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A Sustainable Future for Frisian Folklore

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Immaterieel erfgoed als toeristische bestemming Intangible Heritage as a Tourist Destination



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DAGELIJKS LEVEN

A Sustainable Future for Frisian Folklore

Opportunities and Challenges for the Sustainable Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage and Tourism in Friesland

Introduction

'Iepen Mienskip' (Open Community) was the proud slogan of the Dutch Cultural Capital of Europe of 2018, Leeuwarden-Friesland (LF2018). The rallying cry, expressed in the traditional Frisian language, translates into a sense of openness and community. This concept originates in the ancient fight against rising waters, which is characteristic of Friesland. Most of the countryside is below sea level and has battled floods for centuries through collaboration and caring for one another.³ Nowadays, the open community mainly manifests itself in a sense of connection and taking care of each other as a neighbourhood or village. As such, it has been registered by the Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage (DICH). This initiative, among others, collects and preserves intangible cultural heritage, or intangible heritage, such as cultural events, traditions, and customs strongly linked to local communities. The main goal of the DICH is to "promote intangible cultural heritage and to make it accessible ... and encourage people to participate in it."⁴

In recent decades, tourism has become an impactful tool to support the dynamic of intangible heritage and ensure its economic survival. Tourism, however, increasingly apparent in Friesland since LF2018, also poses a possible threat to the survival of intangible heritage communities.⁵ On a global scale, tourism has already proven to be possibly harmful to a place or community's

1 Main author Anne-Baukje Coster.

2 Corresponding author Maaïke de Jong.

3 M. Visser, *Burgerpanels Fries Sociaal Planbureau en gemeente Leeuwarden over 'iepen mienskip'*. Leeuwarden, 2016. https://www.fsp.nl/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/fsp_fbp_over_iepen_mienskip-def_0.pdf (28-09-2020).

4 *Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage*, <https://www.immaterieelerfgoed.nl/en/kenniscentrum>, par. 1 (28-09-2020).

5 L. Lazzarotti, 'The Resurge of the 'Societal Function of Cultural Heritage'. An Introduction', *City, Culture and Society* 3:4, 2012, p. 229-233; F. Lenzerini, 'Intangible Cultural Heritage: The Living Culture of Peoples', *European Journal of International Law* 22:1, 2011, p. 101-120.

ecological and authentic well-being.⁶ Consequently, sustainable safeguarding has become a highly relevant topic for intangible heritage communities susceptible to tourism to ensure their physical and cultural well-being.⁷ Another important aspect of heritage is its relation to human rights and democracy.⁸ According to the Faro Convention heritage "promotes a wider understanding of heritage and its relationship to communities and society [...] objects and places are not, in themselves, what is important about cultural heritage. They are important because of the meanings and uses that people attach to them and the values they represent."⁹

Despite the smaller scale and less pressing state of tourism in Friesland, the discussion about how to achieve the sustainable safeguarding of intangible heritage communities is extremely present. Another factor in this may be its ranking third in 'Europe's Best' by renowned travel guide Lonely Planet, which, together with LF2018, stimulated the debate around the sustainable safeguarding of intangible heritage communities in the Northern Netherlands.

This article aims to further develop the debate around the sustainable safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage communities in Friesland and contribute to larger debates surrounding sustainable tourism and intangible heritage preservation worldwide. These aims will be achieved by exploring the current state of affairs, attitudes, and concerns around the topic of sustainable tourism in intangible heritage communities in Friesland. Theories such as Butler's Tourist Area Life Cycle¹⁰ and Pine and Gilmore's so-called 'Experience Economy'¹¹ will be utilised. Additionally, this article will explore opportunities to add additional, sustainable value to intangible heritage communities and create entrepreneurial opportunity. This article will explore the following research question:

What are the opportunities and challenges facing intangible cultural heritage communities in Friesland concerning managing sustainable safeguarding and cultural tourism simultaneously?

By using qualitative research, interviewing Frisian intangible heritage communities, and applying relevant theories, this article will contribute to

- 6 R. Butler (ed.), *The Tourism Area Life Cycle. Vol. 1: Applications and Modifications*. Blue Ridge Summit, 2006 [Aspects of Tourism 28]; C. Little et al., 'Innovative Methods for Heritage Tourism Experiences: Creating Windows Into the Past', *Journal of Heritage Tourism* 15:1, 2020, p. 1-13; P. Schofield, 'City Resident Attitudes to Proposed Tourism Development and its Impacts on the Community', *International Journal of Tourism Research* 13:3, 2011, p. 218-233; B. Todorovic, 'The Importance of Life Cycle on the Future Development of Tourist Destination', *CES Working Papers* 11:2, 2019, p. 143-156.
- 7 L. Arizpe, 'Intangible Cultural Heritage, Diversity, and Coherence', *Museum International* 56:1-2, 2004, p. 130-136; F. Cominelli & X. Greffe, 'Intangible Cultural Heritage: Safeguarding for Creativity', *City, Culture and Society* 3:4, 2012, p. 245-250; Lazzeretti, *Resurge*; Lenzerini, *Intangible*.
- 8 *Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society* (Faro Convention, 2005), <https://www.coe.int/en/web/culture-and-heritage/faro-convention> (29-09-2020).
- 9 *Ibidem*, par. 1.
- 10 Butler, *Tourism*.
- 11 J. Pine & J. Gilmore, *The Experience Economy*. Boston, 2019.

the answer of this question, and practical recommendations for intangible heritage communities will be presented. The relevance of this article lies mainly in exploring strategies to combine tourism and heritage preservation sustainably. Since the tourism industry has grown exponentially in recent decades, defining ways to manage this event in sustainable ways that safeguard both the environment and the essential value of heritage communities are crucial.¹² These communities, in turn, form a vital component of cultural and societal well-being. As such, it is also included in the eleventh Sustainable Development Goal, Target 11.4, that aims to "strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage."¹³ Additionally, the article addresses a variety of other disciplines such as sociology and folklore, making the overall research interdisciplinary and open for further interpretation and discussion. This article draws on developing research in the field of intangible cultural heritage protection and tourism by UNESCO, defined as "sustainable safeguarding."¹⁴ In the Netherlands, this topic has been put on the cultural agenda by the DICH. This article is part of their investment in local research into sustainable safeguarding for intangible cultural heritage. The Frisian case discussed in this article supports both the European and national goals to explore safeguarding opportunities.

The outline of this article is as follows: first, the theoretical background and concepts mentioned in this introduction will be laid out and interrelated. Subsequently, in the methods section, the research structure, circumstances, and ethics of the research will be presented, followed by the results. In the discussion, the conclusions of the most outstanding findings will be presented, illustrating the most striking challenges and opportunities for intangible cultural heritage communities in Friesland. Recommendations, limitations, and finally, directions for further research will conclude this article.

Theoretical Background

Intangible Cultural Heritage

Intangible cultural heritage is a summary of the "practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, and skills inherent to a community."¹⁵ This heritage lives on and changes over time, making it dynamic and relevant, as "culture cannot be abridged to its tangible products; it is continuously living and evolving."¹⁶ Additionally, Lenzerini defines the following elements of intangible cultural heritage:

12 World Tourism Organization, *Tourism and Intangible Cultural Heritage*. Madrid, 2012.

13 United Nations, *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2019*. New York, 2019, p. 44-45. <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2019/The-Sustainable-Development-Goals-Report-2019.pdf> (28-09-2020).

14 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Safeguarding Intangible Heritage and Sustainable Cultural Tourism: Opportunities and Challenges*. UNESCO-EIHCAP Regional Meeting, Hué, 2008. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000178732> (28-09-2020).

