



Tourist Safety and Natural Sustainability at Preikestolen

An Exploratory Study of Stakeholders Perceptions



Photo: Preikestolen, Norway. (Photo: Joar F. Langeland)

A Master thesis
By
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Abstract

This thesis seeks to explore the tourist safety measures and the natural sustainability of Preikestolen from the perception of the stakeholders.

Stakeholders considered in this study are organisations with ownership or affiliation interest.

Background information as well as stakeholder theory in relation to safety and natural sustainability provides the background for the research objective, also the legislation is considered in relation to Preikestolen. 8 semi-structured interviews were conducted with managers or senior partners of their respective organisations. The findings of the study imply that the stakeholders have different perceptions of what they wish Preikestolen to be. The stakeholders considered that the natural sustainability is safeguarded, given the current number of visitors. There is a shared opinion of more regulation of the Preikestolen area and further improvement of the facilities in to ensure the sustainability of the nature as well ensuring the visitors safety. The cooperation between different stakeholder groups was adequate and The Pulpit Rock Foundation was held forward as the foundation of the collaboration. Furthermore, the safety information provided to tourists should be improved at different levels. Additionally, more knowledge is desired about the tourists, especially those who come to visit for one day (e.g. cruise tourists) in order to ensure safety precautions. The stakeholders expressed that the contingency plans of Forsand and Strand municipality did not consider the safety of tourists at Preikestolen and other highly visited nature attractions in the area.

Keywords: Tourism safety, natural sustainability, mountain destination.

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Introduction

When developing tourism strategies and policies for a destination, the county and municipalities as well as destination marketing companies should consider the prerequisites and expectations of stakeholder groups and tourists to ensure a sustainable destination (Theobald, 2005). The destination usually consist of complementary or competing organisations who form a complex system of connections (Pavlovich, 2003), and their recommendations are valuable and therefore included in the facilitation of a destination (Crosby, Kelly, & Schaefer, 1986).

Tourism literature has acknowledged the increasing interest and preference of the nature, and therefore nature-based tourism has thrived (Uriely, 1997).

If tourism development is planned improperly, it can destroy the environmental, economic and social foundations of tourism in a community (Byrd, 2007).

Preikestolen; also known as The Pulpit Rock is located in the Lysefjord within Forsand and Strand municipality and is entitled by CCN and Lonely Planet as one of the world's most spectacular viewpoints. The plateau ranges 604 above sea-level and in 2016 there where 285.000 visitors (Jøssang, 2016). In 2017 it is estimated that 300.000 (Jøssang, 2017) people will take the four hour hike. The main season ranges from April-October, and the winter of 2017 was also the first time Stiftelsen Preikestolen (The Pulpit Rock Foundation) officially opened for winter tourism (Jåsund, 2017).

This study has been inspired by the heated debates of stakeholders perceptions of the challenges at Preikestolen. This study has particularly concentrated at stakeholders perceptions of the tourism safety as well as the natural sustainability of Preikestolen.

The stakeholders considered in this study are those with ownership and/or affiliation interests related to Preikestolen, as they are more likely to have in-depth knowledge.

In a multi-sector destination there are conflicting economical, environmental and social and some may be less concerned about some perspectives as they may have different objectives. To achieve sustainable development of a destination, it is necessary to be flexible, adapt and search for new answers (Byrd, 2007).

Tourism safety literature mainly involves man-made events or natural disasters (Mansfeld & Pizam, 2006). As Preikestolen is considered as a safe destination in those terms, this study focus on how tourist safety is affected by activity patterns, perceived by stakeholders.

As this is a current subject of interest, there has not been done extensive research on Stakeholder perceptions of tourism-safety and natural sustainability. Therefore, an explorative case study approach is chosen.

The research question; “How are tourist safety measures and the natural sustainability at Preikestolen perceived by the stakeholders?”

By applying pre-research, stakeholder theory literature, tourism safety literature, legislation and media coverage of this relevant subject, the aim is to acquire a greater understanding and provide some implications to stakeholders by semi-structure interviewing relevant representatives of organisations.

Literature review

Stakeholder Theory

The issues stakeholder theory can be traced back to the early 1950`s when Frank W. Abram`s, chairman of the board for Standard Oil wrote “*Management Responsibilities in a Complex World*” (Zakheim, Palmer, & Stoll, 2008, pp. 23-24) and argued that core management duties derive from the general commitment to maintain an equitable and workable balance among the claims of the various interested groups.

The “stakeholder” concept was further established to strategic management by R. Edward Freeman in 1984 (R Edward Freeman, 2010). Generally the questions derived from stakeholder theory concerns the relationship between the organisation and the external groups who are affected or can affect the organisation (R. Edward Freeman, 1991). Clarkson (1995) concurs with this conception that stakeholders are persons or groups that have or claim ownership, rights or interests in a corporation and the activities in the past, present or future. These claimed attentions are the result of actions or transactions taken by the organisation and may be legal or moral, individual or collective. Correspondingly, stakeholders have the ability to take action if their needs are not convened (Garvare & Johansson, 2010).

Stakeholder management is an important area within business management and a way of organising the organisation to manage response of concerns of its stakeholders. Furthermore, Stakeholder management is needed to reduce or solve disagreements, and invariably the issue of achieving a balanced perspective among stakeholder opinions (Theobald, 2005).

There are two definitions of a stakeholder, a wide sense approach and narrow sense approach.

The Wide Sense of Stakeholder:

Any Identifiable group or individual who can affect the achievement of an organization`s objectives or who is affected by the achievement of an organization`s

objectives (Public interest groups, protest groups, government agencies, trade associations, competitors, unions, as well as employees, customer segments, shareowners, and others are stakeholders in this sense) (Zakhem et al., 2008, p. 51).

The Narrow Sense of Stakeholder:

Any identifiable group or individual on which the organization is dependent for its continued survival. (Employees, customer segments, certain suppliers, key government agencies, shareowners, certain financial institutions, as well as others are stakeholders in the narrow sense of the term) (Zakhem et al., 2008, p. 51).

Stakeholder groups are divided into two different clusters, where the primary stakeholder groups usually consist of shareholders, investors, employees, customers and suppliers together with the public stakeholder group that involves the government and communities that provide infrastructures and markets.

Likewise, laws and regulations must be obeyed as well as taxes and other obligations. More stakeholder participation emphasizes the ability to handle multiple perceived issues (Byrd, 2007) and there is a high level of interdependence between the organisation and the primary stakeholder groups. The organisation will be seriously damaged or unable to continue if something is mistaken between the groups (Clarkson, 1995).

Secondary stakeholder groups are those who influence or are influenced by the organisation, although they are not engaged in transactions with the organisation and are not essential for the organisation existence. The media and other special interest group such as volunteer organisations are considered as secondary stakeholders that have the capacity to mobilize public opinion in favour or conflict to the organisation's performance (Clarkson, 1995).

According to Frooman (1999) Stakeholder theory tries to answer three general questions; who they are, what do they want, and how are they going to try to get it. Stakeholder theory further emphasises that the organisation needs to contemplate the interests of groups affected by the

them as it is a key element in order to understand the structures and dimensions of business and society relationships (Theobald, 2005). Michael Jay (1995) claims that earlier organizational theories did not take into account the different stakeholders and their influence, although by doing so it allows the organization to consider a wider range of influencers.

