides (Interview 10, G1).

5.3.2   The Private Sector

Another challenge that could benefit from advanced preparation is that many employees in G2 find that they cannot mix Chinese tourists with tourists of other nationalities. As a simple example, tourists have complained about Chinese eating habits, leading some hotels to try and seat them separately. One guesthouse owner explains how she addresses this issue "I try to arrange Asians on the same floor. If there is someone from Germany or Denmark then they do not find it comfortable to be surrounded with a large number of Asians. That is just how it is" (Interview 8, G2). As a more extreme example, glacier guided tours have seen Chinese tourists showing up unprepared for the activity, even joining the tour in heels. This results in a very slow and short tour which leaves tourists from other countries unsatisfied. A tour guide explains the difficulties of this situation "Sometimes it is hard to have to....it takes such a long time and you never leave at the right time and if you have a mixed group then it takes all your diplomatic abilities to keep everyone happy" (Interview 20, G2). This is a serious dilemma and has led to dramatic methods to isolate Chinese tourists in other countries, for example, a city in Switzerland has made a separate train just for Chinese tourists, in order not to mix them with locals or other tourists because people did not like their behavior, this effort has received quite negative

responses from Chinese tourists (Fan, 2015). From the data, this is a result of lack of preparing from private companies. If countries or cities decide to go in this direction it could negatively affect the experience Chinese tourists have. There is a difference between preparing for a tourist with a high CD and separating tourists with a high CD from others. The separation can lead to negative effects while preparing for CD most likely leads to positive effects. As mentioned in the literature review, one nation cannot be judged as one culture because there are so many aspects to think of, age, gender and class for example (Reisinger, 2009; Jørgensen et al., 2017). Therefore, going in this direction of separating Chinese tourists from other tourists or having signs about how to behave exclusively in Mandarin implying that only Chinese tourists have behavioral issues might negatively impact Chinese tourists who do not fall under that category of behavioral issues and further perpetuate NCA amongst hosts.

5.3.3 Risk

Risk was an important topic noted in all three groups of participants which could benefit from increased preparation which comes in different forms for different groups. Organizers, G1, note that if there is direct contact between organizers, meaning no middlemen such as Online Travel Agencies (OTA), the interaction is riskier. This risk comes from late cancellations because of visa issues which can come too late to refill the hotel or the tour. Another problem frequently mentioned by G1 is Chinese organizers engaging in haggling for the price, an issue touched on above, even after a contract has been signed. This is tiresome and confusing for organizers leaving them frustrated. For employees, G2, their perceived risk comes from the issue of physical safety, they perceive Chinese behavior to be risky and one participant expresses that he is responsible for their safety:

> They are quite lost, I repeat the same word but yeah that is the impression I have most of the time. At the same time I would say that Chinese people are ready for everything, they arrive there with a lot of paperwork but they do not know exactly what they have to do. So that is the tricky part. Make sure to keep them alive. (Interview 19, G2)

Participants working for a tour company are responsible for the tourists safety and this can cause stress and extra work if the behavior of the tourist is dangerous. For the locals, G3, each participant expressed annoyance as well as fear when it comes to Chinese tourists and driving, which directly affects the locals safety as well as the tourists. Participants consistently stated that, Chinese tourists lack awareness of how to change their driving habits to fit Iceland's roadways, especially compared to other tourists. One local explains this feeling:

> Sometimes you can just get so annoyed e.g. driving after some car that is driving slowly or incorrectly. Someone that is completely unaware of what is going on

around them and I admit that I think, oh this is some Chinese tourist that does not know how to drive in Iceland. This mainly happens in traffic. (Interview 12, G3)

As Iceland has a small population, many of the roads connecting towns and communities are quite narrow and consist of one lane for each direction, with a minimal shoulder for stopping. Chinese tourists are keen to stop to take pictures and have been known to pull over anywhere on the road even if it is unsafe to do so because of the size of the road which has resulted in accidents (Gylfason, 2019). Additionally, participants note that Chinese pedestrians are unaware of their surroundings, sometimes not realizing they are even on a road, so locals are scared of hitting them with a car. This creates extra stress and frustration in daily life for G3 when driving to and from work.

Going back to the Integrated Threat Theory, these perceived risks by the three groups are considered realistic threats, not based on values and beliefs but actual physical threat (Stephan, & Stephan, 2000). These threats perpetuate ethnocentrism and prejudice (Stephan, & Stephan, 2015; Soldatenko, & Backer, 2019). It is therefore important for the Destination Management Organization (DMO) or other governmental institutions to systematically work at diminishing the risk factor of receiving tourists with a high CD. This could be accomplished by the DMO or other governmental institutions taking a leadership role as suggested by Beritelli & Bieger (2014) and Hristov & Zehrer (2015). This leadership role is intended to lead the private companies to take actions and prepare appropriately.