15 Cominelli & Greffe, *Intangible*.

16 Lenzerini, *Intangible*, p. 101.

*"All immaterial elements that are considered by a given community as essential components of its intrinsic identity as well as its uniqueness and distinctiveness in comparison with all other human groups."*¹⁷

This definition taps into the idea of cultural diversity, which is a manifestation of the needs of people and communities to distinguish themselves; this, in turn, is expressed through intangible cultural heritage.¹⁸ This concept is especially relevant in recent decades, which see accelerating development in technology and data science, intensive economic growth, and a growing sense of discontinuity and estrangement among people worldwide that might impede the practice and expression of different cultures across the globe.¹⁹ Academics from a variety of disciplines recognize the risks of declining cultural diversity and thus, the prominent role of intangible cultural heritage safeguarding to ensure this diversity persists.²⁰ The definition by Lenzerini also mentions "intrinsic identity"²¹, pointing out the embeddedness of intangible cultural heritage in a person's or community's sense of self and belonging.²²

Since this research draws on existing and developing research in the area of Intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO, their definition of intangible cultural heritage will be further adopted and referred to in this research:

*"The practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage."*²³

Because of the dynamic nature of intangible cultural heritage, UNESCO steers away from the term 'preservation' when it comes to intangible cultural heritage. Instead, they focus on 'safeguarding' as a notion that is more future-oriented and fluent.²⁴ 'Preservation', as used in this article, will, therefore, point towards sustainable preservation, where 'sustainable' indicates this dynamic and future-oriented notion. UNESCO also steers away from concepts such as 'unique' and 'authentic', considering them inappropriate as they fail to recognize the dynamics inherent to intangible cultural heritage. In line with research supporting UNESCO, such terms will be used cautiously in this article when referring to intangible cultural heritage.

17 Ibidem, p. 102.

18 Arizpe, *Intangible*.

19 D. Bhawuk, 'Globalization and Indigenous Cultures: Homogenization or Differentiation?', *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 32:4, 2008, p. 305-317.

20 Ibidem; Arizpe, *Intangible*; Cominelli & Greffe, *Intangible*; Lenzerini, *Intangible*.

21 Lenzerini, *Intangible*.

22 Arizpe, *Intangible*.

23 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*. Paris, 2003, p. 2. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000132540> (28-09-2020).

24 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Safeguarding*.

Cultural Tourism

Tourism, though seemingly paradoxical, plays a critical role in several aspects of intangible cultural heritage safeguarding. Financially, tourism can, for example, play a crucial role in generating capital to fund creative and sustainable innovation to keep intangible cultural heritage lively and relevant.²⁵ Recent years, characterised by rapid globalisation, have also revealed a less beneficial impact tourism can have on a destination or community. The current tourism industry is characterised by rapid, almost unlimited growth.²⁶ The pace of this growth transcends the development of sustainable strategies to counter-effect the impact on the environment. Higgins points out that the tourism industry nowadays is no longer "directed to education, social well-being, inclusion and other non-econometric goals";²⁷ instead, the focus is mainly on general growth and improved infrastructure and transport. Consequently, growing tensions between local institutions and the tourism industry can be observed worldwide.²⁸ As such, tourism plays a relevant role in opportunity exploration and challenges for local intangible cultural heritage.

Cultural tourism is a promising audience for intangible heritage communities because cultural tourists tend to stay longer and spend more money in a certain place than other kinds of tourists.²⁹ Cultural tourists distinguish themselves from general tourists because they focus on a specific cultural location or experience. Hausmann outlines several reoccurring concepts that are common in most definitions of cultural tourism:

*"Visits by people from outside the host community, motivated either entirely or to a certain degree by the cultural offerings and values (aesthetic, historical, etc.) of a particular destination."*³⁰

Cultural tourism is characterised by a combination of cultural heritage sites, their traditional use to locals, and their use to tourists. As a result, often, compromises must be made to make traditional practices and tourism compatible, especially in intangible cultural heritage communities.³¹ TALC a common model used for tourism and tourist areas can be applied to Frisian intangible cultural heritage to make sense of what impact tourism can have on intangible heritage communities in Friesland.

25 A. Hausmann, 'Cultural Tourism: Marketing Challenges and Opportunities for German Cultural Heritage', *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 13:2, 2007, p. 170-184.

26 A. Budeanu et al., 'Sustainable Tourism, Progress, Challenges, and Opportunities: An Introduction', *Journal of Cleaner Production* 111, 2016, p. 285-294; F. Higgins-Desbiolles, 'Sustainable Tourism: Sustaining Tourism or Something More?', *Tourism Management Perspectives* 25, 2018, p. 157-160.

27 Higgins-Desbiolles, *Sustainable*, p. 157.

28 Ibidem; Hausmann, *Cultural*; Schofield, *City*.

29 E. Folasayo, 'Intangible Cultural Heritage as Tourism Product: The Malaysia Experience', *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure* 8:3, 2019, https://www.ajhtl.com/uploads/7/1/6/3/7163688/article_43_vol_8_3_2019.pdf (28-09-2020).

30 Hausmann, *Cultural*, p. 174.

31 Ibidem.

The Tourist Area Life Cycle

Butler introduced the Tourist Area Life Cycle (TALC)³² to make sense of the various hypothetical stages a tourist destination goes through and what this means for a local community and its quality of life. The TALC takes the principle of an asymptotic curve, which means a slow increase of visitors that grows steeper as popularity increases. Eventually, this reaches a ceiling as capacity is overdrawn, social, environmental, or physical factors impede further growth and attractiveness, and visitor numbers decline.³³ Butler sketches the seven stages a tourist destination goes through. As tourism in Friesland is still rather modest, the first three stages are most relevant to the aim of this research. These stages are exploration, involvement, and development. In the exploration stage, small numbers of tourists explore the area and its customs; such tourists are often attracted by the authentic state in which they perceive a place or community confines.³⁴ A community is not yet dependent on regular visitors.³⁵ Second, the involvement stage occurs as a place or community grows in publicity and starts to attract more visitors; this stage is very much characterised by locals, who decide to invest in tourist facilities, such as hospitality.³⁶ In both stages, there is often a large degree of direct communication between locals and tourists, something that is often experienced as pleasant and charming by tourists.³⁷ Next, in the development stage, high rates of tourists are attracted, and advertisement investments increase; in this state, local control tends to decline rapidly.³⁸ For intangible cultural heritage sites, this is the stage where the essential value of the heritage is particularly at stake. Because of increasing tourist numbers, intrinsic cultural practices can be exploited at the cost of their original purposes.³⁹

The TALC should be considered within certain limits, being heavily embedded in marketing theory; therefore, it is not a set concept.⁴⁰ Instead, it consists of hypothetical patterns, followed by various tourist destinations around the world. Nevertheless, the TALC is useful for making sense of how tourism ‘behaves’ in certain areas at certain stages in time. In the concluding remarks of his initial paper on the TALC, Butler stresses the importance of recognizing tourist destinations and heritage communities not as infinite and timeless, such as the model would suggest, but as “finite and possibly non-renewable”.⁴¹ This revelation by Butler indicates that the TALC model could benefit from slight modifications to better fit intangible cultural heritage destinations. They are not mere tourist destinations but also fulfil very

32 Butler, *Tourism*.

33 *Ibidem*.

34 *Ibidem*.

35 *Ibidem*.

36 *Ibidem*.

37 *Ibidem*.

38 *Ibidem*.

39 *Ibidem*.

40 *Ibidem*.

41 *Ibidem*, p. 11.

distinct functions within a local community that are not easily reproducible or renewable. Consequently, the TALC model does not incorporate these different functions of an intangible heritage community and could be remodelled to the extent that it becomes more inclusive and aware of the diversity of purposes of intangible cultural heritage. Butler's note on finiteness and non-renewability also relates to the sustainable component of both tourism and the intangible cultural heritage evident in contemporary studies of tourism and heritage safeguarding.⁴² Additionally, this also stresses the importance of exploring strategies and challenges for intangible cultural heritage regarding tourism.