Normative, instrumental and descriptive stakeholder theories

There are important distinctions, problems and implications associated with the stakeholder concept and there is according to Donaldson and Preston (1995) three aspects in the literature of stakeholder theory; descriptive/empirical, instrumental and normative.

Descriptive/Empirical; This theory is used to describe the implication of what the organization is, and occasionally explain specific characteristics and behaviours as well as the organization as a collection of cooperative and competitive interests possessing principal value.

Instrumental; This aspect establishes a significant structure for examining the connections or the absence them in context of stakeholder theory, between the practice of stakeholder management and the success of various organisational objectives (e.g., ROI, growth).

Normative; This is a fundamental basis that involves acceptance of the ideas that the stakeholders are persons or groups with legitimate interests in practical and/or central aspects of corporate activity as a function of including the identification of moral or philosophical guidelines.

Additionally, normative theories argue that all stakeholders should be treated with proper respect and thought for their own sakes (Theobald, 2005)

Stakeholder Theory In Tourism

When developing tourism strategies and policies, responsible authorities or destination marketing organisations should interpret the different set of needs and expectations of diverse

stakeholder groups and tourists related to the destination performance and sustainability goals (Theobald, 2005).

There is two distinct areas of tourism literature toward stakeholder theory, the first being the idea of the organization adapting to the interest of the stakeholders by developing policies and practices based on the power and influence of the stakeholders. Those with greater power and influence are considered more important than those with less power and influence (Byrd, 2007). The other area reflects the achievement of fair partnerships and collaboration within tourism destinations. A dialogue among participating stakeholders, including the public sector has the potential to share decision-making and agreement about the planning and actions of the destination (Araujo & Bramwell, 1999). For the growth to be successful, it has to be planned and managed in a efficient sustainable manner (Byrd, 2007).

The tourism destination usually comprises of diverse categories of complementary or competing organisations within multiple sectors. This creates a cluster that forms a complex system of connections and interrelationships at the destination(Pavlovich, 2003).

The Stakeholders values and recommendations should be included (Crosby et al., 1986) to guarantee the planning, development and operation of tourism to be cross-sectional and integrated with the involvement of different government sections, public and private companies, community groups and experts to provide precautions for success (Liu, 2003). If tourism development is planned improperly it could destroy the resources (e.g. environmental, economic and social) that are the foundation of tourism in a community (Byrd, 2007).

Tourism sustainability and stakeholder cooperation

As declared, in the case of Preikestolen, the sustainability aspect will primarily consider the natural and not the social and economic perspectives, however these are

important aspects and in order to clarify sustainability, these aspects are considered in the literature review.

There are various definitions of what sustainable tourism is (Butler, 1999). The most used definition is World tourism organization`s definition “*Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities*” (l'environnement, tourisme, & Carbone, 2005, pp. 11-12)

This implies that sustainable tourism should make the optimal use of environmental resources that maintains essential ecological processes and conserve natural heritage and biodiversity. Moreover, respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities and contribute to inter-cultural understanding and ensure sustainable long-term economic benefits, distributed fairly to all stakeholders including stable employment, income, social service and contribution to poverty alleviation (l'environnement et al., 2005).

In a multi-sector/multi-actor destination situation, achieving sustainable development requires a balance between conflicting economic, environmental, social and cultural objectives. A destinations stakeholders can be grouped based on their sustainability objectives and perspectives which may imply that groups focussed on economic growth may be less concerned with environmental protection or the need of the local community (Theobald, 2005). The group often compromise of multiple stakeholders who may hold diverse interpretations on development and varying degrees of influence over decision making, and there may also be conflicting public/private sector interests (Jamal & Stronza, 2009). It is challenging to have a form of tourism development that does not impact the destination, and communities within and around protected areas are vulnerable (Jamal & Stronza, 2009). Sustainable development has to continuously include a search for new answers, be flexible and adaptable in order to ensure improvement. The identification and inclusion of

stakeholders is an important step to ensure sustainable tourism development (Byrd, 2007). In contemplation of managing change development in multi-sector stakeholder groups, Gray in Jamal and Stronza (2009) described five characteristics: (1) stakeholders are interdependent, (2) solutions are developed by dealing constructively with differences, (3) joint ownership of decisions, (4) the stakeholders assume collective responsibility for the direction and (5) collaboration is an emergent process, which organisations jointly deal with growing environmental complexity. Determining how effectively the needs and expectations of each stakeholder group are being encountered, depends on the relationships including communication between each cluster of stakeholders so that each group's expectations and needs are integrated (Theobald, 2005). A continuous tourism planning process should involve stakeholders in the formulation, implementation and adaption of decisions (Yuksel, Bramwell, & Yuksel, 1999). Several forms of alternative tourism, such as ecotourism are located in subtle and exposed environments that has insufficient infrastructure that cannot endure the crowds of tourists. The individual impacts of these should be considered with respect to the location as well as the past, current and future activities (Butler, 1999). Besides, it would be a naive guess that nature-based tourism will automatically be sustainable (Byrd, 2007).

Butler (1999) believes that the key challenge with sustainable tourism development is not small-scale environment and cultural forms of tourism, but how to ensure the development of mass tourism as sustainable as possible. A further challenge is public vs. private interests as tour operators are not always located at the destination (Jamal & Stronza, 2009). To ensure a multi-sector/multi-actor stakeholder approach, it is necessary to enforce sustainable policies and actions. Collaboration between different stakeholder groups should integrate the relationship between public and private sector organizations, the destination and the community (Jamal & Stronza, 2009).

The interaction and coordination between tourist operators and tourists can improve education concerning the host protected area, as well as influencing environmental behaviour intentions in order to develop and improve the most efficient strategies for sustainable tourism (Powell, Kellert, & Ham, 2009).

The interests of present visitors will involve the quality of the experience they encounter while visiting the community and changes in the community may impact this in a positive or negative manner (Byrd, 2007).

Examples of positive changes may be better infrastructure and/or improved customer services, while negative changes could be high number of visitors and/or host community resentment. As a consequence, these changes will influence the amount of money visitors spend in the community and the possibility of reappearing. For the future visitors of the community, they will also consume the current and the future resources in the community. Consequently, commercial organizations must be aware of the future visitors consumption when planning activities (Byrd, 2007).

Various tourist destination organizations tend to focus on marketing and promotion of the location and are not involved in resource conservation and planning for sustainable use which affect the destination sustainability (Jamal & Stronza, 2009).

Tourism safety

Tourism safety literature often involve natural disasters (such as hurricanes, floods and tsunamis) and man-made events (such as terrorism, crime and war) (Mansfeld & Pizam, 2006). In the case of Preikestolen, natural disasters and man-made events are not considered in the literature review as Norway is considered a safe country as a tourist destination. Furthermore, there have not been natural disasters concerning the area of Preikestolen although there may occur heavy rain or snowfalls, wind and icy conditions in the mountains. Safety is acknowledged as a key factor in the selection of destinations to visit and negative

events such as accidents have a negative impact on the tourism industry (Mansfeld & Pizam, 2006). Additionally, accidents are recognized to be the leading cause of mortality and injury among tourists travelling to foreign destinations (T. A. Bentley, Page, & Laird, 2001). The term “tourist safety” concerns the well-being, welfare and particularly how the personal safety is affected by activity patterns in their own action space (Tim A. Bentley & Page, 2001). Governments and tourism operators need to address the specific concerns relating to tourist safety and security (Theobald, 2005), and tourists need to be assured that their safety is supreme and that appropriate safety measures are present. In essence, tourists need greater assurances of quality, safety, and well-being (Theobald, 2005). Stakeholder groups share a common objective of mitigating the change in the security climate at tourist destination and can prepare themselves for the occurrence of safety incidents through planning and thus reduce the possible negative impacts on the community, the economy, the tourism industry and the tourist themselves (Mansfeld & Pizam, 2006). The tourism industry has the major responsibility for preventing tourist safety on their own property, but Preikestolen being a public area, the public sector have the major responsibility for ensuring tourists safety (Beredskapsplikt, 2011).