5.3.4   Added Value

Failing any of these attempts to prepare, whether through ICC training or government programs, simply preparing oneself for interactions with people with a high CD can have some value. This need to prepare for the interaction was apparent amongst those that had reached Stage Three in acquiring ICC skills (Figure 4) or had direct economic benefits and little direct contact, even if they were unaware of the benefits of ICC training. This preparedness was viewed either as mentally preparing for the interaction by being overly positive or for preparing by making sure the amenities enjoyed by Chinese travelers was at hand, such as having extra hot water for tea or general drinking. The participants in G2 that had this attitude believed that the success of the interaction depended partially on themselves and their attitude. 'Added value' and 'positivity' were frequent codes in the data and these participants had realized that if they began an interaction with positivity and were being friendly and engaging, there was a higher chance of it resulting in a successful interaction. Instead of getting the interaction over with, they put extra effort in. One participant even expressed that she believed the attitude that the Chinese tourists receive from hosts is often so negative, that when she was welcoming and friendly she felt that the tourists were surprised and extra satisfied (Interview 8, G2). Although this research does not include interviews from Chinese tourists and therefore cannot analyze their perspective, this participant expresses how she understands Chinese tourists perspective. As mentioned above,

Chinese tourists are concerned about being treated equally as other tourists (Yu & Lee, 2014). This concern could be related to Sorrells (2014) mention of the historical imbalance between the West and the East. Chinese tourists seem to be aware of this historical imbalance making it extra important to focus on proper service (Cripps, 2013). The participant implies that Chinese tourists are consistently met with a negative attitude, which if true, could certainly influence tourists perceptions. Several participants expressed that they tried to prepare in different manners, such as learning from previous contact, asking foreign friends for advice, or showing extra interest and attention. All of these methods were felt to give added value to the experience. As an example, one hotel owner from G2 explained that she sings traditional songs for their customers, provides advice on what to do in the area and spends time on greeting them which has led to very good experiences so far (Interview 11, G2). For Chinese people coming to Iceland, there is already a value for price disconnect because a five-star hotel in China can be the same price as a guesthouse in Iceland. This means their expectations coming in are already quite high and therefore, it is important to make up for it by adding value in communication.

To sum up, both the private and public sector need to focus on preparing for culturally different tourists. A general lack of preparation from both public and private entities affects all three groups and leads to miscommunication. This lack of preparation is manifested in different perceptions of risk, whether as economic risk for the organizers, the risk of injury to the hosts for the employees, or the risk of a traffic accident for the locals. Not being able to mix Chinese tourists with other tourists poses a problem for G2. Some participants found that a positive attitude and preparing oneself mentally are important components in successful Intercultural Communication.

5.4 Negative Community Attitude

One large aspect of the research that needs to be unpacked is the impact of NCA on the hosts perception of guests. This proved to be a very real problem as every single participant acknowledged that there was an NCA towards Chinese tourists. An NCA does not necessarily mean that the participants own perspective of Chinese tourists is negative but that they have noticed a lot of negative sentiment in the community. More often than not, the interviewees expressed a neutral or positive attitude towards Chinese tourists but were concerned the local community held negative attitudes towards Chinese tourists. These negative attitudes are expressed in different forms in the community, all the way from humor to anger. Community anger is expressed among people talking in social circles about the negative effects of an increase of Chinese tourists (See Appendix E). On the other side, humor was noted as quite a common method for expressing frustration with Chinese tourists behavior. In particular, Chinese tourists are targeted because of their driving, an issue that was mentioned in the previous section, the types of car they drive and how they behave:

There is of course that classic joke, or just when you are driving in Reykjavík if you see an Asian in a Dacia Duster or some twenty year old girl on a land cruiser that has never driven a land cruiser in her life and does not know that it is closer to being a truck than a car, then you joke. But you know there is no seriousness in it and we would rather have them than not. (Interview 4, G1)

The reference to 'classic jokes' implies that it is a widely held belief that Chinese tourists are bad drivers and are known for other weird, by Icelandic standards, behavior, with four participants describing Chinese tourists as children that need to be taught how to behave "It is really difficult to react in these situations, you kind of just have to turn into a kindergarten teacher, explain to them 'one at a time' kind of thing" (Interview 9, G1). Chinese tourists have even been nicknamed 'Dalvíkingar' (name of a town in Iceland) in the restaurant industry so that the waiters can freely talk about them in Icelandic and this has then spread to other industries and locals (Interview 15, G2). Whether Chinese tourists would be able to pick up on the Icelandic word for Chinese or not, which is Kínverji, the decision to come up with a nickname to try and hide these jokes or frustrations further implies that NCA is deeply rooted. In taking a step back this is a clear example of ethnocentrism, comparing to your own culture and believing that other cultures do not live up to your standards, that is patronizing to Chinese tourists by assuming that they do not know any better and need to be taught how to behave. This has resulted in some employees focusing on finishing the interaction as soon as possible when involved in a service interaction, with a somewhat 'just deal with it' attitude which is not the type of exchange you would want as a guest. Of concern is the government of China's belief that their nations travellers behavior has improved significantly over the years as they have gotten more used to traveling (Shuang, 2017), but that hosts attitude towards them remains quite negative.