Sustainable Challenges and Strategies

First in 2003, UNESCO's States Parties have gathered to compose and continually review and improve the Convention for the safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage.⁴³ This convention is directed at overcoming challenges faced by intangible heritage communities and therefore relevant in formulating sustainable strategies for the purpose of this research. In the operational directives, special attention is being paid to the possible role of tourism for specific intangible heritage communities in the sixth chapter. Key is the expected role of States Parties in facilitating and promoting initiative and opportunities for heritage communities, here it is also mentioned in relation to tourism States Parties ought to "anticipate potential impact before activities are initiated".⁴⁴ This line stresses the importance of research and anticipation of possible strategies and outcomes to facilitate tourism in intangible heritage communities in the best and most sustainable possible way.

Following the hypothetical asymptotic curve of the TALC, increasing tourism numbers can induce the commercialisation of local communities to gain maximum economic benefit from their visitors.⁴⁵ This commercialisation can result in the loss of intrinsic value of local intangible cultural heritage communities but does not necessarily have to be the case if carefully constructed, sustainable strategies are adopted.⁴⁶ Modern technologies and developments have led to a lively debate on opportunity creation for intangible cultural heritage communities. Intangible heritage communities do not merely need strategies to manage cultural tourism; they also need creative ways to promote their heritage in the first place since the passing of time and generations influences the way people perceive intangible heritage.

An important factor in strategically attracting tourism is understanding how people manage their time. Popularity can decline as younger generations

42 Ibidem.

43 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Operational Directives for the Implementation of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Heritage*. Paris, 2018, p. 170-197. https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ICH-Operational_Directives-7.GA-PDF-EN.pdf (28-09-2020).

44 Ibidem, p. 37.

45 Butler, *Tourism*; Folasayo, *Intangible*.

46 Folasayo, *Intangible*.

find other uses for their time.⁴⁷ This goes not only for visitors but also for younger generations who are expected to inherit intangible heritage communities in the future. Linder recognized a rising trend of people packing their free time with activities to increase their productivity, calling them 'the Harried Leisure Class' that experiences, rather contradictorily, more stress as they gain more leisure.⁴⁸ Nowadays, the harried leisure class, defined by its voracious and rather unsustainable leisure spending, has been joined by the 'Equanimeous Leisure Class', defined by its little leisure activity and more passive spending of time, such as in watching television.⁴⁹ Both these classes form a different kind of challenge for both attracting and enthusing people of all ages.

Educative tools are a crucial part of setting sustainable safeguarding in motion, and they attract and enthuse people.⁵⁰ Research has shown how visitors of historic sites prioritize learning something over the overall atmosphere, though together, they belong to the top priorities of visitors.⁵¹ An important medium gaining increasing attention in the educational field is technology (and so-called smart tools), indicating technological developments such as "sensors, big data, open data, and new ways of connectivity."⁵² The establishment of online platforms through smart tools and social media can support educative learning experiences for young and older people alike to keep intangible cultural heritage lively and attractive.⁵³ This also stresses the importance of marketing for intangible heritage, dealing with exploring the demands and wishes of targeted visitors and appealing to them through various modern technologies and tools such as social media.

Creating an appealing marketing strategy for tourism requires intangible heritage communities to increase their strengths. A recurring strength or appeal of intangible cultural heritage is its close relation and connection to the past.⁵⁴ This relates to a trend observable on a more global scale: the desire to escape modern rapid globalisation and rediscover 'authentic' experiences.⁵⁵ This trend is promising for developing sustainable strategies for cultural tourism and intangible heritage communities, as it stresses how tourists tend to be more aware of the communities they visit and value their essence and intrinsic value. Crucial in this is 'experience', which is key in transmitting

47 M. Ott, F. Dagnino & F. Pozzi, 'Intangible Cultural Heritage: Towards Collaborative Planning of Educational Interventions', *Computers in Human Behavior* 51, 2015, p. 1314-1319.

48 S. Linder, *The Harried Leisure Class*. New York, 1970.

49 I. Glorieux et al., 'In Search of the Harried Leisure Class in Contemporary Society: Time-use Surveys and Patterns of Leisure Time Consumption', *Journal of Consumer Policy* 33:2, 2010, p. 163-181.

50 Ott, Dagnino & Pozzi, *Intangible*.

51 Butler, *Tourism*.

52 U. Gretzel et al., 'Smart Tourism: Foundations and Developments', *Electronic Markets: The International Journal on Networked Business* 25:3, 2015, p. 179-188 (p. 179).

53 Ott, Dagnino & Pozzi, *Intangible*.

54 Butler, *Tourism*; Cominelli & Greffe, *Intangible*; Little et al., *Innovative*.

55 I. Yeoman & U. McMahon-Beattie, 'The Experience Economy: Micro Trends', *Journal of Tourism Futures* 5:2, 2019, p. 114-119.

the essence and value of intangible cultural heritage from a community to its visitors.

Experience Communities

Pine and Gilmore have established a theory around the 'experience economy', stressing experiences as the core element of entertainment and education.⁵⁶ Intangible heritage consists inherently of experiences that tie together to form identity and culture. Experiences are defined as any combination of goods and services that cumulate to engage an individual or group and create lasting memories or feelings. Thus, experiences are meant to be memorable and unique.⁵⁷ The experience economy is originally placed in a marketing perspective, making it an asset in promoting and selling products, services, places, or practices,⁵⁸ which also makes it well-equipped for promoting intangible heritage communities and tourism.⁵⁹ The term 'experiential marketing' is especially relevant; this deals with anticipating an individual's emotional values and needs to increase involvement with either a product or service, leading to an experience.⁶⁰ There are four so-called realms of experience: entertainment, education, aesthetic, and escapist.⁶¹ Depending on the shape, size, and form of intangible cultural heritage communities, they can focus on one or more realms to facilitate experiences for their visitors. Education could be a promising realm to pursue relating to awareness creation. According to Oh, Fiore, and Jeoung, the active interaction of the mind facilitates new knowledge to create an understanding of certain practices and their worth.⁶² Additionally, self-education and personal enlightenment have been deemed important to satisfy the cultural tourist's intrinsic motivations for visiting certain places or communities.⁶³

Intangible cultural heritage communities are the designated parties to facilitate experiences. They are often grouped in official or unofficial organisations of practitioners, locals, or enthusiasts. Tourism, for such organisations, is often not only a vital part of finance and funding, but it is also an opportunity for heritage communities to engage others in creating awareness and enthusiasm for their specific cultural heritage. This is not only beneficial for short-term financial reasons but also facilitates the long-term sustainable endurance of the intangible cultural heritage. Therefore, by creating experiences for visitors, intangible cultural heritage communities

56 Pine & Gilmore, *Experience*.

57 *Ibidem*.

58 S. Chang, 'Experience Economy in the Hospitality and Tourism Context', *Tourism Management Perspectives* 27, 2018, p. 83-90.

59 M. Alexiou, 'Experience Economy and Co-creation in a Cultural Heritage Festival: Consumers' Views', *Journal of Heritage Tourism* 15:2, 2019, p. 200-216.

60 Pine & Gilmore, *Experience*.

61 *Ibidem*.

62 H. Oh, A. Fiore & M. Jeoung, 'Measuring Experience Economy Concepts: Tourism Applications', *Journal of Travel Research* 46:2, 2007, p. 119-132.

