

The storied self in tourism spaces: Qualitative narrative methodology as a framework for understanding self-identity in Niseko, Japan

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Abstract

Although research documents tourism influences the lifestyles, values, behaviours, and self-identities of tourists and host-communities, the majority of tourism research remains focused on tourists. Niseko, in northern Japan, offers an example of a rural community transformed from a small agricultural-based economy into a cosmopolitan, international ski resort destination supported by foreign investment. Drawing upon Niseko's experience, this paper engages with a growing body of research advocating advantages of qualitative methodology to augment the preponderance of quantitative tourism research, particularly for measuring progress, change, and experience. Using the case example of Niseko, we argue narrative inquiry offers a research method for understanding tourism as a dynamic, reflexive process negotiated by tourists and hosts within social environments. In synthesising tourism literature, we illustrate how a shift in methodological focus, from quantitative to qualitative narrative inquiry, shifts research focus towards issues and research questions of great pertinence in contemporary liminal tourism spaces, such as those characterised by Niseko's ski destinations, and, by drawing upon Anthony Giddens's theory, allude to the importance of prioritising identity construction in the provision of tourism.

1 Introduction: Research methodology and the changing nature of tourism

The role methodology plays in constructing research foci and priorities is central to the questions researchers ask and answer. In light of the tourism industry research being largely characterised by quantitative studies, this paper introduces qualitative narrative inquiry as an under-utilised research method that may deepen the field's prioritisation of, and appreciation for, the role identity construction plays in shaping tourism experiences and practices. Contemporary tourism surpasses mere provision of destinations, as commodities exchanged as economic products, to spaces for postmodern travellers who see themselves in subjective terms, and are fluid and open in their travel experiences. (Maoz & Beckerman, 2010). In today's post-industrial society, the tourism industry creates, and facilitates consumption of, places that embody lifestyles constructed to affirm, or enhance, self-identity as global citizens more than consumers of commodified places and foreign spaces.

While historically tourists have been perceived as concerned solely with the pursuit of relaxation or escapism (Horne, 1992), more recently it has been recognised that tourism also has educational and transformational potential for individuals (Jamal & Hollinshead, 2001), particularly through quests for authenticity and self-identity. Illustrating this in her seminal work *Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism* (1978, p. 2), Smith defines a tourist as, "a temporarily leisured person who voluntarily visits a place away from home for the purpose of experiencing change". These quests occur in spaces removed from usual social roles, relationships, and expectations, and often occur after experiences of major life events or changes (Lean, 2012). Reisinger (2013) posits that personal transformation through tourism may occur through interactions with an 'other' and exposure to unfamiliar activities, foods, and lifestyle choices. Further, it is suggested some types of tourists, such as volunteer tourists or backpackers, are particularly influenced or even transformed, by tourism experiences (Coghlan & Weiler, 2015; Matthews, 2008). Hence, the 'liminal' nature of tourism spaces creates freedom and opportunities for individuals to consider their own selfhood in isolation from tradition social roles and environments. While the transformative potential of tourism is widely acknowledged, it is also recognised to be under-researched (Robledo & Batle, 2015; Wilson, McIntosh, & Zhara, 2013).

Despite changing travel trends, whereby individuals increasingly seek to visit tourist destinations they find compatible with their lifestyle preferences, beliefs, and self-identities, much tourism research continues to employ quantitative methods to document tourism trends (Easterling, 2004; Hwansuck & Murray, 2010; Kim, Usal, & Sirgy, 2013; Tosun, 2002; Valdez & Sifenack, 1997). Although useful for statistically documenting trends over time and demographic details, quantitative research remains limited in its capacity to distil more nuanced, and deeper meanings and understandings of the social relationships that underscore tourism experiences. We argue tourism research may not only benefit from qualitative investigation, moreover, it requires a sociocultural lens to distil how the complexities of the social and personal 'self' are dynamically affected by experiences of tourism.

To illustrate how methodologically shifting tourism's research objectives, from documenting economic growth and trends, towards investigating the type of experiences those in the industry perceive as desirable, we draw upon the case example of Niseko, a formerly rural agrarian community in northern Japan, to suggest how tourism, as an industry, may become better equipped to support the various communities upon which it relies, as well as the clients it serves, if its practices are increasingly informed by qualitative, as well as quantitative, research.