There is no doubt that some Chinese tourists have shown behavior that is considered unacceptable in Western countries but this does not represent the majority. However, the media mainly reports on abnormal behavior or silly mistakes made by Chinese tourists (Daðason, 2016; "Fæstir í bílbeltum", 2019, "Myndband sem sýnir", 2017; Sverrisson, 2017). The media's strong influence on people's perception and repetitive news stories on negative aspects of Chinese tourists is likely to make people feel justified in their NCA (Mutz & Goldman, 2010). It could be creating and perpetuating the negative stereotype from the Integrated Threat theory (Stephan et al., 1998) with hosts simply assuming bad behavior from Chinese tourists and adjusting their service according to that, by trying to get it over with.

Along with the media, word of mouth is another aspect that could be maintaining this negative image in any of the three groups. The basic idea here is best expressed by one participant who aptly stated "you remember the bad stuff" (Interview 8, G2). Iceland accepts thousands of Chinese tourists but those who show abnormal behavior, according to local perspective, are those that will be remembered and talked about frequently between friends

and coworkers. In some cases, the behaviors that are considered unacceptable according to Icelandic cultural standards have been quite extreme, such as defecating in public, jumping on an iceberg or in one extreme case driving off the road, right in front of a bridge on a straight roadway, and into a river because of an incorrect GPS instructions (Daðason, 2016). While this kind of behavior is frequently talked about, when compared to the 92,368 Chinese tourists that visited Iceland in one year, from May 2018 to April 2019 (*Tourism in Iceland*, 2019) the amount of extreme behavioral cases is minimal. What makes word of mouth so influential and dangerous is that people love talking about extreme incidences. One G3 participant, an organizer in a tour company, talks about the behavior of Chinese tourists and how they view it in the tourism industry: "And then it is just fun to talk about it, just a bit funny. It is just entertaining" (Interview 18, G1). He also talks about the impact of a good story

> I think the most interesting part about Chinese tourists is how different they are. Even though it makes them difficult customers you can really enjoy it. As I said, the tourism industry talks about these tourists a lot and has all sorts of funny stories to tell. (Interview 18, G1)

Whether these stories hold the whole truth of Chinese tourists behavior or not, the continued popularity of the extreme cases has the ability to stereotype a whole tourist population based on the actions of a few extreme cases.

Local participants, G3, further showed that NCA towards Chinese tourists is widespread. All of them were able to describe different reasons as to why Chinese tourists behavior is unbearable without having ever experienced or witnessed this behavior themselves. It was only because of word of mouth that they had heard about the behavior they felt was not welcome in Iceland. As an example, two participants from G3, a nurse and a doctor, said that negative conversations about Chinese tourists occur in the breakroom (Interview 22 & 25, G3). Whether you work in tourism or are a local, if something you consider abnormal happens it is immediately a story, and if the incident is extreme, then it becomes quite a story to tell. This relates to negative stereotyping, one of the four components of Integrated Threat Theory since the NCA leads to people expecting extreme behavior from Chinese tourists (Stephan et al., 1998). Media and word of mouth are identified as key aspects of negative stereotyping, by perpetuating this negative image as well as Chinese tourists behavior being an exciting topic to discuss and joke about. In this case, NCA is a part of what is holding back the social sustainable development of the tourism industry.

5.5   Creating Interest

One reason Chinese tourists may have an NCA is the tendency for them to travel in large bus tour groups which isolates them from the general public, though in reality this is not always the case (Arlt, 2013). According to the interviews, it is this mass travel that can lead to problems with some participants feeling the tourists show up in huge groups and take over the country's most popular spots. Described by some like zombies that take photos, they are seen as not being interested in the country with some tourists not even leaving the tour bus when arriving at an attraction.

> It was just a group of Chinese tourists. They slept the whole trip. They do not engage in the tour and then he has this microphone and decided to guide, they did not listen. Then they stopped and they just asked, 'please could you wake us up when we arrive'. They arrive, some of them did not even leave the car, they just took a picture and then drove off. (Interview 16, G1)

According to a couple of participants, this lack of interest does not have to be the case but is sometimes a result of not having a proper tour guide and settling for a tour leader. One participant states that it is up to the host to create interest by explaining to them the big picture of the country or binding the attractions together through a good story.

> I blame them for trying to skip the tour guide because these tour leaders that come here, they know very little and they have no motivation to create interest in the country and the thing about Iceland, there is so much you see very beautiful of course but behind all that is so much that needs further explanation. (Interview 10, G1)

This participant explains the need to create interest and the role that the guide plays in this. Most tours fail to cultivate this interest as they either have an English-speaking guide and the tourists cannot understand them or they do not have a guide at all, just the tour leader who is not there to be a guide nor build interest for the tour. However, the participant explained that as soon as he provides details about Icelandic nature, history and culture in Chinese, the tourists get interested and ask further questions.