63 *Ibidem*.

do not only engage visitors at the time of visiting but also aid future survival and thus, safeguard the heritage. Creating experiences does depend heavily on balancing out the desires and needs of, on the one side, intangible heritage communities, and, on the other side, tourists, and visitors. Consequently, intangible cultural heritage communities must carefully define their goals and values to prevent becoming ‘tourist relics’.⁶⁴ To balance out these different needs, education through experiences can prove valuable for transferring the message of sustainable safeguarding and the value of intangible cultural heritage to tourists.⁶⁵ This is, however, dependent on the specific challenges and opportunities perceived by Frisian intangible heritage communities.

Methods

To explore the opportunities and challenges faced by intangible cultural heritage communities in Friesland, a qualitative approach has been adopted, utilising semi-structured interviews with representatives of Frisian intangible cultural heritage. Since opportunities and challenges lie, by definition, in the eye of the beholder and are, therefore, very prone to interpretation, a qualitative research method most effectively explores the perception of tourism and sustainable safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage.⁶⁶ Additionally, the constructionist element of qualitative research aids insight into the social and societal contexts of the interviewees that also affect the intangible cultural heritage they represent.⁶⁷

Friesland

Friesland is a province in the North of the Netherlands, that stands out especially because of its own distinctive language similar to old English, that has been recognized by the Dutch government as the second official language of the country (Fryslan.frl). Additionally, the Frisian countryside is characterized by large areas of agricultural land as well as water and waterways that cumulate in the UNESCO recognized heritage site of the Waddenzee (Fryslan.frl). Friesland houses a considerable array of traditions and customs not seen elsewhere in the country and can therefore be considered a distinct cultural domain of the Netherlands.

Procedures

A sample of four Frisian intangible cultural heritages was selected based on characterising features such as distinctiveness and rootedness in Frisian history and culture but also in light of the timeframe and length of the current

64 Butler, *Tourism*, p. 11.

65 Ibidem; Oh, Fiore & Jeoung, *Measuring*.

66 E. Bell, A. Bryman & B. Harley, *Business Research Methods* (Third edition). New York, 2011.

67 Ibidem.



F. 1: Frisian woodcarving in De Knipe – Picture: Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage.

article.⁶⁸ All four intangible heritage communities differ from each other in slight manners, such as scope, frequency of execution, and the number of executioners. All heritage communities and representatives are shortly introduced below.

Frisian woodcarving in the Knipe is an ancient craft mainly practised in a village in the south of the Frisian province. Individual woodcarvers decorate wooden objects and furniture with typical, often geometric shapes that have been influenced by the ancient merchant and fishing culture in the region. In the Knipe, you can see it still being practised by some locals (DICH). *Erno Korpershoek*, a practitioner of the craft, lives in the Knipe and has his work on display in his workshop.

The *Hindelooper Culture* is inherent to one of the eleven Frisian cities, Hindeloopen. Its culture is characterised by an established trading history and the harbour, located on a small peninsula of the IJsselmeer, which used to be part of the sea. Its most distinguishing features are decorative painting, traditional dressing, and a distinctive language resembling Old-Frisian in both sound and vocabulary (DICH). Additionally, the city houses two museums

68 Ibidem.



F. 2: The culture of Hindeloopen – Picture: Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage.

connected to its culture and ice-skating history. *Pieter Bult* is the project manager for the foundation for the safeguarding of the Hindelooper Culture. He helped to found the organisation and functions as the project manager.

Gondola riding on wheels in Drogeham is an annual procession where so-called gondolas on wheels, decorated with dahlias and built by neighbourhood community groups, ride through the town. It is categorized as a flower parade and was first organised in 1967 when inhabitants of Drogeham got inspired by a neighbouring gondola procession and decided to do something similar on carriages since the town has no waterway (DICH). *Jellie Hamstra*, an inhabitant of Drogeham, is the chairwoman of the foundation that organises the annual event.

The Strontweek is an annual event derived from the ancient transport over water between Friesland and the Northern region of Holland. Frisian fishermen traditionally transported dung to tulip fields in North-Holland as fertiliser, hence the name 'Shit Week'. In 1973, the first 'Strontrace' was organised to revitalise the old sailing route and make a competition and training out of it. Now, the event covers an entire week in which teams must travel the old route using only a compass and the wind. Additionally, a sailor-song festival and maritime market have been added to the festivity to commemorate the old fishermen's way of life (DICH). *Eelke Boersma* is the secretary of the sailing foundation that annually organises the event.

All interviewees were approached through email, first by Albert van der Zeijden, DICH representative, and after their consent, directly by me. All interviews were planned per national health regulations at the time of research, amidst the global Corona crisis. As a result, three out of four interviews have been conducted by phone call and one by physical encounter. All interviewees



F. 3: Gondola ride on wheels in Drogeham – Picture: Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage.



F. 4: Avontuur bomend It Soal binnen – Picture: Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage.

have been asked to read and sign a consent agreement beforehand regarding the ethics, recording, and display of personal details (see Appendix A for the agreement form). All recordings have been stored according to privacy regulations approved by the University of Groningen.

Data Collection

All interviews adopted a semi-structured fashion, facilitating interpretation and the free speech of interviewees.⁶⁹ The interview guide has been constructed through frequent feedback loops facilitated by DICH representative Albert van der Zeijden, supervisor and knowledge partner Maaïke de Jong (University of Groningen, Campus Fryslân and NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences), Alexander Grit (Hanze University of Applied Sciences / Alfa-college), and fellow researcher Sander Vroom (Hanze University of Applied Sciences) see Appendix B for the interview guide. Interviewees were asked to recall personal and organisational wishes and bottlenecks concerning tourism and the safeguarding of the heritage. Due to the extraordinary circumstances during the time of research, during the Corona crisis, some related questions about the impact of this crisis have also been included. To ensure validity, a distinction has been made in the questions between challenges and opportunities in pre-Corona circumstances and challenges perceived during the crisis. Overall, objectivity has been emulated through the careful construction of questions, including continuous feedback loops and facilitating free speech as much as possible.⁷⁰ All interviews have been conducted in Dutch, the native language of all interviewees. Consequently, interviewees could speak more freely and comfortably than would have been the case in English. The unprecedented circumstances at the time of research, amidst the Corona crisis, may affect the reliability of this specific research, as the results have possibly been influenced by the ruling circumstances and sentiments of the interviewed parties at the time of interviewing.

Data Analysis

The data acquired from the interviews has first been transcribed, leaving disruptive sounds and unnecessary repetition out.⁷¹ The transcripts have been translated using thematic analysis, defining a variety of recurring themes relating to perceived opportunities and challenges for intangible heritage communities. By distinguishing different themes within the answers of the various representatives, possible directions for promising, cooperative opportunity exploration can be discovered. The themes will be discussed in the results section.

RESULTS

In this section, the results of the four semi-structured interviews will be outlined using thematic concepts from the discussed literature and transcribed interviews.

69 Ibidem.

70 Ibidem.

71 Ibidem.

| | <i>Woodcarving in the Kriipe</i> | <i>Gondola riding on wheels in Drogeham</i> | <i>Hindelooper Culture</i> | <i>Strontweek</i> |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Visitors (annually)</i> | +/- 100 in workshop + spectators from museum exhibitions | +/- 18.000 spectators for both adult and children gondola procession | 35.000 for museums + Day trip visitors | 3.000 for festival + market +/- 60000 spectators |
| <i>Frequency</i> | All year round | One weekend in September | All year round | One week in October |
| <i>Target group</i> | Specific interest group | All ages | All ages | All ages |
| <i>Nationality</i> | Mainly Dutch | Mainly Dutch/regional | Dutch+ international | Mainly Dutch |
| <i>Stability of visitor numbers</i> | Steady | Steady | Growing | Steady |
| <i>Tourist Stage (TALC)</i> | Exploration | Investment | Development | Development |
| <i>Satisfaction of tourist rates</i> | Relatively Satisfied | Unsatisfied | Unsatisfied | Unsatisfied |

Table 1: Tourism in Frisian Intangible Heritage Communities.