2. Research Methodology and Conceptualising Self-Identity in Tourism Research

Tourism has a long history of conducting quantitative research (see for example, Andereck, Valentine, Knopf, & Vogt, 2005; Easterling, 2004; Hwansuck & Murray, 2010; Kim et al., 2013; Tosun, 2002). This ongoing bias is, we argue, an outdated practice for an industry serving contemporary societies preoccupied with curating lifestyles and imagery conveying affiliation with social identities, attitudes, and groups that resonate with individuals' specific values and belief systems. As a meaning-making system, tourism offers individuals opportunities to engage in social interactions in environments of their choosing. Tourism spaces are dynamic settings for the production and consumption of experiences, time, and imaginings (Freidus & Romero-Daza, 2009; Toyota, 2006) and for negotiating identities (Snepenger, Murphy, Snepenger, & Anderson, 2004).

The scarcity of tourism studies focusing on subjective experiences is a deficiency noted in research literature. Westwood, Morgan, and Pritchard (2006, p. 35), for instance, contend, "far too few tourism scholars have attempted to investigate the ontologies of being, meaning and identity", reflecting the need for subjective, contextual research exploring individual

experiences. This quote both reflects the field's continued reliance upon ontologies and epistemologies extolling quantitative research, and, moreover, articulates fundamental aspects of societal organisation which tourism research and practice fails to consider that may, if addressed, improve future practices and processes. Contemporary societies are, as post-structural theorists argue organised by traditional social variables, such as class, gender, and ethnicity, as well as by the interplay individual agency permits, or prevents, in light of structural impediments and advantages (Giddens, 1991). Drawing upon Giddens' (1991) social theory of self-identity, may, we argue, permit tourism researchers to consider new insights permissible from conceptualising tourism as a process of self-actualisation whereby reflexive social actors co-construct desires and experiences using an iterative and reflexive process of identity construction. However, whereas prior tourism research applying Giddens' concept of self-identity (Elstrud, 2001; Glover, 2003; Hyde & Olsen, 2011; Noy, 2004) demonstrates how narrative methodology may foster deeper insight into tourists experiences' of influence on self-identity, we argue future research requires focus that includes individuals and/or social groups other than tourists. Hence, while the subjectivity of tourism has long been documented in the literature, its influence on self-identity, and implications for tourism destinations and participants, such as those in Niseko, remain sidelined in favour of quantitative approaches recognised as less effective for exploring human experiences, perceptions, and meanings (Dickman, 1989; McGibbon, 2000; Sharpley, 2014), and studies failing to examine the plethora of individuals involved in creating tourism experiences and spaces.

Quantitative approaches are limited in a number of ways that are relevant specifically for examining tourism broadly, and in Niseko specifically. For example, quantitative methodologies are restricted in their ability to unpack host experiences of tourism, which is acknowledged to be complex, contextual, nuanced, and individually determined (Sharpley, 2014). Specific quantitative instruments, such as surveys and questionnaires, are restrictive for gathering complex data that may vary by research participant since they often ask the same questions in the same order and require participants to choose from predetermined responses (Farrelly, 2013). Quantitative approaches also are critiqued for describing the impacts of tourism, rather than providing insight into why they are occurring. (Deery, Lee, & Fredline, 2012), and are generally unable to address research investigating understanding and meaning (Walle, 1997).

Tourism is fundamentally a social interaction between tourists and their hosts, people and the places they inhabit. Tourism researchers tend to bifurcate between using social structural or social agency theory to explore meaning construction. In postmodern consumer culture, however, identity construction also exists in a conceptually contested space. For example, recent research using Bourdieu and Riceour's theories describe self-identity in tourism research traverses being a transformative, reflexive process continuously (re)negotiated through consumptive practices narrated by selfhood that is temporally contingent and one that is a relational selfhood embedded in, and influenced by, power relations (Ourahmoune, 2016). Such theorising, and research findings, connote the complexity of self-identity as an influencing factor in tourists' decision-making process about destinations, experiences and their relevance or contribution to situationally relative, as well as enduring, aspects of self-hood. However, like much other tourism research, including research utilising Giddens' self-identity theory (Hyde & Olesen, 2011), research focus predominantly concentrates upon the selfhood and identity of tourists, despite acknowledging the broader sociocultural environment in which tourism occurs (Ourahmoune, 2016). Progressing tourism research, therefore, demands transcending equating self-identity research in tourism with *consumer* self-identity research.