According to Mansfeld and Pizam (2006), the most effective way to prevent and/or reduce the number of safety incidents is by ensuring a strong cooperation between the tourism industry, the local authorities and the tourists themselves by educating them about the safety and security threats during their trip.

Legislation and regulations at Preikestolen

The location of Preikestolen is incorporated in the Norwegian outdoors recreation law (Friluftsløven) and has been effective since 1957, and it ensures individuals the principle of right to roam (Allemannsretten). This law states that everyone can walk by foot on uncultivated land with consideration and care. On cultivated land such as pasture, there are

other regulations that are not relevant to the area of Preikestolen as it is located in uncultivated land. Additionally, individuals that sojourn in uncultivated land may harvest natural ingredients such as nuts, plants, flowers, berries, wild mushroom and roots of wild herbs as long as it occurs with considerate and care (Friluftsløven, 1957).

The Pulpit Rock Foundation is an organization that has the purpose of facilitate tourism and the development of tourism industry surrounding Preikestolen, as well as outdoor activities in line with the current development plans and regulations for the area within the different municipalities (Ryfylke.no, 2017).

Considering the authorities tasks related to the law, the municipality, the county council and the county governor shall work to promote recreational purposes within their region.

Furthermore the climate and environment ministry may offer the county council the responsibility of promoting and facilitate outdoor recreation. These instances also have the right to act, complain and file lawsuits in order to safeguard public recreational interests. The county governor can act on behalf of the government on this concern (Friluftsløven, 1957).

Regarding the construction of traffic easing infrastructure in uncultivated land, the municipality can give tourism organisations the right to construct infrastructure whereas climate and environment ministry can outsource those rights to regional organisations (Friluftsløven, 1957).

There is also a regulation act concerning the safety and security of the citizens in municipalities. This regulation act implies that the municipalities is required to work systematically and comprehensive with the safeguard of its citizens, across different sectors within the municipality with the objective of reducing the risk of loss of human lives, health damage and environmental and material values (beredskapsplikt, 2011).

Analysis of risk and vulnerability of events that may occur in the municipality and how these events may affect the municipality in consultation with relevant public and private actors

ought to be done in order to prepare long-term strategies and priorities of safety and security. Additionally, these strategies and the priorities should cooperate between the surrounding municipalities where it is beneficial (Beredskapsplikt, 2011).

One of the main emphases of the tourism strategy for Rogaland county 2013-2020 (Fylkeskommune, 2013) is sustainable all year tourism and structured processes in local communities to ensure conservation of the nature, the local communities resources with considerations regarding the requirements and profitability of the businesses.

In this study, the sustainability scope is concerns natural sustainability of the Preikestolen area.

Methodology

Based on existing literature the research objectives of this study explore the stakeholders perception of tourism safety measures and the natural sustainability at Preikestolen by methods of:

- * Exploring their perceptions of current and future safety procedures at Preikestolen
- * Exploring their perceptions of natural sustainability at Preikestolen
- * Exploring the cooperation between the stakeholders

Furthermore, as a guideline of the objective, the following research question have been defined:

“How are tourist safety measures and the natural sustainability at Preikestolen perceived by the stakeholders?”

Research design

There are three different study designs of elementary research; exploratory and causal, also named explanatory. The objective of exploratory research is to explore new areas with

little or no prior research in order to acquire a basic understanding, descriptive research has the objective of gaining a clear and precise image, while causal research investigates why events happen (Neuman, 2011). Based on these explanations and the aim of this study being developing a better understanding of stakeholders perception of tourist safety measures and natural sustainability and moreover, develop a better understanding of these concepts in context of Preikestolen an explorative case study approach was chosen.

Case-study research intensively investigates one or small set of cases, and it can be individuals, groups, organisations, movements, events or geographic units.

A case study method is used to understand a real-life phenomenon in depth, and it is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident (Yin, 2009).

Qualitative data collection technique

In a explorative case study research there are two choices of gathering data, quantitative which collects data in the form of numbers and qualitative collection based on words, observations or pictures (Neuman, 2011). As stakeholders perception of tourist safety and natural sustainability is an unexplored subject, a qualitative data collection technique was chosen. Besides, most case-study research is qualitative (Neuman, 2011). To collect data, a semi-structured interview method was selected in order to focus directly on the case, additionally it is a common way of gathering data in case study research (Yin, 2009).

Semi-structured interviews

In line with the objective of this study, a semi-structured interview is believed as the best fit in order to obtain as relevant answers as possible and for discussing the research question. Another central aspect of semi-structured interviews is the possibility for participants to talk unreservedly and also supplement aspects of the study that they consider

important. Interviews are an vital source of case study evidence since most case studies are about human affairs or actions (Yin, 2009). A pilot interview was conducted in order to further develop the questions for the interview guide and too see if new aspects where enlightened.

Additionally, the interview was pre-tested on 2 participants to avoid misunderstanding and ambiguity to ensure clarification of the questions and improve the quality (Neuman, 2011). The participants all accepted that the interviews and findings were recorded and non confidential. Furthermore they were informed that researcher was voluntary at a sea-rescue organisation. The interviews were conducted face-to-face where possible for the contributor, but Skype and telephone interviews was also conducted because of the distance between the interviewer and interviewee, time limitations was also a consideration. Face-to-face and Skype interviews was preferred in order to detect body-language and to express thankfulness and appreciation towards the interviewee, however telephone interviews is probed to be useful in qualitative studies (Sturges & Hanrahan, 2004).

Stakeholder criteria

As stakeholders is defined as individual or group who can affect the organisations performance or be affected by the accomplishment of the organisation`s objectives (R Edward Freeman, 2010). The criteria set for the stakeholders at Preikestolen was that they had to represent an organisation and have a local affiliation and/or have a thorough knowledge of the activities surrounding of Preikestolen. Furthermore no tourists where interviewed as the purpose of the study were the organisational stakeholders perceptions.

Sampling selection

Preikestolen stakeholders where identified and selected based on snowball sampling which is a method of selecting the cases in a network (Neuman, 2011). Stakeholders in this study were defined as organisation that is directly or indirectly involved in the activities at

Preikestolen. The researcher participated on different tourism related conferences held by Stavanger Chamber of Commerce where diverse stakeholders in relation to Preikestolen were represented. This helped identify relevant stakeholders where the object were to obtain different types of organisations. The media coverage related to Preikestolen the last year has also identified some of the interviewees. When the researcher had made contact with interview participants, they were encouraged to suggest other organisations relevant to this study.