Tourism

As mentioned in the theory section, Frisian intangible cultural heritage communities can be roughly categorized into the first three stages of tourism, according to the TALC model.⁷² In Table 1, the state of tourism in the four intangible cultural heritage communities is displayed.

The relatively small number of visitors, small interest groups, and individual practitioners place the woodcarving craft in the exploration stage of tourism. Korpershoek describes his craft and the number of visitors as ‘very modest’. The other three heritage communities are further advanced in facilitating visitors and tourism. The main reason for categorizing gondola riding on wheels in the involvement stage as opposed to development lies in the visitor range. In the interview, Hamstra specifically mentioned that many visitors of the gondola procession are from the area or neighbouring provinces. This span fits more in the involvement stage, where investments are still mainly made in accessibility and facilities for tourism. The Strontweek and Hindelooper culture facilitate a larger, more widespread visitor range, placing them in the development phase.

Local Community

The role of local communities in both the execution and support of the intangible cultural heritage is another prominent theme. In Table 2, the perceived status of local communities in each heritage community is presented.

72 Butler, *Tourism*.

| | <i>Woodcarving in the Knipe</i> | <i>Gondola riding on wheels in Drogeham</i> | <i>Hindelooper Culture</i> | <i>Strontweek</i> |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <i>Scope</i> | Knipe and surroundings | Village of Drogeham | City of Hindeloopen | City of Workum |
| <i>Demography</i> | Mainly elderly practitioners | All generations | All generations | Young- adults and adults |
| <i>Involvement</i> | No involvement | High involvement | High involvement | Little involvement |
| <i>Connection</i> | x | Raised with tradition | Raised with tradition | x |
| <i>Dynamic</i> | Decline over the years | Stable | Increase over the years | Stable |
| <i>Stance towards visitors</i> | x | Welcoming | Overall welcoming, some friction | x |
| <i>Future Generations</i> | Very few new practitioners | Youth excited about tradition | Youth excited about tradition | Some youth excited about tradition |

Table 2: Local Communities.

An important distinction made in the interviews is the difference between the local community and the organisations and practitioners that organise and execute the intangible cultural heritage. These two entities are often tightly interwoven, which requires some caution when speaking about the role of local communities within the intangible heritage. In the case of the woodcarving craft, Korpershoek indicated little involvement of the local community because it concerns an individual craft. In the case of gondola-riding in Drogeham, the involvement of the community is deemed high because of the several community groups that build gondolas for the procession. Similarly, in the case of the Hindeloopen, involvement is regarded as high because it concerns a culture that is interwoven into the fabric of daily life in the city. Bult also mentioned that the culture is included in town and school regulations, as children are taught the Hindelooper language in primary school. The Strontweek, according to Boersma, suffers from insufficient involvement of the local community. The main reasons he gives for this are the location of the event, the harbour, which is quite secluded from the city centre, and local entrepreneurs. Additionally, the founder was not very connected with the inhabitants of Workum, a dynamic that has remained over the years. Another interesting finding is that whereas the involved community in Hindeloopen is extremely positive towards tourism, friction exists between inhabitants that have moved to Hindeloopen for peace and quiet and entrepreneurs that want to profit from increasing tourism.

None of the representatives expressed a direct fear of loss of the intangible cultural heritage. However, all indicated their biggest concern was to keep the heritage lively and topical for future generations. The Hindelooper culture and gondola riding in Drogeham indicated enough involvement to pass on the culture and traditions, provided there is necessary support and stimulation. The Strontweek also mentioned no immediate fear for the loss of the heritage as their contestants come from across the Netherlands. In the case of woodcarving, only a few woodcarvers remain, and attracting youngsters is currently minimally effective, according to Korpershoek.

| | Woodcarving in the Knipe | Gondola riding on wheels in Drogeham | Hindelooper Culture | Strontweek |
|--------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------|---------------------|------------|
| Sponsors | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Museums | Collaboration | × | Collaboration | × |
| Website | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Social Media | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| App | No | No | Yes | No |
| Stakeholders | No | No | Yes | No |

Table 3: Mediums for Marketing and Modernisation.

Renewal and Modernisation

All representatives indicated they, together with their organisations, actively try keeping up with modern trends to raise awareness for their heritage. In Table 3, the most common sources of marketing and modernization mentioned by the interviewees have been laid out.

From this table, it appears that the Hindelooper culture utilises the most mediums to draw visitors, and woodcarving displays the least number of mediums. In the interview, Korpershoek did indicate a willingness to learn more about the use of social media channels. Both the organisation for gondola riding on wheels and the organisation for the preservation of the Hindelooper culture also indicated an interest in workshops or learning from effective marketing examples of other intangible heritage communities. The organisation for the Strontweek mentioned that they have a considerable ability to deal with marketing and PR business on their own.

Noteworthy is the overall lack of collaboration with stakeholders and other entrepreneurs. Despite occasional collaboration with museums and big events, such as LF2018, most communities, except for the Hindelooper culture, indicate little to no collaboration with external stakeholders. An interesting finding regarding international relations is that both Hindeloopen and Drogeham, and the national organisation for flower parades, are in the application process for UNESCO intangible heritage recognition. Both parties indicate this as a ‘big injection’ for their heritage, drawing international attention.

Sustainability was overall regarded as highly relevant, both environmentally and societally. Some remarks were also made on financial sustainability, as the current Corona crisis impacts many of the intangible heritage communities. Events such as the Strontweek and gondola riding suffer especially as they are very dependent on carrying out their event. Additionally, the Corona crisis impacts the involvement and societal aspect of most intangible heritage. Close communities, such as Hindeloopen and community groups in Drogeham, can no longer gather and communicate as usual. All heritage communities indicated they are unsure, to some degree, about the future impact of the Corona crisis on their heritage.

All four interviewees mentioned several systems that provide or could provide support, as displayed in Table 4. Striking is that Boersma mentioned

| | <i>Woodcarving in the Knipe</i> | <i>Gondola riding on wheels in Drogeham</i> | <i>Hindelooper Culture</i> | <i>Strontweek</i> |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Municipality</i> | No support Craft too small and specific | Enthusiasm Lack of pro-activity | Cultural subsidy Tourism stimulated Lack of pro-activity | Cultural subsidy Good collaboration |
| <i>Government</i> | x | x | Stimulating preservation | Legislation impedes traditional practices |
| <i>DCICH</i> | Good support | Good support | Good support Could be more pro-active | Cannot help with legislative issues Could be more pro-active |
| <i>Other</i> | Museums | Foundation for national flower parades | College- and university cultural projects | x |

Table 4: External Support Systems.

how his organisation suffers from increasing legislation, impeding traditional ways of sailing during the Strontrace. Safety regulations force them to sail with the use of technology and motors, which contradict tradition. Permits are another barrier for traditional fishing, which takes place during the Strontweek. According to most of the communities, generally, some pro-activity in supporting heritage safeguarding and tourism from the side of municipalities is missing. From a national angle, only the Hindelooper culture seems to benefit from stimulation by the national government. The DICH, overall, is perceived as supportive, but some pro-activity in stimulating collaboration and networking would be appreciated. For external support, especially gondola riding on wheels in Drogeham benefits from their membership of the foundation for Dutch flower parades, which they perceive as very supporting. Korpershoek indicated he would like to see more active interest in Frisian crafts from cultural institutions such as museums.

Additionally, all four intangible cultural heritage communities pointed out several global trends impacting their heritage. Korpershoek mentioned a small reevaluation of old crafts and practices, something he, as a craftsman, takes advantage of; this fits in with a larger trend also recognized by Boersma: 'A longing for nostalgia'. All four representatives mentioned how people become busier as they gain more hobbies and ambitions, and amid this, a trend of longing for 'authenticity' and tradition is being recognized by the intangible cultural heritage communities. In return, these communities are happy to facilitate by exploring various ways to put their heritage in the spotlight.