3. Qualitative Narrative Inquiry, Self-identity, and Tourism in Niseko

Tourism research has directed far more attention to understanding the motivations, experiences, and behaviours of tourists than the opinions and experiences of tourism hosts (Sharpley, 1999). In Niseko, as elsewhere, understanding tourism hosts' experiences is an equally essential component of unpacking what occurs in tourism spaces. Critically considered, the lack of knowledge about how tourism affects individuals in host communities may exist because of the inherently subjective nature of such influences (Cooper, Gilbert, Fletcher, & Wanhill, 1993; Mathieson & Wall, 1982; Sharpley & Telfer, 2002) coupled with tourism research's predisposition towards quantitative methodologies.

Over the past several years, tourism researchers have increasingly advocated qualitative methodologies. For example, Dredge, Jenkins and Ionnides (2011) recommend the interpretative approach of exploring socially contextualised narratives to understand, and explain the tourism planning and policy making process, while Ryan (2000) suggests it is essential to utilise methods that enable the researcher to be flexible and to reflect the subjective experiences. Further, Deery, Jao, and Fredline (2012, p. 64) assert, "the quantitative focus from

previous social impact research has led to a narrow understanding of the issues surrounding the social impacts". With increased calls that tourism research should select methods which, "reflect the individual, experiential and ludic characteristics of tourism" (Westwood, Morgan, & Pritchard, 2006), space may be created for a range of participant voices and narratives to be heard.

One interpretive approach which speaks to this concept of valorising subjective and contextual research participant stories, and is compatible with Giddens (1991) theory of self-identity, is narrative inquiry. A narrative can be defined as a short or extended story about a significant experience or a life story (Chase, 2005). Narrative inquiry aims to understand how the participant interprets their experiences as a cohesive narrative to reflect their own sense of 'self' in a socially embedded context (Glover, 2003). Narratives are characterised as reflecting a natural and universal way people account for their experiences across cultures (Butler-Kisber, 2010) and, thus, are particularly well suited to cross-cultural research. Moreover, narratives are useful in tourism contexts because they can capture perceptions of tourism experiences and the intersection of tourism and identity (Glover, 2003). As a method, narrative interviewing has several distinct advantages over other qualitative methods. For example, semi-structured interviews are led by the researcher and, therefore, offer participants less opportunity to describe experiences in detail resulting in limited depth in the data (Gibson, 1998). Focus groups, another common qualitative method, are poorly suited to research dealing with personal topics, such identity, and are recognised as susceptible to the potential effects of group or cultural conformity influencing participant responses (Farrelly, 2013). Thus, in considering qualitative research methods options for advancing knowledge about self-identity in tourism research, we advocate narrative inquiry, in light of the existing literature and methods reviewed, is advantageous.

In the interpretivist tradition, narrative inquiry acknowledges the subjective and dynamic nature of knowledge and supports participant description of lived experiences by assuming 'the story' is a key way humans understand and explain social reality (Clandinin, 2007). Narrative inquiry permits tourism researchers to explore how individuals perceive and construct events and experiences (Reissman, 2008) and assists participants with unpacking the interplay between 'local' and 'global', highly relevant in tourism spaces (2010). Narrative inquiry, then, not only opens a window to understanding participants' experiences, it also enables tourism researchers to comprehend more broadly how experiences of tourism and tourism spaces may

influence the development of self-identity (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). Having outlined the advantages of narrative inquiry, contextualised amid contemporary tourism research, noting the field's historical predisposition towards quantitative research and topical focus on tourists, rather than examine tourism more holistically, we next discuss what may be gained by applying this methodological lens to investigate if ski tourism has contributed to the transformation in self-identity, as expressed through narratives by tourism business owners, in Niseko, Japan.