> But when you arrive and explain things it is more enjoyable, they become more cooperative and start to listen. They might even start asking more questions. I start telling them about the Icelandic sagas and they say it is fun and ask if I have more stories like that. But if not they maybe just think there is nothing to learn. (Interview 10, G1)

This is an important piece of information as it shows that there is an interest in the country from some tourist but that communication is the issue not a general lack of interest. This 'lack of interest' is the root of complaints from G2, employees, especially tour guides

that feel disrespected with this lack of engagement, further fostering negative emotions. People get offended and hurt when they are not being listened to, and feel that what they have to offer has little value. This could be because hosts are found to see tourism positively if they can use it to share and preserve their culture and heritage (Besculides, Lee, & McCormick, 2002). Although this language dilemma is a part of preparing, this aspect deserves a category of its own. Despite the fact that this attitude mostly concerns guides (G2), this image of the uninterested and inexperienced tourist spreads out to organizers and locals (G1 and G3) as this was mentioned as an identifying characteristic of the Chinese tourist by participants from all three groups.

6. Implications

This chapter aims to provide implications for the tourism industry as well as a clear answer for the research question; How can cultural clashes between the supply and demand side be mitigated when diverse cultures interact in the tourism industry? After having explained the theoretical notions of the study, it is important to explain the implications and visually represent the aspects that help mitigate cultural clashes. In the analysis, the Three Stages of Acquiring ICC Skills Without Training was introduced. Many of the participants felt that without training it was difficult or impossible to reach Stage Three, Understanding Cultural Differences, unless they had spent years working in the tourism industry. However, after conducting interviews, analyzing the responses and reviewing the relevant literature, it is clear a better method is needed. The following sections will attempt to lay out five recommendations to help prepare hosts for guests that have a high CD. The first step is educating hosts on the multiple perspectives towards successful communication. Second, the benefits of ICC training need to be recognized, accepted, and used to help ensure that hosts are offering the best products possible. Third, hosts need to better prepare for dealing with guests with a high CD, which can be done in a variety of ways. Fourth, the negative community attitude that has formed towards Chinese tourists needs to be countered with positive stories and a realization that many stories exemplify the extreme and not the norm. Finally, an overall effort needs to be made to create more interest and excitement in the tourist attractions that are being sold. Each of these five steps all hold a benefit for the Icelandic tourism industry and can be used in any situation when a high CD is apparent between the guest and the host. However, when used together they can help to limit cultural clashes (Figure 5). By focusing on these five areas, it will assist destinations in welcoming tourists with a high CD and hosts to reach Stage Three in acquiring ICC skills relatively quickly, and not have to rely on co-workers, or go through years of work to build up this knowledge.

Figure 5. Five steps to prepare hosts for guests with a high CD.
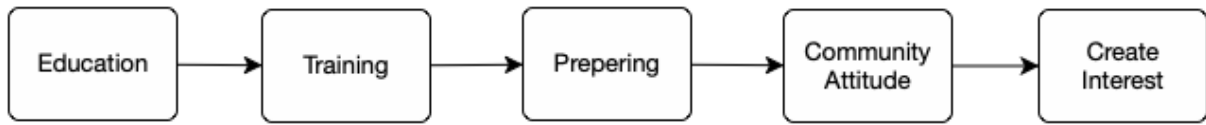
Source: Own study.

6.1   Education and Training

Educating the hosts, whether in G1, G2, or G3, on the different cultural values and ways of viewing communication is a strong place to start when trying to mitigate cultural clashes. There is a tendency for hosts to look at Intercultural Communication through a macro lens, focusing on specific behaviors, noting that these behaviors and manners differ from their own culture. Therefore, it is crucial to educate hosts on the fundamental differences in world views and Intercultural Communication. This will allow for more successful interaction because the guests behavior would no longer be viewed as weird or abnormal, and instead the host would be able to logically understand why the guest acts the way they do. They may even be able to gain insight into their own peculiar habits and be better able to explain them to their guests. In order to use tools for training like Hofstede's dimensions, which help to determine the distances and differences between cultures, we need to be building on the understanding that reaching common ground is not the goal of communication for everyone. With a better understanding we can utilize different tools and specific theories, Asiacentric theories along with Eurocentric ones, to better communicate.