Discussion

Conclusions

The results from the four interviews with intangible heritage communities have presented several striking topics worth discussing concerning the challenges and opportunities these communities face in 21st-century society.

Before doing so, however, it is critical to point out the difference between equality and equity in the case of the four heritage communities in question and possible recommendations. As was already briefly pointed out in the methodology, the four interviewed communities showcase differences in scope, frequency of execution, and the number of executioners. Learning the results, this difference has become prominent in defining different challenges and opportunities regarding tourism and safeguarding for each and demanding personal strategies based on equity rather than one formula based on equality. The latter would be counterproductive and unfair to the distinctiveness of all parties involved. Therefore, a rough distinction can be made defining woodcarving as a craft, gondola riding on wheels, and the Strontweek as events, and the Hindelooper culture as lifestyle intangible cultural heritage.

Another relevant distinction worth mentioning when it comes to defining strategies for sustainable tourism and cultural tourism is the different dimensions of sustainability that were perceived by the interviewees. These can be categorized as environmental, societal, and financial sustainability. Cumulated, these three dimensions fit perfectly in the triple bottom line theory, defining sustainability as a combination of 3 P's: people, planet, and profit.⁷³ These three dimensions provide an effective framework to define different forms of challenges and opportunities that the different intangible cultural heritage communities in Friesland encounter.

Challenges

The societal dimension of the triple bottom line provides the most challenges perceived by Frisian intangible heritage communities. All interviewees, when asked about the most pressing challenge for their heritage, mentioned, first and foremost, fear of passing on the heritage to future generations and ensuring its survival. The biggest challenge, thus, appears to be finding ways to enthuse young community members and ensure enough public support to keep the heritage lively and engaging. Trends in contemporary society feed this development of younger generations finding less time to invest in either visiting or preserving intangible cultural heritage. This appears especially relevant for the crafts and events, as these are less prominent and interwoven into daily life the same way the Hindelooper culture is. Both Korpershoek and Hamstra mention aspects of the 'harried leisure class', as they observe people getting more hobbies and becoming busier in general.⁷⁴ Additionally, aspects of the 'Equanimeous leisure class' are also recognized, as mediums such as social media become increasingly prominent in the lives of younger generations.⁷⁵ Persuading especially these people to physically engage with intangible cultural heritage proves challenging. This challenge also demonstrates itself

73 H. Patzelt & D. Shepherd, 'Recognizing Opportunities for Sustainable Development', *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice* 35(4), 2011, p. 631-652.

74 Linder, *Harried*.

75 Glorieux et al., *In Search*.

in the ageing problem that is observable in Western societies across the planet. This is especially evident in woodcarving and parts of the Hindelooper culture; practitioners are spread thinly throughout the province, and most of them are above the age of 50. The gap between these people and younger generations is considerable, not in the least because of evident differences in means of communication and leisure spending.

Another challenge for intangible cultural heritage communities poses itself in the economic spectrum of sustainable safeguarding and tourism. There appears to be an overall search for a proper and effective means of reaching people and adopting effective marketing. Table 1 shows how in three out of four heritage communities, visitor numbers have remained stable over the years, indicating a lack of knowledge or financials to attract larger or different audiences. The motives behind these tourist dynamics vary from community to community, in part explainable by the TALC. Small crafts, such as woodcarving, which are still in the exploratory phase of tourism, search for new ways to promote their heritage but are obstructed by the individuality of the craft and struggling to gather new knowledge on their own. The organisation for gondola riding on wheels has reached regional visitors but finds it difficult to explore other options to reach a more widespread audience. For the Strontweek, a slightly different motive applies, as they are reaching saturation and have already adopted most options to attract more visitors. Their struggle mainly lies in finding enough capital to extend marketing options. An overall financial challenge is finding both enough capital and people to explore new marketing strategies.

The Corona crisis taps into both the financial and societal side of sustainability issues. As an unprecedented event with extreme measurements, all interviewees indicated challenges resulting from this crisis. For the events especially, financial issues are relevant, as their events are either cancelled or on the brink of cancellation. Additionally, on the social side, the impediment of physical communication impacts the communal sense on which some communities rely. For example, in the case of the gondola building, which brings members of the community of Drogeham together months before the actual event, due to cancellation, these communities now need other ways to meet each other.

Opportunities

The high relevance of environmental sustainability in intangible cultural heritage communities in Friesland is the first striking area for opportunity. Most intangible cultural heritage has a longstanding history based on traditional practices with low environmental impact, stemming from pre-industrialised societies. Woodcarving in the Knipe is a manual craft utilising local wood. The Strontweek is based on manual labour as well, without the use of mechanics or technology to drive the ships or catch the fish. The core elements of the Hindelooper culture are also founded on manual and local craftsmanship. Gondola riding on wheels, though relatively new, also works to actively search for more environmentally-friendly ways to sustain their tradition, such as using

less harmful glue for their gondolas. Overall, intangible heritage communities are in a fruitful position to not only sustain and pass on their tradition but also create awareness and appeal for environmentally-friendly practices. This ties in with a more widespread trend observed by Bhawuk and acknowledged by most interviewees: a general longing for locality, authenticity, and revaluation of old crafts.⁷⁶

The latter revaluation of tradition and, in a sense, simplicity, fits in with societal sustainability and is a considerable area for opportunity exploration for intangible cultural heritage communities. Relating back to Pine and Gilmore's experience community theory and the concept of experiential marketing, all communities already facilitate an array of experiences for their visitors. These range from city tours to workshops that, despite appearing as mere services, inherently facilitate experiences based on tradition and perceived authenticity. Such experiences are deeply rooted in perception, an area in which intangible cultural heritage communities could invest more, creating perceptions or 'windows into the past'.⁷⁷ These could not only serve as a fulfilling of visitor's needs but also include educational value regarding societal and environmental sustainability. Another area of societal opportunity is collaboration. Out of the four communities, only Hindeloopen indicated systematic collaboration with local stakeholders. Systematically incorporating local entrepreneurs offers the opportunity to create more public support and a tighter network or community that is essential to ensure sustainable safeguarding.

On the financial side of sustainability and tourism, intangible cultural heritage in Friesland has shown ample opportunity for profitable marketing and modern means of communication and advertisement. These are not all equally utilized, however, in an era where influencers dominate, and online collaboration and sponsoring has become a norm for effective marketing. Additionally, a considerable opportunity lies in the creation of online applications, or apps, to facilitate interactive experiences for different ages and create opportunities for digital visits, which is highly relevant due to the Corona crisis and its possible aftermath. International sources of funds could also be more actively attracted, which is especially relevant for the Hindelooper culture and gondola riding on wheels. Both are currently awaiting recognition by UNESCO, which could induce international relations and collaboration to create larger support and marketing bases.

Recommendations

In line with large differences existing between the intangible cultural heritage communities interviewed, different strategies can be defined for each. This section is meant to provoke further research and opportunity exploration for the relevant communities and stimulate further research into sustainable strategies for intangible cultural heritage communities in general.

⁷⁶ Bhawuk, *Globalization*.

⁷⁷ Little et al., *Innovative*.