4. The 'new' Niseko, a liminal tourism space?

The Niseko area is located on the northernmost tip of the Japanese archipelago on the island of Hokkaido, the largest, but most sparsely populated, prefecture in Japan (Teikoku-Shoin, 2010). Hokkaido has a strong nature-based tourism industry, considered to be an important component of the national economy (Ide, 2012). Niseko is located 93km west, or approximately two hours' drive, from the prefectural capital, Sapporo and is known for its cool climate, low humidity, and abundant snowfall (JapanExternalTradeOrganisation, 2006). While the town is a small administrative hub, what has become known as the 'Niseko area' encompasses ski fields located in the surrounding areas of Kutchan town, Grand Hirafu, Hirafu Onsen, and Annupuri (Staples, 2011). Originally a collection of small agricultural villages specialising in farming potatoes, the chance introduction of skiing by an Austrian Lieutenant in 1912 changed the course of Niseko's history, with the first ski lifts opening in 1961, the beginning of its transformation into a ski destination (Committee for Publishing a History of Ski Resort Development at Hirafu, 2011).

Underpinned by the 1972 Sapporo winter Olympic games' success, in the 1980s there was a rapid expansion of lifts, ski lodges, and hotels catering to a predominately domestic market (Committee for Publishing a History of Ski Resort Development at Hirafu, 2011), reflecting a broader trend of growth in the Japanese domestic ski tourism market stimulated by the economic bubble in the 1980's (Funck, 1999; Kureha, 2008). Subsequently, the collapse of the Japanese economy in the 1990s led to domestic ski-tourism falling from 17% in 1993 to 12.7% of the population in 1997 (Funck, 1999). In turn, capital was withdrawn from the ski industry, resulting in numerous resort closures (Kureha, 2014). After the period of decline in the 1990's, Niseko's fortunes changed in the new millennium when Australian tourists reinvigorate the ski industry (Kureha, 2014). Many settled in Niseko, developed tourism-based businesses, purchased holiday homes, and transformed local streetscapes (Committee for Publishing a History of Ski Resort Development at Hirafu, 2011; Kureha, 2008). Niseko gained

distinction as a world class ski resort, with tourism peaking December to April (Staples, 2011) and attracting 1.63 million visitors in 2015 , of which Australians comprised 39% of international visitors (KutchanTownOffice, 2016b). In December 2003, 80 foreign residents lived in Niseko compared with 1545 foreign residents by 2016 (KutchanTownOffice, 2016a), with the self-contained apartments reflecting Australians' preference for longer visits than is typical for Japanese tourists (Committee for Publishing a History of Ski Resort Development at Hirafu, 2011; Kureha, 2014).

Economists recognise Niseko's transformation from rural to cosmopolitan, terming its foreign investment since the Millennium the 'Niseko boom' and the Japanese Government highlighting Niseko as an exemplar of rural revitalisation (Staples, 2011). Recent research by Nelson and Matthews (2017) investigated the perceived effects of Australian tourism on local residents and business owners, finding a developing Australian tourist enclave and issues regarding excessive alcohol consumption and other anti-social behaviours among Australian tourists. Popular media also cover Niseko's social changes, with a business magazine reporting, "Australian snow seekers" had "transformed a near deserted resort – Hirafu [now the main tourist area of Niseko] into a vibrant enclave" (Jackson, 2007) and a surfing magazine reporting, "so bad had the drunken antics of the Australians become in the quaint ski village of Niseko, that local authorities...[had] appointed a Canadian cage fighter to keep the peace" (STAB, 2010).

The Japan External Trade Organisation (2006) recognises a key obstacle facing the future of tourism in Niseko is potential friction between hosts and guests due to the increase in foreign tourists. In addition to Australian tourists, inbound travel from nearby Asian countries recently has increased, with tourists from Hong Kong (30,835), Singapore (21,425), China (8,179), and Taiwan (3,033) visiting in the 2014-2015 ski season. (NisekoPromotionBoard, 2015). Further, a recent increase in direct flights from mainland China to Hokkaido has facilitated a steady increase in Chinese inbound tourists to Hokkaido since 2007 (KutchanTownOffice, 2017), which is unsurprising given China is the leading tourism market worldwide (UNWTO, 2014) and Japan is one of the top ten outbound destinations for Chinese tourists (JNTO, 2017). The pattern is the same in Niseko with the Kutchan Town Office reporting 76 Chinese tourists in 2005 and 8179, in 2015 (personal communication, 2016).