Building on the importance of education, the next aspect to be discussed is changing the way ICC training is perceived. The fact that ICC skills are still considered to be a personality trait is problematic as training of ICC skills should be an essential part of an operation, not just something you hope an employee has or will gain naturally (Weinstein, 1969, as cited in Chen, 2017). When considering the type of ICC training needed, each of the three interview groups would require a different type of training given the nature of their positions and the different issues they deal with in communications. For G1, group organizers, communication means dealing with issues in communication such as planning, cancelling plans and pricing (De Sausmarez et al., 2012). The interviews highlight that two main issues arose for G1 participants, the difficulty in dealing with different hierarchy structures and the divergent views of negotiation, or lack thereof once a price has been set. For G2, it is important to train front line employees to understand their position relative to the guest early on in the training process (Reynisdóttir, 2019). For the workers, this means understanding that their own behavior could be considered abnormal or weird, and to understand that there is a reason behind the way the guests behave the way they do. There is no specific training for locals, since locals mainly draw their negative opinion of Chinese

tourists from stories from the tourism industry, so for G3 the main focus should be on improving the attitude in the tourism industry which then spreads to the locals.

6.2   The Public Sector

Preparing is an essential aspect for any challenge, and it is also vital in helping to mitigate cultural clashes when there is a high CD between the guest and the host. When it comes to preparing, Beritelli & Bieger (2014) and Hristov & Zehrer (2015) state that for successful and sustainable destination development, there is a need for public organizations, such as Destination Management Organizations (DMO's), to systematically lead the industry through coordination of knowledge and resources. After going through the data, it seems that public organizations such as DMO's could play a bigger part in providing knowledge and resources for ICC training as the two studies suggest by generally preparing the industry and influencing community attitude. This would be beneficial for diminishing risk factors, advocating for ICC training, countering NCA and enforcing regulations. The interviews highlighted that the participants felt there was a lack of preparedness from the public side on how best to deal with the influx of Chinese tourists. As the old adage goes, 'Fail to Plan, Plan to Fail', it seems that unless there is an increase in planning, Iceland is planning to fail.

There are three main actions the government could take to improve this situation. First of all, it could show an example by leading the industry towards further preparations. This they can do by creating a website similar to the one provided by visitcopenhagen.com in the hopes that this would indicate to the private sector the need to start preparing for these tourists. This website could then be recreated for other nationalities with a high CD. Secondly, creating a mobile application for the tourist could be beneficial in addressing a few different aspects, mainly language barriers, to create interest and address Risk for G2 and G3 (Figure 6).

Figure 6. Issues that could be addressed with a destination app.
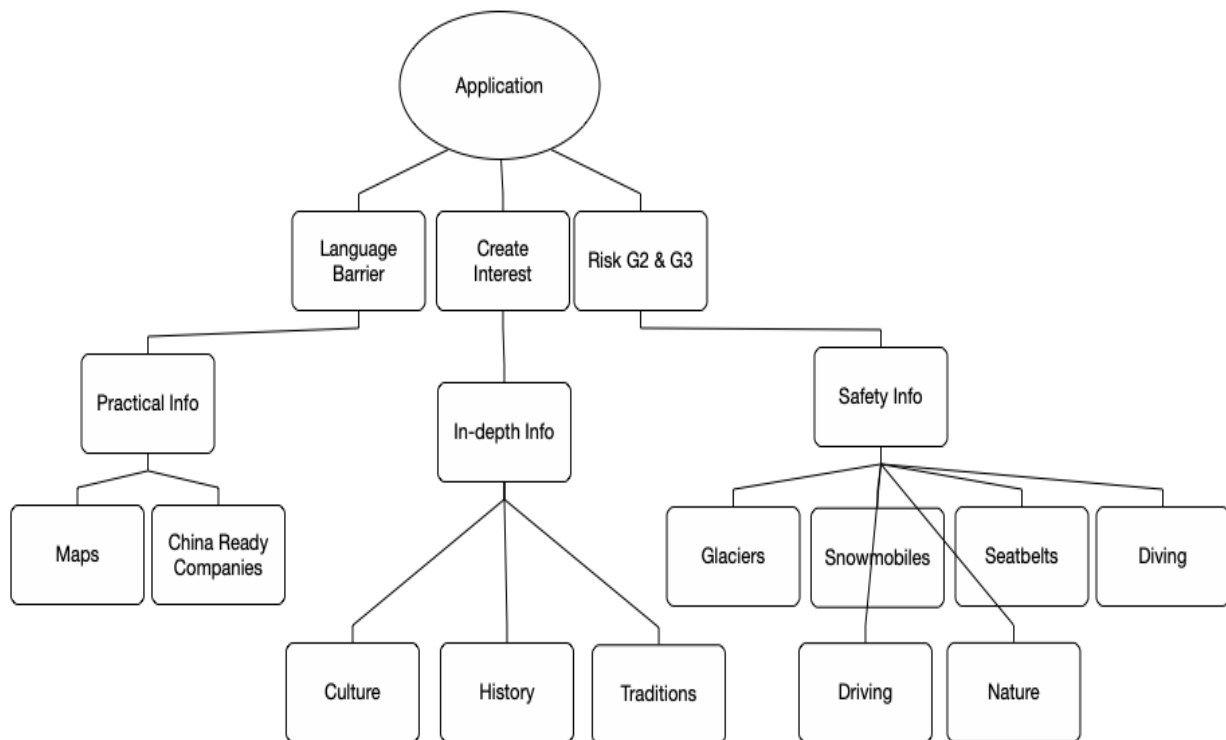
Source: Own study.