For *Woodcarving in the Knipe*, as a relatively small craft, the most promising area for opportunity exploration lies in collaboration on many different levels. Through collaboration with fellow carvers and craftsmen, a larger and more stable support base can be created. Furthermore, a network with people from similar crafts, both national and international, could benefit the general recognition and revaluation of craftsmanship. More intensive and regular collaboration with museums would also benefit woodcarving, as these cultural institutions reach much larger publics. Additionally, social media channels could be utilised more extensively for promotion. Finally, collaborations with furniture makers or fellow artists can further spread the awareness of the craft and increase usability and practicality. Accessories could be sculpted from wood, addressing larger publics and anticipating trends of authenticity, sustainability, and locality. Woodcarving would also benefit from increased support from overarching institutions, such as the municipality. *Gondola riding on wheels in Drogeham*, the organisation for gondola riding on wheels in Drogeham, is already rather well-developed when it comes to marketing and modern trends, such as social media. An expressed concern is their lack of knowledge of additional opportunities and channels to reach a more widespread audience. Extensive collaboration with the overarching organisation for Dutch flower parades could facilitate this, for example, by exchanging good practices, creating combined experiences by offering combined tickets, or setting up public schedules of all flower parades. Additionally, collaboration with fellow villages and local entrepreneurs can root the event in a larger area and ensure economic survival by, for example, including community groups from other villages. Here, it is important to keep a balance between original core values and characteristics and renewal and expansion. Recognition by UNESCO would be another important injection for increasing visitor rates and possibly funding to expand marketing.

For *Strontweek*, an event that stretches over several provinces of the Netherlands with Friesland as the centre, the organisation could invest in an intensive collaboration with organisations in the Southern provinces to increase publicity for the event. Currently, the organisation has little to no stakeholders; this could be improved by attracting local entrepreneurs in, for example, the hospitality field. Consequently, tourists could be attracted for longer periods of time, incorporating dinner and overnight stays into the heritage. On the safeguarding side, the organisation is already working on enabling more people to participate in the Strontrace. Additionally, workshops and masterclasses in fishing and sailing can be offered to increase interaction to accompany passive activities such as watching. To attract more youngsters, perhaps a smaller children edition could be organised with guided sailing competitions in the harbour of Workum. Legislative-wise, extended communication and collaboration between the government, DICH, and organisation could be facilitated to reach agreements on the traditional execution of sailing and fishing during the Strontweek.

Hindelooier Culture, the organisation for the preservation of the Hindelooier culture, is already well-advanced and enjoys the most national and international attention of all four intangible heritage communities. A

major concern expressed by the organisation is ensuring a balance if visitor numbers increase further; this is critical to prevent further friction between locals, entrepreneurs, and tourists ‘such as in Giethoorn’, according to Bult. Giethoorn here is an example of ‘over-tourism’ in the Netherlands, something Hindeloopen needs to watch out for if international recognition grows. Therefore, it is imperative to keep an eye on the size of the town and the number of tourists visiting in peak seasons. This could be done by regulating tourist numbers and keeping closely in touch with the local community to ensure all parties are contented. Collaboration with local entrepreneurs already takes place; this could facilitate in creating further experiences, such as introductions to the language, painting workshops, sewing classes, or dress-ups for tourists. As such, the local community can closely monitor tourism, reducing the risk of losing control over the heritage and its values.

Overall, with an eye on global trends of globalisation, people getting busier, and intangible heritage being tested by the accelerating pace of a changing world, all four intangible cultural heritage communities could benefit from collaboration and increased relations amongst each other. Combining heritage communities could increase public support and spread especially small heritage communities, such as woodcarving, over a larger amount of people. Combining here does not indicate giving up core values and characteristics to form a new, cumulated heritage. Instead, by merely supporting and advertising each other, a network can be created that can gain wider attention. Municipalities, as local bodies of authority and cultural funds, could more actively engage in facilitating collaboration and creating a network. Together with museums, they can create a campaign around ‘Frisian experiences’, drawing larger audiences than single municipality campaigns probably would. This collaboration ties in with the proposal of the 2006 Expert Meeting on Community Involvement in Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) that suggests an establishment of “advisory bodies, comprising cultural practitioners, researchers, NGOs, civil society, local representatives and relevant others, for the purpose of consultation on inventorying and safeguarding ICH.”⁷⁸ Moreover, the Expert Meeting suggests to “establish local support teams including community representatives, cultural practitioners and others with specific skills and knowledge in training and capacity building to assist in inventorying and safeguarding specific cases of ICH.”⁷⁹ Some hypothetical examples of collaborations are: combining Hindelooper painting and furniture decoration with woodcarving to incite renewal and enthuse young artists and builders, featuring woodcarving and Hindelooper painting during the Strontweek and gondola procession, or advertising the Strontweek in Hindeloopen as a nearby event and vice versa. Such small collaborations create interaction between intangible heritage communities to create more

78 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation & Asia/Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO, *Expert Meeting on Community Involvement in Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage: Towards the Implementation of the 2003 Convention*. Tokyo, 2006, p. 13. <https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/00034-EN.pdf> (28-09-2020).

79 Ibidem.

widespread attention and recognition. Together, these communities can ‘enlarge’ their heritage, making use of their dynamic nature. Instead of several small to medium-sized communities, together, they can form a network of Frisian intangible cultural heritage. Through collaboration, they can create larger support systems and spread tourism over the countryside to ensure both environmental and societal sustainability are safeguarded. Friesland offers good infrastructure and is not massive in scale, allowing tourists to cross the province in minimum amounts of time to visit several heritage communities and get full experiences, creating Friesland as a ‘round’ tourism destination with an eye on tradition as well as sustainability. Additionally, external institutions, such as universities and colleges, could pose as think-tanks to both entice youngsters to think about intangible cultural heritage in their region and give contemporary input to traditional communities and practices.

These recommendations also fit in the operational directives of the convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, that are all directed at collaboration between States Parties and intangible heritage communities, to anticipate and encourage, where possible, sustainable tourism and safeguarding.⁸⁰

Limitations

Some limitations apply to this research because it deals with the opinions and perceptions of representatives of the chosen intangible cultural heritage communities. This article deals with opportunity exploration and possible strategies for the environmental, societal, and financial sustainability challenges of intangible cultural heritage communities concerning tourism and safeguarding. As the interviews have been with representatives of intangible cultural heritage, the results and discussion should be considered with an eye on the perceptive nature of these results. Also, the fact that this research utilises models and theories that have not been customised for intangible heritage communities, the fit of these models into the research should be considered when defining tangible strategies and policies relating to tourism promotion and intangible heritage. Tailored models and theory would benefit future research into tourism and the discussed communities.

Furthermore, another limitation is the scope of the research. Initially, the research was to use a larger interview pool, including local municipalities and Museumfederatie Fryslân in the interviews to attain insights into the challenge and opportunity perception from other sides than only intangible heritage communities. Due to the limited timeframe and size of the research, municipalities were discarded. Additionally, Museumfederatie Fryslân did not respond timely enough, possibly due to the unusual circumstances at the time of research. Therefore, the current research could have been richer had these partners been included; this introduces the first opportunity for further research.

80 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Operational*.

Additionally, due to the highly unusual circumstances at the time of research, resulting from the Corona crisis, the research structure and results should be considered in light of these unprecedented circumstances. One consequence here is that not all interviews have been conducted through the same medium; this has resulted in a noteworthy difference in the length of the physical interviews as opposed to the interviews conducted over the phone. This could be explained by the rather impersonal and unusual approach used through calling, which, combined with insecure and perhaps distracting circumstances, may have resulted in biased results with an eye on the original research aim and question.⁸¹

Further Research

Further research around challenges and opportunities for intangible cultural heritage communities to combine sustainable safeguarding and cultural tourism could focus on other parties involved with the intangible cultural heritage in question. Such parties can include municipalities, local entrepreneurs, museum federations, or tourist offices. Combining the stances and opinions of external parties can help to articulate clear strategies for tourism and heritage policy within and between municipalities, organisations, and intangible cultural heritage communities. As for the specific intangible cultural heritage communities discussed in this article, further in-depth research could be done into the specifics of their organisation, and its challenges and opportunities, through interviews with more community members. Consequently, tailored advice and strategies can be drawn up and implemented.