Data analysis

One pilot semi-structured interview was conducted followed by 8 semi-structured interviews, whereas 1 was disregarded. The interviews were conducted in Norwegian by face-to-face, Skype conversations or telephone. The interviews ranged from 25-50 minutes depending on the interviewees ability to talk unreservedly about the topics. In this study it is used a narrative analysis which is an valuable approach to the analysis of qualitative data, as it facilitate the exploration of content in interviews (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). The data preparation phase involved taking some notes during the interview to spot any similarities or differences during the interview phase. Additionally, taping the interviews and transcribing them by listening carefully to the tapes to attain a truthful representation of the interviews were done. The transcripts were then carefully read through and corrected for any data errors. The transcripts are not attached as they were for the analysis of this study but the interview guide is located in appendix 1. The data exploration phase and data reduction phase goes hand-in-hand (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006) and started in the interview process by taking some notes and writing down any reflections after each interview, correspondingly in the transcript phase, possible findings were noted for later discussion.

The data reduction phase in this study consisted of writing paragraphs for each of the subjects, supplemented by abbreviations in *cursive Calibri text* with initials created by the

researcher. The full names are found in appendix 2. Additionally, as the interviews were conducted in Norwegian and the study is written in English, the researcher has translated the abbreviations.

Reliability and validity

Reliability and validity are ideas that help to establish the truthfulness, credibility or believability of findings. They have multiple meanings and refer to related, desirable aspects of measurement (Neuman, 2011). Reliability means dependability or consistency, which suggests that the same thing is repeated or recurs under the identical or very similar conditions. Validity is more difficult to achieve, it suggests truthfulness or correctness and refers to how well an idea “fits” with actual reality. In qualitative studies, it is more remarkable to achieve authenticity than realizing a single version of truth. Authenticity means offering a fair, honest, and balanced account of social life from the viewpoint of the people that lives within it (Neuman, 2011), and furthermore provide a detailed account of how people that are being studied, understand certain events.

Measurement validity regards how well the conceptual and operational definitions fit each other. The better the fit, the higher is measurement validity. Face validity addresses that the indicator really measures the construct whereas internal validity means that errors internal to the design of the study are not being done in order to produce false conclusions.

In this study deliberations to reliability and validity were accounted for and semi-structured interviews was selected to fit the purpose of finding the relationship between stakeholder`s interpretations of tourist safety and natural sustainability. The questions derived from the research objective and relevant theory to create a basis for understanding the interpretations of the stakeholders. Additionally, the interviews were transcribed and listened to numerous times. It is assumed that the results in this study are both reliable and valid.

Findings

The obtained sample consisted of the municipality of Strand, The Pulpit Rock Foundation, Norwegian People's Aid, The Norwegian Trekking Association, Ryfylke IKS (regional council for the surrounding municipalities), NCE Tourism Fjord Norway and Forsand municipality tourism information. These fitted the criteria as mentioned earlier of having a local affiliation or knowledge of the activities surrounding Preikestolen. The interviewees proved to have in-depth knowledge of the research objective. An additional organisation was interviewed but as it did not meet the criteria of being local and/or having thorough knowledge of the activities surrounding Preikestolen, that interview where disregarded. Strategic employees where selected in each organisation, primarily the managers or senior partners due to their knowledge and involvement in the organisation they represented. The obtained sample is small as purposeful sample of chosen respondents offer the information of their organisation in contrast of representing a larger population. Therefore it is trusted that the sample size of this study is adequate for the exploratory purpose (Reid, 1996).

Stakeholders perception of increased tourism at Preikestolen

Each organisation have noticed a sizeable increase of visitors at Preikestolen and had views of how that affected them. Five of the respondents pointed at the positive and negative effects of the increased visitation brought with it. Some of them pointed out that it were positive for the development of the local communities and region, as well as the possibilities of future development in the area. On the other hand in terms of negative consequences they pointed at the effects as the frequency of rescue missions as well as littering and the attrition of the trail. As the main season is short, there are masses of visitors in a short timespan that have a negative effect on the "product" and the income generated from the tourists do not cover the necessary facilitation of the area.

The main income generated of tourists are parking fees and The Norwegian Trekking Association Stavanger also revenues on rental equipment, ZIP-line, sleeping facilities, dining and so forth.

Some also mentioned that a tourist transported by bus to Preikestolen is to a large extent subsidised by tourists arriving by cars.

About increased visitation “ We experience it as both positive and negative, positive for the local community and the tourism generally in the region and when I say negative it is not exclusively negative, but it is clear that it have been an increase in rescue missions in the past couple of years on the basis of increased number of tourists and that causes in increased wear and tear on our crew and equipment” – NF

About increased visitation “ We experience it as positive in relation to the possibilities but simultaneously a bit frustrating in relation to that we in a way run ahead this increase of tourist masses with facilitation that is not financed by, what can I say, the visitors” - RY

About increased visitation “ We have our own revenue at the parking area and it is what we live from, but it is not enough. That is one side, the other side is receiving the guests in a professional and secure way, even the last one. Hence, when there are few and many” – SP

Cooperation between the different stakeholders

All except one stakeholder implied the cooperation to be decent like an alliance and one even described it as a “family”. One of them described it as something that is good, or at least starting to be good. A big part of the activities at Preikestolen and the surrounding area is tied together by The Pulpit Rock Foundation in a way that they are responsible for many of the activities. In the board of the foundation, different organisations are represented

(Municipalities, landowners, and businesses). Some of the interviewees also pointed out that there was a suitable cooperation on readiness between the Norwegian People's Aid, police, fire department, health care, the Rescue Coordination Centre and The Pulpit Rock Foundation.

About cooperation “ We keep ourselves updated with each others Facebook groups to be updated with information about for example weather and trail conditions. We also have meetings... For example yesterday there were a mutual meeting for the different tourist information's where I also participated and informed transversely, so there is frequent meetings along the way”- FKT

About cooperation “ We have different activities, we have canoe, kayak, zip-line and those sort of things, but if there is groups that wishes to kayak at Lysefjord we can get it done, but then we're thinking, okey it is not worth it. Instead we rather use Lysefjord kayak”- DNTS

The right to roam principle

The right to roam principle was a topic that the interviewees expressed that the organisation they represented had fundamental views towards. The principle of the right to roam is a feature of the Norwegian nature but there are some restrictions that is challenged at Preikestolen since there are high numbers of visitors and it is projected that the yearly increase will be 10-20% the next decade. All stated that something had to be done in relations of spreading the season and control the numbers of visitors. Likewise it was problematic to stop the tourists from taking the hike, as the legal basis in the right to roam principle do not cover denying visitors to walk. Police can under certain circumstances deny people if there is a danger of loss of lives.

From a municipality view there is a differing view of the right to roam; it were mentioned that the politicians had different views than the administration of the municipality without elaborating further on that subject.

A fundamental part of the right to roam principle is that people can move freely in the nature without costs, and the issue of how to make money of the tourists where also a topic that surfaced. As mentioned, the parking areas are the main income of the visitors (also the facilities of The Norwegian Trekking Associations which mainly generate themselves). Several of the interviewees noted that one should look at the possibilities of the current legislations or encounter them to increase the amount of money the visitors spent at the location to pay for necessary infrastructure and develop the area as well as surrounding communities.

