Henna Hirvonen

AFFECTS ON CROWDED TRAILS

A narrative study on the affective atmosphere of Finnish national parks during perceived crowding

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Author: Henna Hirvonen

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Abstract

On the footsteps of continuously growing popularity of nature-based tourism, national parks have become important tourist attractions, both internationally and in Finland. In addition, the global coronavirus Covid-19 pandemic has increased volumes of visitors in national parks even further. As a result, perceived crowding occurs. Already, crowding in natural environments has gained a considerable amount of research interest. However, affect theories and ideas involved in them, such as affective atmospheres, could be more utilised in studying crowded nature areas, such as national parks. In general, there is a growing body of academic literature about affective atmospheres, which this work aims to contribute by examining an affective atmosphere in the context of a crowded national park.

This narrative study is interested in how visitors of Finnish national parks experience crowding: what kind of affective and emotional responses are involved in these experiences? How are these responses contributing to the creation of an affective atmosphere? Therefore, the main research question of this work is: How is the affective atmosphere of a crowded national park? In addition to these aims, this Master's thesis examines what kind of interruptions in the flows of visitors' experience occur during the visit, and how they can potentially alter the affective atmosphere and the national park experiences. Then, these interruptions are studied in terms of how they can potentially shape the experience of space. The data consists of 11 written narratives, involving 10 out of 40 of the Finnish national parks.

The results indicate that a rather broad variety of affects, both positive and negative, are present during visits in crowded national park settings. Affects were identified to occur in encounters between narrators and other hikers, between narrators and nonhuman actors, as well as in situations involving congested national park facilities. Interruptions were also emerging from these situations. Interruptions' influence on how visitors experience the space was closely related to memories and expectations, having the potential to determine future visits.

Keywords: affective atmosphere, perceived crowding, nature-based tourism, narrative research

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of this study

It was a surprisingly warm Saturday for the end of September, plus twenty Celsius, when my friend and I headed to Repovesi National Park for a pleasant day trip to enjoy the nature. Even before arriving on site it came obvious that we most certainly were not the only ones with the very same idea. It was a challenge to find where to park the car as the parking lot was more or less full already, even though we arrived before noon. Some cars were parked quite widely, and therefore cars that arrived later had to be parked outside the actual parking lot, for example on the sides of the road.

Standing on a long queue to toilets made me feel slightly uncomfortable because I noticed that there were basically non-existent safe distances between people. Visitors seemed to be in a good and relaxed mood, though, ready to explore the nature. Also the starting point was quite crowded when multiple people stood there deciding which route to take. Fortunately, my friend and I were able to proceed quickly from that point as we had already chosen to walk the Ketunlenkki trail, which we knew from previous experience to be a trail that is not too challenging for a relaxing walk, but versatile enough to admire different landscapes. Perhaps for these qualities, it happens to be the most popular loop trail in Repovesi (Luontoon.fi / Repoveden reitit), and that was easy to see onsite: in the beginning of the walk there were always people walking either straight ahead of us or behind us. I did not have the nerve to stop at the Lapinsalmi bridge to take pictures of the beautiful views even if I wanted to do so, because there was a constantly growing queue behind us, waiting to cross the bridge, too. After the bridge, my friend and I decided to have a little break to enjoy our packed lunch and see if the traffic would abate if we waited a bit. Soon we noticed that it actually did, and we were happy to keep going.

After walking for a while, we arrived to an observation site. There were already quite a lot of people, taking pictures and just sitting there on the rock, enjoying the sunny weather. The atmosphere was relaxed, and people were thoughtful for each other: I did not see anyone holding the popular photo locations for themselves for too long, but

instead everyone took couple of pictures and then made space for next ones waiting for their turn. Near to the end of the Ketunlenkki trail, visitors can get acquainted with the special feature of the trail: crossing Kapiavesi with the Ketunlossi cable ferry which can be towed manually. This time, the queue for the ferry was very long, but shortened quickly because it only took a brief moment each time to cross the water and return. The ferry was rather small and as it became full every round it operated, there was not a possibility to keep safe distance. As mentioned, the distance was short, though, so it did not take too long to cross Kapiavesi, to be able to hop off the ferry and walk the remaining distance to the car. "Wow, this trip was so different than my earlier Repovesi visit", I remember thinking on the way back home.