One of the most mentioned initial codes 'language barriers' could be addressed with practical information such as maps in Mandarin, location of important sites and so on. Creating interest is a big problem related to language barriers, and with an increasing number of independent travelers and tour companies trying to cut costs, it is harder to provide in-depth information for the tourist. Therefore, this application could address this issue by providing in-depth information on history, culture and tradition. It could go into detail explaining what customs are normal in Iceland and what is considered abnormal. For example, providing information that goes beyond explaining where a restaurant is to explain why the restaurant is popular and the history behind it. In addressing risk factors, it could provide information regarding safety that have become large issues. This could be information on driving rules in Iceland, what to look out for in nature, glaciers, snowmobiles and the importance of wearing seatbelts to name a few, all of which came up in the data. The government could then use this application to incentivize those companies whose employees have gone through ICC training by advertising them in the practical info section. Thirdly, the government should be more adamant about the implication of laws and regulations in the tourism industry. This would address the issue of people working on commission. They also need to address risk factors for G3, which is driving. That could be done by enforcing regulations that tourists need to take a short driving course when renting a car. It would be convenient to have a core set of information on the application and then have QR codes in places so that Chinese tourists could scan the code and get further information.

Establishments could then choose if they want to provide QR codes with information, such as a restaurant providing a menu in Mandarin and information about their establishment.

6.3 The Private Sector

Moving away from the public sector, there is much that can be done by the private sector, with each of the three groups having their own areas to prepare. For G1, they can increase their communication with their front-line employees to better understand what is working and what is not when it comes to communicating with Chinese tourists. This would help organizers in planning tours or understanding the frustrations of front-line employees when it comes to Intercultural Communication. Overall this would lead to tour operators being better able to meet the needs of the Chinese guests by understanding what the front-line employees need. By better understanding the nuances in Intercultural Communication each group deals with it could diminish the current 'deal with it' attitude that does not exactly encourage training.

For G2, front line employees, the two major issues noted were the language barrier and not being able to mix Chinese tourists with other tourists. This language barrier could be addressed using the application discussed above. While the potential problems of mixing Chinese tourists with other nationalities occurs in a minority of cases, there are still things that can be done to better incorporate them with other tourists and locals. Each participants own position and role would need examining to determine the specific steps they could take to be better prepared for any issues. But as an example, it was mentioned earlier the case of tourist showing up for glacier walks in heels, meaning that the tour was slower and shorter than normal because of this. This type of issue could be solved by having a clause in whatever language selected, Mandarin in this case, when booking the tour that states that hiking boots or sneakers are required, which would then need to be accepted before booking the tour. Taking this to a more general level, companies and front-line employees could be more upfront with the risks involved and the preparations needed from the guest to undertake the activities so each participant, regardless of nationality or culture, are on the same level. Whether it is providing more information in Mandarin or being upfront about the requirements, there are a multitude of ways G2 participants could think ahead to be better prepared for tourists with a high CD.

6.4 Countering NCA With Increased Interest

Back to the dilemma of creating interest, engaging in a conversation with the tourist, giving them individual attention would increase communication (Fan, Zhang, Jenkins, & Tavitiyaman, 2017). If the tourist speaks English, or some other common language, then taking time to engage in conversation would be beneficial. This would show that the establishment cares about informing the guest about the culture of the area which could increase the guest's interest and give added value to the experience. Creating interest is a

key in mitigating cultural clash, not only for the enjoyment of the tourists but also for the hosts (G1, G2, G3). Employees and small business owners (G2) expressed the enjoyment of interacting with other cultures as no one day is the same (Interview 10, G1). That is a key part of their enjoyment, it is therefore important to make this interaction as interesting as possible for all parties involved.

Since every single participant in all three groups expressed the knowledge of a Negative Community Attitude (NCA) toward Chinese tourists, there is no easy solution. As outlined in Chapter 5.4, media and word of mouth are key aspects of what perpetuates this NCA. Given that media is considered to be able to change the attitude of an outgroup with positive exposure (Zhang, & Tan, 2011) it would be beneficial to introduce positive aspects of Chinese tourists and Chinese culture in the media. This could affect the hosts in a positive manner and hopefully lessen the effect of word of mouth as well by making it less acceptable to openly criticize Chinese tourists. This would fit in with Iceland's goal to create sustainable tourism by working on the social sustainability of the Chinese tourists by fostering a positive community attitude towards potential tourists. This is especially true since it is possible even more Chinese tourists will arrive in the future, especially as the Chinese embassy in Iceland is working on establishing direct flights between China and Iceland (Jónsson, 2019). Social media could play a strong role spreading a positive image of Chinese tourists. Private companies could post on their social media websites about what goes well on trips with Chinese tourists. As an example, they could post a photo of a small Chinese group and say where they went and what they enjoyed the most, what specifically they were interested in and what they thought was unique. For news media it is harder to make suggestions because they have nothing to gain from speaking positively about Chinese tourists and, in fact, most likely get more traffic on their websites if they report on abnormal behavior. Although it would be great if they could emphasize the positive economic impact Chinese tourists bring. Overall, any method to decrease the NCA held by Iceland's local population would help to mitigate cultural clashes, as it would in any destination.