About the right to roam principle “ That is a hard question to answer for me because there is politicians that have to “watch their hats here”. Forsand municipality attitude to the right to roam principle is that persons should have the right to walk were they wishes in the nature, simultaneously the municipality sees the need for limiting traffic (visitors) and also control the traffic at different areas, especially at Preikestolen”- FKT

About the right to roam principle “ As of today, the tourists almost pays nothing to visit Preikestolen. Those who has to cover the costs are us, the taxpayers, so we mean that there is a big mismatch between those who pollute, now I am thinking in a wide term regarding pollution, regarding garbage, better roads, dilapidated infrastructure and all those things” –SK

The Idea of Preikestolen as a national park

Some of the interviewees pointed out that the organisation they represented did not have an official standpoint on this topic but all except one pointed out the necessity of ways

of preserve and control the area. A national park could be an efficient tool to ensure sovereignty. This circumstance have also been up to hearing at the municipalities councils after Strand municipality had developed a plan, this plan was eventually rejected as the politicians of Forsand municipality were negative to the idea of an national park.

The Pulpit Rock Foundation that does not have an official opinion of this idea but did a research and pointed out pros and cons. This research was criticised of orienting toward a national park, but the point was that they tried to mollify the national park-term.

About national park "that research process pointed out new possibilities, not so much changes in the law but a new understanding of the law where the use (of Preikestolen) could be taken in as a part of the protection, hence regulate the use. Also it was pointed out that the national park regime is suitable for larger control over the traffic (visitors), that's needed, everyone sees that, its needed" – SP

Hiking fee at Preikestolen

On this topic the interviewees again pointed out that the need for income to facilitate the infrastructure but there was conflicting views whether a form of hiking fee would be the solution. Some of them reasoned that the income could be made before the trail begun, for example the parking area whereas one stated that the government had to take more responsibility of the infrastructure of the area.

About hiking fee " We have said two things, more governmental responsibility for the infrastructure part, but one should also look at the opportunity of introducing a hiking tax"- NCE

About hiking fee " I am thinking that everything we need of fees can be solved before you start at the trail, at the parking area and out of busses... Do not think it have to happen in the trail at all"-RY

Cooperation between different stakeholder groups

The organising and landownership of the different stakeholders at Preikestolen and the ownership were sufficient among the municipality representatives and the organisation that has the facilitator role at Preikestolen. The other organisations provided a moderate clarification. The composition of stakeholders and ownership interest of the area is slightly puzzling seen from the outside.

Preikestolen is 2/3 privately owned by Høllesti co-ownership that represents five landowners. The remaining 1/3 of the trail is owned by The Norwegian Trekking Organisation Stavanger. Furthermore there is use and easement agreements and a law to ensure The Preikestolen Foundation activities in the area (parking, infrastructure and facilitation). There is an economic compensation to the landowners and the area is also included and works of the county plan directions of 1992-1993. Preikestolen is also secured by the planning and building act.

Within The Preikestolen Foundation the different stakeholders such as landowners, municipalities, the business community, Norwegian People's Aid and The Norwegian Trekking Association are represented.

Concerning the cooperation between the municipalities and the government there was a understanding that the government have not been involved at Preikestolen other than the contribution through National Hiking Trails which was established in February 2017, laws and regulations regarding uncultivated land, likewise when Preikestolen as a national park were treated in the governmental parliament.

On the contrary, those of the interviewees who had experience with cooperation between the municipalities and the private sector described it as a solid and healthy relationship.

Concerning the cooperation between the different private stakeholders, the interviewees had contrasting views. From the perspective of the municipality interviewees, they felt that the

cooperation could have been enhanced although it has improved, and they suggested that a larger tourist operator or a platform of all services could improve the cooperation between the minor operators. The Norwegian Trekking Association Stavanger described the cooperation as a symbiosis, however another one destined that some of the stakeholders had their disagreements and meanings of one another even though they cooperate on a regular basis. The absence of cooperation with transport companies, cruise lines and foreign tour operators where also addressed, a tourist transported by bus to Preikestolen is to a large extent subsidised by tourists arriving by cars.

About municipal cooperation “ Our job at the tourist information is to facilitate the services that local firms can provide, activities and all that. There are meetings with local businesses, e-mail, telephone and personal attendance with what they (private companies) can offer and so on. Sometimes we have them alone (meetings), often we have them through The Pulpit Rock Foundation”-FK

Considering the communication and meetings between the stakeholders, several highlighted The Pulpit Rock Foundation and Lysefjord Development association as meeting-points as well as several network meetings led by them. Some of the interviewees also pointed out that there were annual meetings between the stakeholders that handled safety events as well as briefing and debriefing when requisitioned to rescue missions. Additionally, before and under projects in relation to Preikestolen there were mobilisation meetings between the relevant stakeholders.

There was a broad understanding that stakeholders meanings and wishes were heard, and the Pulpit Rock Foundation were put forward as an area where one could be listened to, but it was not unambiguously that a stakeholder could have it as they wanted.

Correspondingly, the interviewees concurred that some of the stakeholders had a larger degree of influence than others such as The Norwegian Trekking Association Stavanger as

they own both land area and have the mountain lodge and supplementary services. The Pulpit Rock Foundation with the board members were underlined as well as the politicians of the nearby municipalities such as Strand municipality since they have a strategic position of the foundation and parking areas. The co-ownership of Høllesti were also an organisation that had the opportunity to stop certain activities. One interviewee felt that the conservation of the area withheld possible business development.

About private cooperation *“ We can not sit here as “the king of the castle”, everyone that wants to do something, who is a bit serious, I am trying to my best abilities to cooperate with”-DNTS*

About communication and cooperation *“ There is a minimum of annual cooperation meetings, besides there is a relative, I have the impression of good cooperation, it is clear that we fight for our things, landowners for their things, The National Trekking Association has their interests, so it is clear that there is spread interests” –NF*

About the degree of stakeholder influence: *“It is clear that The Norwegian Trekking Organisation have a great influence, concerning the weight they have, they are Norway`s biggest member association” -SP*

The natural sustainability of Preikestolen

The Preikestolen Foundation is involved in an Innovation Norway project, which concerns economic, social, cultural and natural sustainability, and the goal is to certify Preikestolen as a sustainable travel destination within 2018. Many of the interviewees expressed that the current facilitation of the trail was from their point of view, sustainable and in order to keep the nature preserved in the future, facilitations of the trail was necessary. Additionally there was a concern regarding the economical perspective of sustainability, extending the interest of visitors to other parts of the Lysefjord.

Stakeholders natural sustainability focus

The interviewees were asked about examples and focus areas of sustainability at Preikestolen and they provided examples of sustainability in form of service facilities of the area in forms of toilets, extension of the trail in an authentic approach to avoid visitors going outside and cause damage to the nature, plants and wildlife. Some felt that Preikestolen is not untouched land anymore given the amount of visitors, and one day Preikestolen will reach the maximum numbers of tourists it can endure unless the visitor patterns spread out through the different seasons. Some of the organisations that were more business development focused also pointed out that they focused on keeping the populations in the local communities. Regarding the conservation of the nature, questions whether power development and power lines as well as cruise ships and tourist ferries were sustainable, appeared from some of the interviewees. Forsand municipality are positive to power development, and there have been suggested a gondola lift installation to Preikestolen. How could that influence the scenery and authenticity as well as the nature it self was something that some of the interviewees questioned. Additionally the ferries and cruise ships with the polluting engines was a rhetoric enquiry, there was a dilemma between charging the ships for entrance in the Lysefjord, although they may risk to loose these potential customers if operators avoided the Lysefjord.