The national park visit described above took place in early autumn 2020, and was the source of inspiration for conducting this Master's thesis study. When comparing this trip to my previous one in Repovesi National Park three years earlier, I found it interesting how crowding made such a difference to the experience. I most certainly am not the only one who has experienced crowding during outdoor recreation these days: nature-based tourism is the most rapidly growing segment of the tourism industry (Newsome, Moore & Dowling, 2002, p. 8), and in its footsteps, also national parks have significantly grown in popularity (Puhakka & Saarinen, 2013, p. 411; Juutinen et al., 2011, p. 1231). Indeed, lately, crowding in national park settings has become a noteworthily recognised phenomenon (Timmons, 2019, p. 996), and has been boosted further as people have become more enthusiastic for outdoor recreation due to restrictions related to the global Covid-19 pandemic (Tuomainen, 2020). Therefore, the topic of this study can be perceived as timely.

During my daytrip to Repovesi, I noticed that not only crowding, but also being aware of the prevalent pandemic and the authoritative instructions relating to it contributed to my experience, causing multiple emotional and affective reactions. This insight gave me the idea of further examining crowding in national park settings from the perspective of affects, affective atmospheres later becoming the main focus. When considering the brief overview of previous research I will introduce next, this kind of an approach could be an interesting addition to the existing academic literature.

1.2 Previous research

Nature-based tourism is a widely researched phenomenon, and a considerable amount of research has been conducted also focusing on nature-based tourism in national park settings (see e.g. Potts et al., 1996; Manning, 2009; Livina & Reddy, 2017, Puhakka, 2008; Juutinen et al., 2011; Puhakka & Saarinen, 2013; Äijälä, 2015). Also, in their work, Salmela and Valtonen (2019) touch the affectivity in national park settings by studying their national park experience by employing the affective practice of walking-with. However, so far, in general, understandings of affect theories have been utilised in nature-based tourism studies only scarcely.

Overtourism as a term is still relatively young (even though the problem itself has existed already for decades), but has already gained scholarly interest. However, according to some authors, more overtourism-related research is needed in order to fill in several research gaps that exists in terms of reasons and solutions of the phenomenon. Also (perceived) crowding has also been studied for years (see e.g. Jin, Hu & Kavan, 2016; Neuts & Nijkamp, 2011; Zemła, 2020). Even though the primary focus has been in crowding in natural areas, also urban environments have been covered in crowding-related research. Experienced crowding particularly in national park settings has been studied earlier e.g. in the Master's thesis by Pietilä (2012).

From the mid-1990s, affect has attracted research attention to the extent that even the idea of an affective turn has emerged. In its footsteps, there is also a growing body of research about affective atmospheres, for example in contexts of street performances, urban nights, and digital health (see e.g. Tan, 2021; Shaw, 2014; Lupton, 2017; Anderson, 2009). However, according to my knowledge, such atmospheres in the context of natural environments have gained less attention so far, particularly in the context of national parks. Therefore can be suggested that crowded national parks as affective atmospheres have not gained research interest yet – and this is what my study aims to contribute. Aims of this study will be explained more specifically in the next subchapter.

1.3 Purpose of this study and research questions for reaching this purpose

Indeed, from these starting points, the purpose of this research is to examine, how is the affective atmosphere of a crowded national park, in times of a global pandemic. Collective affects are significant elements in generation of an affective atmosphere (Anderson, 2009, p. 78), but the multiple layers of affective and emotional outcomes in a changing affective atmosphere may also be felt individually (Tan, 2021, p. 2). Therefore, it is necessary to examine, what these affects are in settings of a crowded national park, and in which situations they may occur. This will be researched with the research question 1, presented below, which is supported by two sub-questions.

For this Master's thesis research, also interruptions, meaning the disruptions in the flows of experience, are interesting, as they can potentially alter the affective atmosphere of a national park visit by "causing bodies to move or behave unexpectedly" (Lupton, 2017, p. 7, referring to Hollett & Ehret, 2015). Therefore, research question 2 focuses on understanding these interruptions, and their potential in altering the affective atmosphere of a national park during congestion. Affective atmospheres are strongly spatial (see e.g. Shaw, 2014, p. 89) which is why it is interesting to find out, with the research question 3, how these previously identified interruptions may potentially shape how the space is experienced by visitors during conditions of crowding.

Research questions of this study are:

1. How is the affective atmosphere of a crowded national park?

1.1 What kind of affects are present in visitors' bodies in crowded settings in the Finnish national parks?

1.2 In which kind of situations these affects occur?

2. How interruptions in the flows of experience potentially shape the affective atmosphere of a crowded national park?
3. How do interruptions caused by crowding shape the experience of space?