Despite great socioeconomic and environmental change, Niseko has received little academic attention despite a handful of notable studies by Moon (1997), Kureha (2008) and Ichioka, Kawamura and Narisawa (2009) who have considered the geographical impacts of ski tourism. Recent Japanese tourism research identifies by 2015, Niseko received 13,175 Australian ski tourists, double the quantity in 2009, which, in comparison with the very modest quantity of Australian skiers in 2000 and prior, has contributed to the social transformation of this previously small, agricultural village now replete with English schools, Australian food and a thriving Australian expat community running a wide range of businesses (Takeda, 2017). Despite this unusual social phenomena, not replicated elsewhere in Japan, little academic research, tourism or otherwise, has examined Niseko's cultural anomaly, with the exception of one study exploring Australian-Japanese cultural interactions in Niseko as a 'contact zone', noting the lack of cosmopolitanism exhibited by Australians, and applying the concept of temporality to liken the migratory phenomena on par with American 'snow birds' that migrate from New York to Florida for climatic reasons (Takeda, 2017).

Takeda's (2017) conceptual research highlights the need for empirical investigation that may employ research methodologies capable of identifying not only why Niseko has become a key Australian tourism destination, but, more importantly, what consequences mass tourism holds for understanding shifts in self-identity in relation to place. Finally, while other researchers have examined the influx of tourists on the local environment in Hokkaido (Kanaoka, Ichimura, Yamamoto, & Kurosawa, 2004), however, as Kureha (2008) and Nelson and Matthews (2017) note, the influence of ski tourism on residents in Niseko remains poorly understood and, for the methodological reasons articulated in this paper, would highly benefit from future research applying Giddens self-identity theory that uses narrative inquiry to better understand the lived experiences of those living in an environment transformed by tourism.

Tourism is a social phenomenon (Clammer, 1997; Sharpley, 2014) concerned with the movement of people to temporary locations, their interactions with these places, and the people that live there (Sharpley, 2008). Once tourism development occurs, it affects community residents (Jurowski, Uysal, & Williams, 1997). Unlike other industries, tourism has the capacity to, "permeate communities" (Harrill, 2004, p. 2). Tourism affects both hosts and guests (Canavan, 2016) by changing lifestyles, values, behaviours, and identities (Cooper et al., 1993; Dogan, 1989; Fox, 1977; MacLeod, 2004; Mbaiwa, 2011; McDowell & Choi, 2010; Sharpley & Telfer, 2002; Smith, 1978). Despite these changes, research investigating the

sociocultural influences of tourism is an often overlooked research area (Bishnu & Dyer, 1999; Cooper et al., 1993; Deery et al., 2012; Styliadis, Avital, Sit, & Szivas, 2014), with recognised scarcity of research exploring the intersection of tourism and identity (Westwood et al., 2006).

Tourism's transformational properties are widely attributed to tourists (Lean, 2012) although tourism hosts are also recognised as affected by tourism (Wang, 2000). Lanfant, Allock, and Bruner (1995, p.5) describe tourism as an, "exogenous force" prompting subjective identity reflection and reconstruction in tourism destination residents and requiring research examining tourism hosts. Likewise, Bruner (1991) finds hosts do not remain static in tourism spaces, but are highly changed by tourism experiences, arguing some are more influenced by exposure to tourism than tourists. Conceptually, during periods of transformation, it is considered timely to consider how broader socioenvironmental change affects identity (Bailey, 1999; Macintosh & Callister, 2015; Reisinger, 2013). Changes to self-identity are a recognised outcome of tourism experiences and tourism is recognised as, "one of the most important contemporary ways in which the self can be constantly reinvented" (Clammer, 1997, p. 137).

Globalisation, and the social and technological transformations manifesting from it, play a crucial part in the renegotiation of identities, changing how people create and recreate their own ideas of self (Elliott, Katagiri, & Sawaii, 2012). In the context of this fluid globalised world, individuals are recognised as more loosely attached to conventional boundaries of place, culture, and fixed identity (Bauman, 1998; Giddens, 1991; MacLeod, 2004). In tourism contexts, it is widely acknowledged globalisation, and associated mobilities, in liminal tourism spaces can manifest fluidity in social flows and conditions and as fertile grounds for socio-cultural change (Sheller & Urry, 2004). Liminality is a key characteristic of tourism spaces and describes a sense of being physically, socially, and ideologically in a space that is outside of a person's usual environment and social boundaries (Freidus & Romero-Daza, 2009). In tourism spaces, liminality explains the way individuals perceive their environment and social roles differently than in their home contexts (Freidus & Romero-Daza, 2009; Salenniemi, 2003).