About examples of sustainability *“Preikestolen as a tourist destination would risk a reputation loss if there are too many tourists and too many people in the trail”-NF*

About sustainability *“I think that we should have a discussion of what we wish Preikestolen should be and to some extent how we could gain more income of that service. How that will be, that is another context”- FKT*

About preserving the nature *“It is important to find the balance between preserving the present and simultaneously ensure that the tourists that actually comes there (Preikestolen) get the experience they expect”- DNTS*

Stakeholders perception of tourism preparedness

The interviewees conversed that their perception of the tourists' preparations were incredibly varied. The visitors that had mountain experience were seldom a problem, although some tourists were often unprepared of the length of the hike or rapid weather changes. Some interviewees implied that visitors that came by cruise ships or tour operators that had one particular day to visit Preikestolen were those that were least suited for the hike and caused rescue or assist missions. Besides, some of the interviewees said that they knew to little about the visiting tourists and they had plans of seeing how they could gain more information about them. Another aspect of the tourist preparations was that the interviewees had the impression that the tourists had Preikestolen on their bucket list and did not consider which preparations and what equipment and clothing to use upon arrival.

Stakeholders perception of security information enhancement

Some suggested that the marketing of Preikestolen could be more focused on the safety and preparedness, such as finding a balance between the wonderful videos and pictures of the view, but also promote that there may be demanding conditions. This has been addressed. However they implied that there was room for further improvements at different levels of the marketing. Innovation Norway have taped a safety video concerning clothing, equipment and weather conditions at Preikestolen, this is not yet launched.

Furthermore, others indicated the importance of personal information to the tourists about clothing and personal equipment and pointed out that some tourists thought they could buy everything they needed at the basecamp. The necessity of further improvement of the trail where also mentioned by one interviewee. The Norwegian Trekking Association has started renting out and selling clothes suited for the hike in the winter season, although some interviewees meant that it could be more capitalized and use the income for further improvements of the area.

Another subject that were emphasized, the focus on guided trips in order to ensure the safe being of tourists, which also could generate income and further facilitation.

About tourist preparation “ *Many are unprepared of the possibility of weather changes, many are unprepared of that there are no hot dog stands or restaurant when they get to the end since they have focused on the nice things to see, more than the way of getting of getting there*”-FKT

About tourist preparation “ *The tourists that come here (Preikestolen) can be categorized in three; local/regional/nationals, Europeans and through operators and the cruise tourists*” -SK

About information improvements “ *We should probably inform more than we do. Most likely, those who we inform, 90% would listen to us, but there is always people like my self that say that it is no problem*”-DNTS

Safety measures at Preikestolen

Most of the interviewees expressed that the existing safety processes were suitable given the present tourist traffic, but acknowledged that the safety of tourist would be a continuous development process and there would constantly be individuals that thought more should have been done regarding the safety measures in terms of limiting the traffic or more facilitation of the trail. Some noted that if there were too much facilitation, it would affect the nature, besides in Norway there is a tradition of respecting the limits that the nature sets and therefore one should act accordingly.

Several mentioned that the emergency units and the stakeholder organisations had a decent cooperation in case of safety events and that there were guides and patrols in the trail.

As the winter of 2017 is the first year that Preikestolen have officially opened for winter tourism, they felt that the security measures that were made were satisfactory and that there

were valuable lessons learned. Examples such as trail signs, emergency cabin, guides, mountain ranger and the possibility of renting clothes and equipment such as crampons were mentioned.

Strand municipality is also engaged in a project hosted by Ryfylke IKS called Techsperience where big data is used to foresee public moving patterns, which can be used as safety measures. Concerning potential safety measures that could be considered, the majority of the stakeholders expressed that preventive information could be improved and more personnel at the basecamp was a possible solution. They also felt that there were a balance of too strict safety measures and the experience it self. One could risk the obliteration of the hike if there were too much focus toward safety. Some of the interviewees felt that the current safety measures were adequate as they were.

The interviewees intended that they had the impression that tourists that had little mountain experience, inappropriate clothing and footwear and the risk of changing weather conditions or highly visited days often were the reasons of unwanted events, whereas some pointed out that they considered suicides as unwanted events, moreover with 300 000 projected visitors, there would always be some injuries.

About current safety measures “ *We think that they are on a proper track, and one should not expect more than what they have done and is about to do*”- RY

About the current safety measures “ *It where many that injured their foot earlier, where it was loose gravel and rocks, now there is more stairs and solid underlay*” – NCE

About unwanted events at Preikestolen: “ *It is unavoidable when you have 300 000 on foot in a trail in Norwegian nature, it is not unavoidable*”- FKT

The safety responsibility at Preikestolen

There were differing perceptions of who had the responsibility of the tourists at Preikestolen. Many of the interviewees indicated that they felt that the responsibility for tourist safety were a mix between the travel operators, the ones who promote the destination, tourist transport companies, the surrounding municipalities.

Furthermore, the interviewees also felt a moral obligation of the safety facilitation, but identified the Police as the legal institution if an accident occurred.

The Pulpit Rock foundation stated that they wanted to have the responsibility of safety related topics in terms of injury prevention and they had also created an analysis of potential risks at Preikestolen. This corresponded with the perception of the other interviewees. There have also been financial supported of the Norwegian People Aid to secure their preparedness, by the foundation and the Forsand municipality.

Some pointed out that in the Norwegian nature, a person has its own responsibility of safety, risk-perception and well being and asked questions whether this topic moreover was something that the government should be a part of, such as financial support. Some also mentioned that there could be a deductible if the tourist had crossed warnings of taking the hike, which might have a preventive effect.

If a rescue mission happened at Preikestolen, most of the interviewees knew who had the legal responsibility theoretically, but some interviewees felt that the preparedness routines was not well-defined.

About tourism safety responsibility “ We are located where we are located, so it is natural to be a part of the responsibility for them (tourists), you can not “sign out” then try to make money and don` t care what happens”-DNTS

About tourism safety responsibility “ When I go out in the nature I expect that it is my responsibility and not others”-RY

About tourism safety responsibility “ *I think we could reduce a big part of the accidents if it had cost money to take that phone, it becomes to much of a service for some to take helicopter trip*” –NCE

The safety contingency plans of Forsand and Strand municipality

One interviewee had developed Forsand municipality first plan and there had been several revisions. This plan had been used to some extent concerning tourists, often on a psychosocial level. Additionally, some of them had knowledge about them in terms of that the municipality had risk and vulnerability analysis (ROS-analysis) but these analysis were for local inhabitants. Several mentioned that these plans were not targeted toward tourists and Preikestolen, furthermore there was a challenge of cooperation of these plans between Forsand and Strand municipality as the hike starts in Strand but ends in Forsand.

About contingency plans “ *The municipality has a obligation to construct such plan, I do not have those plans here and what we have seen is that they do not cover what we are doing, they have not thought of that*”- SP

About contingency plans “ *Preikestolen is located in Forsand, but you start walking in Strand. That’s the challenge; it is not the same administrative authority that has the responsibility for the whole thing*”-SK

How the interviewed organisations work for tourism safety at Preikestolen

The municipalities’ representatives said that they did not work directly with this topic. However they had some indirect processes by having the authority to stop building plans in dangerous areas and so forth. Several mentioned the annual contingency meetings with other stakeholders where they discussed events that had occurred, lessons to be learned and what they should further focus on in the matter of safety. One interviewee said that their work on

educating guides and tourists was a step in the right direction. Additionally, some felt tourist operators had the safety responsibility of their own customers.