In conclusion, this article has pointed out the status and livelihood of some of the most prominent intangible heritage communities in the province of Friesland. The vast variety in scale, form, and community between these four communities has brought to light an array of challenges and opportunities that roughly follow the lines of some global trends. Their challenges and opportunities spread over the three spectrums of sustainability, creating a need for these communities to be environmentally, societally, and financially sustainable to safeguard their intangible cultural heritage for years to come. LF2018 has been the first injection for the revaluation of culture in the region. Now, further collaboration appears key to create a Frisian 'stronghold' of intangible cultural heritage capable of attracting future generations from both within and without to experience the value of Frisian locality and folklore.

81 Bell, Bryman & Harley, *Business*.

1 APPENDICES

2 Appendix A. Agreement Form



Toestemmingsformulier

Uw toestemming en begrip om deel te nemen aan een onderzoek betreffende duurzaamheid en toerisme in immaterieel erfgoedgemeenschappen in Friesland

Beste vertegenwoordiger,

U bent uitgenodigd om deel te nemen aan een interview als onderdeel van een masterscriptie voor het masterprogramma Sustainable Entrepreneurship aan Campus Fryslân, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen alsook een grotere onderzoeklijn betreft 'Immaterieel Erfgoed en Toerisme' in Noord-Nederland o.l.v. dr. Maaïke de Jong en dr. Alexander Grit t.b.v. het Kenniscentrum Immaterieel Erfgoed Nederland.

Het interview heeft als doel inzicht te krijgen in de kansen en uitdagingen die immaterieel erfgoedgemeenschappen in Friesland ervaren omtrent het combineren van duurzaamheid, preservatie en toerisme, en het identificeren van mogelijke strategieën om dit te verwezenlijken.

Door in te stemmen met dit interview kent u en gaat u akkoord met het volgende:

1. Het doel van dit interview is:

a. Kwalitatieve gegevens verzamelen voor het onderzoek naar duurzaamheid en toerisme in immaterieel erfgoedgemeenschappen in Friesland, en b. mogelijke strategieën identificeren voor zowel immaterieel erfgoedgemeenschappen als externe actoren zoals gemeenten.

2. Voor het uitvoeren van het onderzoek zal het interview worden vastgelegd, getranscribeerd en geanalyseerd. Opname en transcriptie worden niet voor andere doeleinden gebruikt dan het uitvoeren van het onderzoek en het schrijven van de masterscriptie, op termijn wordt de informatie in deze scriptie opgenomen in een groter onderzoek omtrent immaterieel erfgoed en toerisme in Noord-Nederland.

3. Het interview kan video's of foto's van u en het immaterieel erfgoed dat u representeert bevatten, die de student tijdens het interview neemt of die u aan de student verstrekt. De student maakt geen foto's of video's zonder uw toestemming. U stemt ermee in dat als u de student toestaat foto's of video's te maken, de student deze foto's en video's in verband met dit onderzoek mag gebruiken.

4. Dit onderzoek zal door de student zijn/haar professor worden beoordeeld om er zeker van te zijn dat het voldoet aan de vereisten voor het vak.

5. Na de beoordeling door de professor kan dit artikel worden gepubliceerd of verzonden naar mensen die dit artikel op een positieve manier kunnen gebruiken.



Dit interview wordt ondersteund door de professor van de student:

Dr. J. B. M. de Jong
Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, Campus Fryslân
j.b.m.de.jong@rug.nl

Opdrachtgever van de onderzoekslijn 'Immaterieel Erfgoed en Toerisme':

Dr. Albert van der Zeijden
Hoofd Kennisontwikkeling, Kenniscentrum Immaterieel Erfgoed Nederland
a.vanderzeijden@immaterieelerfgoed.nl

Geïnterviewde:

Naam: _____

Immaterieel Erfgoed: _____

E-mailadres: _____

Handtekening: _____

Appendix B. Interview Guide

1. *Wat houdt het immaterieel erfgoed in?*
 - Welke authentieke kenmerken maken het speciaal?
 - Wat zijn uw werkzaamheden binnen de gemeenschap?
 - Wat is volgens u het belang van immaterieel erfgoed in het algemeen?

2. *In hoeverre is de lokale gemeenschap betrokken bij het erfgoed?*
 - Voelen zij zich verbonden met het erfgoed?
 - Spelen zij een actieve rol in de uitoefening van het erfgoed?
3. *Wat wordt er gedaan om het erfgoed te behouden?*
 - Heeft het erfgoed veel veranderingen doorgemaakt door de jaren?
 - Komt hier vernieuwing/modernisering aan te pas?
4. *Is duurzaamheid, dat wil zeggen met oog voor het behoud van de omgeving en zijn mensen en tradities, een relevant onderwerp binnen het erfgoed?*
 - Op wat voor wijze wel of juist niet?
 - Zijn er verwachtingen van buitenaf wat betreft duurzaamheid? (denk bijvoorbeeld aan regelgeving en gemeentes)
5. *Hoeveel bezoekers trekt het (evenement) erfgoed jaarlijks?*
 - Zijn jullie tevreden over deze cijfers?
 - Wat zijn de nationaliteiten van de bezoekers?
6. *Hoe gaat het erfgoed om met toerisme/bezoekers, wordt hier op ingespeeld?*
 - Wat doet het erfgoed aan promotie ofwel marketing?
 - Is er een specifieke doelgroep?
 - (Wat kan een reden zijn dat het erfgoed nog niet door toeristen is ontdekt?)
 - Waarin denkt u dat voor de toeristen de aantrekkingskracht ligt van uw immaterieel erfgoed?
7. *Werkt u samen met stakeholders om toerisme te bevorderen?*
 - Welke stakeholders?
 - Heeft het erfgoed wel eens een speciaal product ontwikkelt voor toerisme? (bijv. een app of wandelroute)
 - Vormen toeristen/bezoekers een aanzienlijk deel van inkomsten voor de organisatie van het erfgoed?
8. *Wat is de invloed van toerisme/bezoekers op het erfgoed?*
 - Heeft toerisme de inhoud/uitoefening van het erfgoed verandert?
 - Wat vindt de lokale gemeenschap van het toerisme/de bezoekers?
9. *Zijn er ook risico's verbonden aan toerisme/bezoekers, volgens u?*
 - Waar liggen de grenzen m.b.t. toeristen en het verlies van de authenticiteit van het erfgoed?
 - Speelt duurzaamheid een rol in de afweging van toerisme en authenticiteit?
 - Wat lijkt u het ideaalbeeld van toerisme en uw erfgoed?
10. *Wat zijn, volgens u, de grootste uitdagingen voor het erfgoed? (los van wellicht de huidige corona crisis)*
 - Wordt er actief beleid gevoerd om deze uitdagingen te overkomen?
 - Heeft uw gemeente speciaal beleid ontwikkeld met betrekking tot toerisme en/of duurzaamheid?
 - Probeert u hierbij aan te sluiten met uw immaterieel erfgoed?
11. *Op wat voor gebieden ziet u kansen voor uw erfgoed?*
 - Heeft u behoefte aan meer kennis: bijvoorbeeld goede voorbeelden van anderen, kennis over digitale manieren zoals apps of een stappenplan hoe je je immaterieel erfgoed op een verantwoorde duurzame manier kan ontwikkelen?

- Zou de gemeente een actievere rol kunnen spelen voor uw erfgoed?
12. *Hoe kan ervoor worden gezorgd dat het erfgoed aantrekkelijk blijft voor toekomstige generaties?*
 13. *Wat voor impact heeft de Corona crisis momenteel op uw erfgoed?*
 - Denkt u dat de Corona crisis op de lange termijn gevolgen zal hebben voor uw erfgoed?
 14. *Zijn er nog overige ontwikkelingen binnen de gemeenschap die invloed hebben op uw erfgoed die u wilt benoemen?*

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