The removal of daily routines and structures in tourism spaces extends beyond a physical change in location, enabling the liminal tourism space to provide individuals with the psychological space to explore and reflect upon their perceptions and behaviours (Nash, 1996). Tourism spaces, therefore, are widely acknowledged as locations where opportunities for negotiations between people, relationships, and identities may take place (Amoamo, 2011) and

new forms of social life may emerge (Hannam, Butler, & Paris, 2014). Thus, liminal tourism spaces influence people in ways that may alter self-identity, leading to a conceptual shift from the perception of identity as something that is ‘*given*’, to something that is ‘*made*’ (Zhao & Biesta, 2011).

In contrast with conceptualisations of identity as passive, determined solely by external social forces (Mead, 1962; Tajfel, Billig, Bundy, & Flament, 1978), postmodern individuals are consciously involved in constructing their own self-identity (Bauman, 2011; Bruner, 1991; Gradinaru, 2014; Hollinshead, 1998). Reflecting on sociological understandings of self in the post-modern era, Wearing and Wearing (2001, p. 144) recommend moving towards, “a fragmented, decentred notion” of self that is self-constructed and recognises individuals’ agency. Along with a growing body of tourism researchers reviewed in this paper, we argue liminal constructions of tourism, when combined with narrative inquiry, offer a suitable methodological framework to explore Niseko and other tourism destinations where communities of place are created and (re)constructed through tourism experiences that research framed by generalised reference groups fails to consider. Giddens self-identity theory (1991) acknowledges the role individual agency and reflexivity may hold for understanding tourism more completely, and contests traditional conceptualisations of identity as socially prescribed (Ye & Edwards, 2017). Indeed, Giddens (1991, p. 54) states, “self-identity is not found in behaviour” (1991, p. 54), is “not a distinctive trait, or even a collection of traits possessed by the individual. It is the self as reflexively understood by the person in terms of his or her own biography” (1991, p. 53). In contexts such as Niseko, this theory would facilitate reconceptualising tourism experiences as windows into self-identity for understanding meaning creation (Andrews, Squire, & Tamboukou, 2008; Reissman, 2008) that are bound closely with concepts of self (Crossley, 2000; Westwood, Morgan, & Pritchard, 2016).

5. Conclusions

This paper identified the small agricultural area of Niseko in Hokkaido, Japan as an example of a community transformed from a rural agrarian society into an international ski resort destination through tourism. It argued that while a handful of academic studies have explored the geographical changes to Niseko manifested by tourism, the methodological lens employed limited the insights able to be garnered about if, and how, international tourism affects Niseko residents. Popular culture articles claim tourism has influenced several sociocultural aspects of

residents' lives, including changes to lifestyles, behaviours, and identities. Nevertheless, little academic research about Niseko exists, while a wider body of tourism research evidences preoccupation with quantitative methodologies unsuited for exploring the in-depth, qualitative changes transformational properties tourism widely attributes to tourists in the research literature (Lean, 2012), with little to no consideration of others involved in tourism as a social interaction involving hosts, tourists, and the environment in which they engage.

Highlighting the limitations of quantitative methodology for exploring experiences and perceptions in tourism spaces or understanding tourism's influence on individuals' lives (Sharpley, 2014), we identified the paucity of theoretically underpinned studies. In reviewing contemporary tourism research theoretically engaging with self-identity, we identified Giddens' theory as well-suited for offering in-depth, explanatory insights that may augment more descriptive studies. In recognising the interplay between social structure and the agency of individual actors, Giddens' (1991) theory, if combined with narrative inquiry, may unpack how living in a social environment transformed by tourism influences self-identity in Niseko, particularly for non-tourists.

In conclusion, this paper has outlined a conceptual framework that, if applied, may make three important contributions to the present body of tourism research. First, the approach addresses the recognised lack of conceptually-driven interpretive tourism research identified in the field as needed to understand the influence of tourism on the people who live in tourism spaces. Second, it identifies why examining international tourism's contribution to transforming Niseko, Japan, may yield insights that address current sociocultural problems/issues. Third, in reviewing narrative inquiry, it promotes this methodology's broader applicability for tourism policy and planning which may further insight into the diversity of tourism contexts, values, and experiences. Narrative inquiry offers future tourism research a framework that not only allows participants' voices to be better heard, it, moreover, enables researchers to more deeply understand the nuanced complexities shaping tourism spaces.

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