About organisational work for tourism safety *“The municipality have focused on organisations such as The Pulpit Rock Foundation has to implement their own ROS-analysis”- FKT*

About organisational work for tourism safety *“ we are basically reactive, we should or some should maybe to a larger degree be proactive to prevent that situations arise”-*

NF

Discussion

The research questioned investigated in this thesis is asking how tourist safety measures and the natural sustainability at Preikestolen is perceived by stakeholders.

The stakeholders generally considered the increase of visitors as positive for the development of the local communities as well as for the region of Rogaland county, but negative in relation to increased number of rescue missions and littering of the trail. Furthermore, the high number of visitors in the short main season between April-October caused challenges as it could neglect Preikestolen as a product.

Regarding the right to roam principle in context of Preikestolen some of the interviewees stated that as they represented an organisation they were not in liberty to elaborate about the organisational views though this were an engaging question and some also expressed their personal view of the right to roam principle in context of Preikestolen. They all agreed upon that this the principle of right to roam were challenged at Preikestolen given the crowds of tourists visiting in a short timespan.

Another issue that were raised was how to make more money on the tourists to pay for necessary facilities, infrastructure and the nearby communities.

When elaborating their views of Preikestolen as a national park some pointed out that a national park would ease the process of facilitating the area, as it would be easier to profit of the visitors by regulations. There had been made a report of the pros and cons of Preikestolen as a national park, but this was disregarded as there were conflicting interests between the municipalities. However, they saw the necessity of preserving and controlling the region, although many of the interviewees stated that their organisation did not have an official view. A big part of the interviewees also declared that in order to develop the area, there was a need of income and the existing revenues generated from parking were not sufficient although there were conflicting views whether a hiking fee would be a wise choice of income, considering the law of the right to roam principle this is not possible. Some justified that the income could be made in advance of the hike and questions aroused concerning the need of governmental influence of supporting the infrastructure.

The organisation of the stakeholders in context of Preikestolen may be seen as a puzzle from the outside but the interviewees had knowledge of the different roles.

The government were not considered as a collaborator as they did not have a direct involvement of the conservation of the area. Additionally, the cooperation between the municipalities were considered firm.

There were opposing views of the interviewees about the experienced cooperation between the private stakeholders. Some portrayed it as a beneficial relationship whereas some felt that it could have been improved, a larger private tourist operator could enhance this relationship buy binding them together.

The pulpit Rock Foundation were put forward by the interviewees as a solid organisation that functioned as an area were the different stakeholders had meetings regarding the activities of Preikestolen. The interviewees indicated that some of the organisations had more influence of the decisions that were made for the development of Preikestolen, and the board members of

The Pulpit Rock Foundation such as the manager and the majors had a big influence. Additionally, The Norwegian Trekking Organisation Stavanger and Strand municipality were also revealed to have an evident influence of the activity. Logically, the different organisations had different subjects that they wanted to accentuate.

The Pulpit Rock Foundation focused on a project to be certified as a sustainable destination and most of the interviewees deliberated Preikestolen as sustainable as of today, although more measures had to be done to ensure the sustainability of the future regarding the projected visitors of 600 000 in 2027. Some also elaborated the importance of expanding the visitation area of other parts of the Lysefjord region too develop economic sustainability of the area, as well as distribute the visitors to other seasons.

The more business related interviewees emphasized on the importance of sustaining the populations in Lysefjord. Some also raised the question of whether cruise traffic and power development in the region were sustainable and what it did concerning the scenery of the fjord.

The interviewees had varying perceptions of the tourists' preparation before they undertook the hike. Some were well prepared whereas others, often with petite mountain experience had difficulties due to clothing and equipment and were not prepared for the length or rapid weather changes. Some of them also implied that visitors that had one day to visit Preikestolen such as cruise tourists often were a problem as they were inadequately clothed on days with poor weather conditions.

Regarding the tourist information enhancement, some of the interviewees found the marketing of Preikestolen as insignificant as it focused on the beautiful scenery and not on the precautions the tourist should take in advance. Additionally they suggested more personal information at the basecamp about the hike, weather, clothing and equipment as well a capitalisation of rental equipment to generate income for the area.

The interviewees expressed that they felt the current safety measures were sustainable given the present traffic, as mentioned there were need of further improvements to handle the predicted increase of tourists. Some of them prompted too much facilitation of the trail and the area would affect the nature and the authenticity.

As the winter of 2017 were the first year The Pulpit Rock Foundation had officially opened up for tourists, they had to adopt as the tourists took the hike all year, the interviewees felt that the safety measures were reasonable and examples such as trail signs, emergency cabin, guides and a mountain ranger were pulled forward as suitable measures. Furthermore, Strand municipality was engaged in a project called Techsperience too be able to use big data to predict travel patterns.

Many of the interviewees mentioned that they felt the cooperation between the safety organisations were well established and commented on The Norwegian People's Aid cooperation with other rescue instances.

Regarding who the interviewees held responsible of the safety of tourists, many felt that it were a mix between tourist operating companies, cruise lines, transporting companies, surrounding municipalities as well as them self who felt a moral obligation as they operate in the area. Some also noted that in the Norwegian nature, a tourist had the responsibility of himself or herself and a deductible if rescued, may serve as a preventive effect. The question of governmental support, like financial funding of infrastructure and safety measures also surfaced at this topic. The Pulpit Rock foundation also stated that they wanted to have the responsibility of the safety facilitation, other interviewees also supported this view. A risk analysis had also been developed by the foundation to detect risks and safety measures. If a rescue mission occurred, the interviewees knew who had the legal responsibility theoretically, but some of them felt that the practical responsibility were ambiguous.

Concerning how the organisations worked for tourism safety, several mentioned the annual contingency meetings with other stakeholders where they evaluated previous events and planned for the following months. One of the interviewed organisation also educated guides at different levels as well as tourists that took longer hikes and certify them with a mountain card.

The municipality contingency plans of Forsand and Strand were not well known of most of the interviewees, except the municipality representatives themselves and one other that had worked in Stavanger municipality. These plans were mostly for the local inhabitants and several noted that these plans were not specific toward Preikestolen or contained safety measures of tourists. Furthermore, as Preikestolen are located both in Strand, there was a challenge of cooperate these plans.

Weaknesses of the study

As the researcher had limited experience of interviewing persons, there was a steep learning curve of knowing how to do the interviews. Likewise, in a retrospect, the interview structure could be enhanced as well as some of the questions could have been more attentive. The theory could also have been improved, although it proved to be difficult to find specific literature concerning this specific topic. The structure of the research could have been enhanced. Additionally, follow up interviews would have been preferred to acquire more information of the interviewees perceptions of some topics.

Strengths of the study

The emphasis of this explorative study were not generalising findings, rather serve as a depot in order to build further studies on this highly relevant and important topic of stakeholders perception of tourism safety and natural sustainability of tourists visiting one of Norway`s most populated tourist attractions. Additionally this study is believed to enlighten relevant perspectives and possible directions of future studies.

Theoretical implications and

This study serves as an opening for further research about tourism safety and natural sustainability seen from stakeholders point of view in the context of natural attractions. For further studies there are several possibilities. One way of building further on this study can be by researching the economical sustainability of Preikestolen or other highly visited nature attractions. Furthermore, researching the visiting tourists perception of safety would have been exciting in terms of comparing the studies to detect similarities and differences.