This study aims to contribute to the growing body of research related to affective atmospheres, particularly increasing understanding of how such an atmosphere may be in a natural environment. Further, with the emphasis on affectivity of a national park experience, this Master's thesis work can

contribute to the considerable amount of previous research related to nature-based tourism. Moreover, it provides an understanding of how increased visitor volumes, influenced by tremendously grown popularity of nature-based tourism and the global pandemic and its restrictions, have been experienced by visitors. At best, these finding may be useful for Metsähallitus, who is responsible for managing all of the national parks in Finland.

1.4 Methods and data

This Master's thesis examines crowding experiences of national park visitors in Finland, and as the main focus is on affective experiences, the study is qualitative by nature. The goal of qualitative research is not to provide statistical generalisations (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018, p. 98). Instead, usually, qualitative research involves a small number of participants in a specific context (Bold, 2012, p. 120), with the aim to understand the phenomenon from the perspective of these people involved, and therefore to be interested in their experiences, thoughts, feelings, and meanings (Juuti & Puusa, 2020, pp. 9). By doing this, a researcher pursues an understanding of certain actions, or offering a theoretically meaningful explanation for a phenomenon in question (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2008, p. 98). It is important to note, that "a qualitative methodology enables one to uncover subjective meanings that complete our understanding of the social world, which is defined out of personal and cultural experiences, not just through statistics" (d'Hauteserre, 2015, p. 78, referring to Bryman, 2012, Jennings, 2011, and Walliman, 2011). A significant notion in terms of this research is that when researching affects, almost all kinds of qualitative data can be employed (Rinne et al., 2020, pp. 26).

Visitor experiences of perceived crowding from Finnish national parks are of great interest in this study. Therefore, narrative approach was employed in the phases of data collection and analysis, as narration can be understood as "a powerful empirical tool for interpreting personal experiences" (Servidio & Ruffolo, 2016, p. 153). The data consists of 11 written narratives which were located in 10 different national parks in Finland. These narratives were analysed by utilising the idea of categorical-content mode of narrative analysis, introduced by Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach and Zilber (1998), combined with inductive content analysis practices. Also, categorical-form approach for narrative analysis, also introduced by Lieblich et al. (1998) was employed together with the method of close reading. In addition, the method of core story creation will be used in presenting the findings from the data.

1.5 Structure of this study

In the next two chapters, the theoretical framework of this study will be explained in detail. First, in chapter 2 (Perceived crowding in national parks), I will introduce nature-based tourism: what does it mean in general, in national park settings, and moreover, in Finnish national parks? Then, overtourism will be discussed, particularly from the point of (perceived) crowding, which is one of the major concerns related to overtourism. Perceived crowding will also be examined in terms of how it occurs in national parks, before moving forward to the third chapter (Understanding affective atmospheres) that aims to familiarise reader with the multifaceted world of affects and affective atmospheres, discussing not only about what is meant with these concepts, but also about the affective turn, affect theory, affect in relation to emotion, as well as body and particularly travelling body and its significance in affect generation.

In the fourth chapter, I will explain the process of data collection as written narratives implemented in this Master's thesis work, as well as how these narratives were analysed by utilising categorical-content perspective to narrative analysis intertwined with practices of inductive content analysis, employed together with categorical-form approach of narrative analysis, and close reading. Also, the idea of core story creation will be introduced in this fourth chapter, and research ethics and reliability will be addressed as well. The results of the study achieved with these methods will be then explained in chapter 5. Finally in the sixth chapter, I will conclude the study by outlining the findings made, critically examining the methodological choices made, and suggesting ideas for future research.

2 PERCEIVED CROWDING IN NATIONAL PARKS

2.1 Nature-based tourism

Nature-based tourism is the "fastest growing component" of the tourism industry (Newsome et al., 2002, p. 8). It can even be perceived to be "rapidly growing out of control" (Newsome et al., 2002, p. 15). Nature-based tourism is also the empirical phenomenon guiding this study. In this work, I will understand nature-based tourism and ecotourism synonyms (Newsome et al., 2002, p. 13-14) as both of them can be considered to share the aim to natural area protection. However, I recognise that divergent definitions exist. For example, these two terms can be perceived to differ from each other as nature-based tourism is lacking "overt environmental interpretation and/or education" (Newsome et al., 2002, p. 14). Patterson (2007, p. 1) cites Whitlock, Romer and Van Becker (1991) who suggest nature-based tourism to mean all kinds of tourism that "relies on the natural environment", whereas some authors argue that nature-based tourism also makes the effort of emphasising the promotion of understanding and conservation of the natural environment (Newsome et al., 2002, p. 13). Regardless of which of these definitions one prefers, national park visitation can be understood as a sub-concept of nature-based tourism as it involves both tourism and nature conservation (Puhakka, 2008, p. 47). Therefore, also national park visitation involves "close interactions between visitor experiences and natural resources" (Elmahdy, Haukeland & Fredman, 2017, p. 15).