7. Conclusions

In considering the research out there on the relationship between tourism and social sustainability, Intercultural Communication between hosts and tourists, cultural clashes, stereotyping and ICC skills are under researched topics that need further research and attention. Both the current literature and the tourism industry as a whole focus on marketing for tourists with a high cultural distance (CD) rather than understanding how to prepare for them once they arrive. There is a lack of preparation regarding actually facilitating the communication between hosts and guests so that it is enjoyable for all parties involved. While some preparation has been observed, usually in providing amenities specific to Chinese travelers, to show that the host is aware of other cultures and cares, these amenities do not exactly help with Intercultural Communication or provide hosts with competence in communication. It is common knowledge that in order to reach social sustainability hosts

have to be on board with the tourism development at a destination (Pearce, 1995; Tasci, & Severt, 2017; Zhang et al., 2006; Zhang et al., 2017). Despite that knowledge, research has focused on hosts perception as a whole, understanding how hosts perceive the tourism industry in its entirety and less on specific tourist types. Since nationality is an influential factor in how hosts view tourists and differentiate them (Griffiths & Sharpley, 2012) it is crucial to focus on the perception hosts have of tourists depending on their nationality and those aspects that can be addressed with ICC. This is especially true when the tourists have a high CD and thus a greater chance of an unsuccessful communication or interaction.

The purpose of this research is to determine how to mitigate cultural clash between hosts and tourists when diverse cultures interact in the tourism industry. The answer to that question is a five-pronged approach of how a destination can react to an influx of tourists with a high CD. There are a number of important changes which need to be made in order to mitigate cultural clashes and to foster a positive community attitude amongst hosts. These changes start with the fundamental understanding of the nuances of successful communication. The crucial aspect being the concept of successful communication varies between cultures. With this understanding comes the next approach; an increase and appreciation that ICC skills are not a personality trait but something that can be acquired through proper training for both G1 and G2. Understanding communication and proper training for ICC need to be a priority when it comes to mitigating cultural clashes. It is important that G1 and G2 get different types of ICC training depending on the situations they deal with, however, it is also important that employees from both groups communicate with each other about cultural situations that arise and could cause issues. With G1 and G2 cooperating it could create a better workplace where employees feel listened to and that their complaints are taken seriously.

In the third step of five it is preparing for those customers, not only with amenities but with ICC skills. It is imperative that the government takes more of a leadership role when dealing with host perception of tourists otherwise social sustainability will not be attained (Beritelli & Bieger, 2014; Hristov & Zehrer, 2015). Governments should focus on several practical applications. Firstly, they should encourage ICC training for G1 and G2, this would facilitate a positive working environment that could in turn increase a positive attitude in the community, G3. Secondly, the government should be focusing on providing relevant information for the private sector on how they can prepare for Chinese tourists. This might not help with ICC skills but is definitely a small step in the right direction. Thirdly, they should create an application that tourists could download with three types of relevant information, practical, in-depth and safety information. It would also be helpful to have a set amount of the most important information already in the application but then QR codes available at different locations for further in-depth information. This would address language barriers, create interest and diminish risk. The government also needs to take a strong stance on the creation and implementation of regulations regarding tourism and tours. The existence

of illegal activities not only impacts the competitiveness of other tourism companies, but it also negatively influences the perception of Chinese organizers.

In the fourth step of five the negative community attitude is addressed, here the private companies need to step up. Because word of mouth is influencing the opinion in the whole community, it is important that companies engage in spreading positive messages through social media.

The last step is the final touch of mitigating culture clash. The lack of interest some Chinese tourists have in Iceland needs to be countered with more information in Mandarin. This was of course addressed by the application, but private companies could insist on big tours hiring Mandarin speaking tour guides. It could also be countered by G2 giving themselves more time for each interaction, more individual attention. Seeing communication as an added value and putting in an effort to explain certain things and encourage questions.