Managerial implications

This study provides findings that are valuable for the further development of Preikestolen as natural sustainable and a safe destination for tourists. The arrangement of the stakeholders at Preikestolen appears as a big bundle, a bit unclear and with different interests of what they wish Preikestolen to be. Naturally, the right to roam principle sets limitations of what can be facilitated, infrastructure and the ability to capitalize on services. In those terms, Preikestolen as Rogaland first national park would make it easier to preserve, set limitations, set jurisdiction, and capitalize of the area. In contrast, one would get more governmental influence of the area, which has been seemed negative in certain organisations. Another challenge that has to be addressed is the preparedness of visiting tourists and how to gain more knowledge about them, especially those who only have one day to visit such as the cruise tourists. Ways of informing as many tourists as possible at basecamp in a personal manner to prevent safety incidents are further considerations to be taken.

The marketing of Preikestolen is an area of concern as there are various periphery organisations that marketed does marketing as well as social media influence.

The municipalities of Strand and Forsand's contingency safety plans does not cover possible issues related to tourism safety at Preikestolen as they are more concerned about inhabitants.

Development of such plans related to Preikestolen and other highly visited nature attractions is recommended.

How to find a balance between safety facilitation, service amenities, preserving the nature in an authentic way while attracting tourists is something that can be further investigated.

Limitations and recommendations

There are some limitations of this study to consider, as the researcher have not studied something so complex and comprehensive before. There were some difficulties of finding relevant literature as well as the interviews and questions could have been improved by more specific questions as well as follow up interviews to add questions and clarify some aspects. Furthermore, privately owned tourist operators should have been interviewed to attain their perceptions of the research objective, however as they did not respond to the invitations and considering the limited timeframe of the interview process, no further inquiries were done.

Future research

The researcher would like to recommend a more varied sample size to include privately owned companies. Additionally, it is recommended to include a governmental instance. Furthermore it is also recommended to research the political and administration of different municipalities to explore their perceptions of tourism safety and natural sustainability as well as researching the municipalities contingency plans and how they work in relation to tourism safety. Correspondingly, the governmental role of preserving Preikestolen or other similar areas can be further researched as the role of conservation primarily lies at local authorities. The researcher would also recommend a study of possible income methods to facilitate Preikestolen as well the possibility of using big data to foresee moving patterns and thereby improve the safety of tourists. Also this study found that little was known about visitors in

terms of information and preparation, especially the visitors that had one day to visit Preikestolen, as they often were the ones who caused assistance or rescue missions.

Conclusion

At Preikestolen the stakeholders work suitable to ensure the tourists safety while considering Preikestolens natural sustainability within the current legislation and frameworks they possess. There are voluminous stakeholders who has implications of how to best preserve the area, fundamentally the Norwegian outdoors recreation law to safeguard the right to roam principle sets limitations of the facilitation, infrastructure and capitalizing of the visitors. The main income is generated from parking fees and the interviewees saw the need for finding other ways to ensure a sustainable conservation of the area and region. A national park which implies government influence has been researched and treated but was disregarded both locally and in the nationally. The study investigated the cooperation between different stakeholder groups and was considered decent by between the organisations interviewed. The Pulpit Rock Foundation was held forward as a establishment of the cooperation between them. The cooperation of the safety organisations was described as decent. There were opposing views concerning the cooperation of private businesses as well as the lack of governmental cooperation. Considering safety it was a common understanding that the current safety measures were adequate, though it had to be further improved to handle the projected increase of visitors. The balance of safety facilitation and maintaining the natural heritage is important and correspondingly, the marketing of Preikestolen and safety information about Preikestolen can be improved and balanced to prevent incidents and thereby reduce the rescue and assistance missions. If such missions occurred, the utilization and implementation of the rescue service were perceived as decent, although it took its toll at

the persons involved. The municipalities of Forsand and Strand's contingency plans does not cover tourism safety specific in relation to Preikestolen or other popular tourist attractions such as The Kjerag bolt or the Flørli stairs. Another challenge of these plans where that the Preikestolen trail is located in both municipalities.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Innledende spørsmål

1. Hvilken rolle har du i bedriften/organisasjonen du jobber i?
2. Hvordan opplever dere økningen av turister til Preikestolen?
3. Hvordan er deres samarbeid med de andre interessentene som operer i Preikestolen-området?

Allemannsrett, nasjonalpark, løypeavgift

4. Hva mener dere om allemannsretten?
 - 4.1. Oppfølging hvis ikke besvart: Sett i relasjon til Preikestolen?
5. Hva mener dere om ideen om å gjøre Preikestolen til en nasjonalpark?
6. Det har også blitt foreslått løypeavgift, hva mener dere teoretisk sett om dette?

Interessenter

7. Kan du beskrive organiseringen/"eierskapstrukturen/eierskapinteressen" rundt Preikestolen?
8. Hvordan er samarbeidet mellom staten og kommunene med tanke på Preikestolen?
 - 8.1. Hvordan er samarbeidet mellom kommunen og private interessenter?
9. Hvordan er samarbeidet mellom de ulike private aktørene?
10. Hvordan foregår kommunikasjonen mellom de ulike interessentene?
11. Er det møter/sammenkomster mellom ulike interessenter?
 - 11.1. Blir de ulike interessenters meninger/ønsker ivaretatt?
 - 11.2. Har enkelte interessenter større innflytelse enn andre?

Naturens bærekraftige utvikling

12. Hva anser dere som bærekraftig utvikling opp mot Preikestolen?
 - 12.1. Eksempler på bærekraftig utvikling av Preikestolen?

12.2. Beskriv eventuelle fokusområder?

13. Blir naturressursene og naturvern utnyttet på en bærekraftig og forsvarlig måte, og hvordan ivaretas dette?

Turisten

14. Hva er deres inntrykk når det kommer til turistenes forberedelser i forkant av turen?

14.1. Oppfølging hvis ikke besvart: Er turistene tilstrekkelig informert om turen og hva som kreves?

14.2. Oppfølging hvis ikke besvart :Hvilke tiltak kunne blitt forbedret?

Sikkerheten ved Preikestolen

15. Hva er deres synspunkter om de nåværende sikkerhetstiltakene ved Preikestolen?

15.1. Er det behov for andre forebyggende sikkerhetstiltak for å hindre uønskede hendelser?

16. Hvorfor skjer uønskede hendelser på Preikestolen?

17. Hvem mener dere har ansvar for sikkerheten til turistene som går opp til Preikestolen?

17.1. Oppfølging hvis ikke besvart: Er det klarhet i hvem som har ansvar for hva rundt sikkerheten på Preikestolen?

18. Kjenner dere til de omliggende kommuners forskrift om krav til beredskapsplanlegging og beredskapsarbeid henhold til sikkerhet?

18.1. Oppfølging om kjennskap til: erfaringer med disse planene?

19. Hvordan jobber dere for å ivareta sikkerheten til turistene på Preikestolen?

19.1. Oppfølging hvis nødvendig: Har dere noen skadeforebyggende tiltak?

Appendix 2

Abbreviation of organisation names

DNTS: Den Norske Turistforening Stavanger

FKI: Forsand kommune turistkontor

NF: Norsk Folkehjelp

NCE: Norwegian Centers of Expertise (Tourism Fjord Norway)

RY: Ryfylke IKS/Ryfylke fondet

SK: Strand kommune (administrasjon)

SP: Stiftelsen Preikestolen