It is recommended that further research be undertaken in the following areas: As mentioned in the limitations it would be intriguing to compare experiences of Mandarin speaking tour guides living in Iceland with the experiences of the three groups. This would give further insight into how much some of the issues that the three groups have are because of cultural differences and language barriers. Comparing these groups would assist in pinpointing areas to focus further on. It would be worthwhile to compare the experiences of Chinese tourists traveling in Iceland to the hosts perspectives, to see if there is any disconnect in how they view an interaction. This could explain why they are not as satisfied with their trip compared to other visitors. It would also be interesting to see the point of view of the government, what they plan to do, they have plans for marketing but there is a lack of plans about preparing. Lastly it would be interesting to conduct this study in another country, to see how hosts in other countries in Europe are dealing with tourists with a high CD, for example to see how or if the information on Visit Copenhagen webpage has helped hosts manage tourists.

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Appendices

Appendices

Appendix A. Email Sent to Participants.

Dear...,

My name is Rakel Sara Hjartardóttir, and I am on my second year of studying Tourism Management. This education program is a joint degree taught in three universities; the University of Southern Denmark, University of Ljubljana and University of Girona.

In my master thesis, I am researching Chinese tourists in Iceland. Primarily, how you can prepare people who work in the tourism industry as well as locals for their arrival by improving communication and mitigating cultural clashes. I am mainly looking into the experience and perspective of those who work at an organizational level, front line employees, and locals have of Chinese tourists.

I need to interview someone at an organizational level/front line employees/locals and am hoping you could help me.

I am going to be in Iceland from 25th March to 5th April, is there any way I could schedule an interview during that time? If you know anyone that is willing to participate but is not available at this time, would a Skype interview be a possibility?

Regards,
Rakel Sara Hjartardóttir

Appendix B. Interview Questions G1 and G2

Introduce the purpose of the study.

1. Could you tell me a little bit about what you do, your position, and how long you have been working in the industry?

2. What aspect of your job brings you into contact with Chinese tourists?
- What method of communication is the most common? (email, phone, face to face)?
-Do you have a preferred method of communication?
-Do you feel a difference in communicating face to face or through technology?

3. How would you describe a successful intercultural interaction/communication?
(Reisinger & Turner, 2004)

4. What is your impression of Chinese tourists?
- Have you seen them represented in media?
-Word of mouth?
-What do you think, if anything, differentiates Chinese tourists from tourists with a different national   background?
- Do you notice a difference between Chinese tourists and other tourists from Asia?

5. What are some experiences you have had, positive/neutral/negative, interacting with Chinese   tourists?
- Which experience stands out the most?
-How do you feel in those situations?
-How do you react in those situations?

6. In your opinion, what made the interaction positive/neutral/negative?
-Empathy,   openness,   cultural   awareness,
-What could have gone differently to make it a more positive interaction?
-Based on your interactions with those from different backgrounds, do you feel that you have gained new knowledge of other cultures?

8. Do you feel that you are benefiting from the increase in Chinese tourists to Iceland?
 (Social Exchange Theory)

9. Does your company take any steps to make these interactions easier?
-Do you prepare yourself differently before communicating with Chinese tourists/organizers?

Appendix C. Interview Questions G3

Introduce the purpose of the study.

1.Ask for general information: **profession, how long they have been living in the city**

2. Have you noticed an increase in Chinese tourists?

3. Does this increase in Chinese tourists impact your life in any way?

4. What is your impression of Chinese tourists?
- Have you seen them represented in media?
-Word of mouth?

-What do you think, if anything, differentiates Chinese tourists from tourists with a different national background?

5. How would you describe successful interaction between locals and tourists?
(Reisinger & Turner, 2004)

6. What are some experiences you have had, positive/neutral/negative, interacting with Chinese tourists?
- Does one experience stand out?
-How do you feel in those situations?
-How do you react in those situations?

7. In your opinion, what made the interaction positive/neutral/negative?
-Empathy, openness, cultural awareness,
-What could have gone differently to make it a more positive interaction?
-Based on your interactions with those from different backgrounds, do you feel that you have gained new knowledge of other cultures?

8. Do you feel that you are benefiting from the increase in Chinese tourists to Iceland?
(Social Exchange Theory)

Appendix D. Behaving Like Children - Initial Coding

"...and then they were just like little school children, maybe all talking at the same time". (Interview 3, G1)

It is like having a group of six-year-old children after a birthday party with lots of candy. It is a little bit like that. But when it is over, after taking one photo, then they just want to keep going, off to the next attraction. (Interview 20, G2)

Appendix E. Anger - Initial Coding

We were just talking about this today my co-worker and I, and he was like oh I cannot stand Chinese and Indian tourists. (Interview 12, G3)

Yeah, these Dalvíkingar (nickname for Chinese tourists) are impossible haha, that is how they talk. (Interview 8, G2)

Just the discussion, 'so many goddamn Chinese people here on a rental car and they do not know how to drive and got their license from a cereal box,' and unfortunately, some Chinese tourists have died here. (Interview 11, G2)

Appendix F. Interview Transcriptions

Transcripts are available upon request in Icelandic, for further information contact rakelsarah@gmail.com