Hall (2004, p. 14) argues that nature-based tourism is, in essence, "based upon the factors that allow an area to display the characteristics of 'naturalness' as determined within Western society". These factors are e.g. accessibility, visitor numbers, and "the relative naturalness" - defined by distance from permanent human-built structures, and by ecological integrity (Hall, 2004, pp. 14). With smaller visitor numbers and lower level of accessibility, an area is often perceived to have higher degree of naturalness (Hall, 2004, p. p14). It is also studied that in people's mental images, wilderness areas need to be silent (Hallikainen, 1998, p. 3) to be enjoyed, suggesting that it is not desired to encounter masses of people while visiting them. For these reasons, the development of nature-based tourism can be seen challenging, as developing tourist facilities in nature-based destinations and increasing their accessibility may lower the values that "attracted visitors in the first place" (Hall, 2004, pp. 15). However, there are also man-made structures in natural environments, such as constructed campsites, huts, and duckboards, that are rarely considered to negatively contribute to wilderness experience (Hallikainen, 1998, p. 98).

Certain features such as attractive landscapes, and clean air and water are valued when visiting nature-based tourism attractions (Elmahdy et al., 2017, p. 15). Therefore, climate change is inevitably affecting negatively to nature-based tourism (Elmahdy et al., 2017, p. 7). Also, human behaviour can negatively impact on certain (nature-based) destinations: for example, some visitors "would move beyond management barriers" into fragile natural environments, causing damage and erosion, removal of vegetation, and also disturbing wildlife for getting travel photos to share on social media (Elmahdy et al., 2017, p. 34). In popular national parks, construction and use of recreational facilities are disturbing wildlife, causing habitat modifications, and deterioration of vegetation, soil, and water, all of them being factors that can be understood to have significant impact on biodiversity (Juutinen et al., 2011, p. 1237, citing Chape, Spalding & Jenkins, 2008, Cole & Landres, 1996, and Liddle, 1997). For managerial measures, such as planning new trails and campsites, understanding of sensitive environments and species is essential (Kangas et al., 2006, pp. 458).

In their study, Elmahdy et al. (2017) introduce multiple e.g. social, environmental, economic and political trends advocating for the continuous growth of nature-based tourism. First of all, according to them (2017, p. 5), population growth is leading to an overall increase in nature-based tourism participation Also, people today emphasise mental health and de-stressing more than before, and therefore rely on nature-based activities as natural therapy or treatment (Elmahdy et al., 2017, p. 5). In addition, urbanisation causes changes in landscapes and loss of their aesthetic values, leading people to long for green spaces, which then increases the demand for nature-based tourism (Elmahdy et al., 2017, p. 5). The environmental awareness of tourists is increasing, and today's tourists are interested in nature-based tourism activities as such activities can help them to "achieve a sense of transformation and identity" (Elmahdy et al., 2017, p. 6). In developed economies, increasing income and leisure time allow a growing number of people to consume more time and money on nature-based experiences, which also contributes to the growth of nature-based tourism (Elmahdy et al., 2017, p. 7).

In Nordic countries, domestic nature-based tourism is studied to be particularly popular (Tervo-Kankare, 2012, p. 20, referring to Gössling & Hultman, 2006, and Sievänen & Neuvonen, 2011). This can be at least partly explained with the right of public access in these countries, allowing everyone to enjoy nature for recreational purposes, such as hiking, ice fishing, and berry picking (Tervo-

Kankare, 2012, p. 20, citing Working group for recreation in the wild and nature tourism, 2002, and Fredman & Tyrväinen, 2010). However, the interest in recreation in nature in the Nordic countries is not only limited to local visitors: for instance, it is estimated, that one third of foreign tourists in Finland participates in nature-based outdoor activities, e.g. hiking, fishing, or reindeer sledding during their stay (Tervo-Kankare, 2012, p. 20, citing Krzywacki, Potila, Viitaniemi & Tanskanen, 2009).

It is estimated that in Finland, there are approximately 5,700 companies that are at least partially based on providing nature-based tourism products (Øian et al., 2018, p. 31). Still (so far) Finland has managed to deal with increasing visitation to its main tourism destinations "in a relatively sustainable manner", thanks to regional strategic planning and investments for infrastructure (Øian et al., 2018, p. 32). However, infrastructure development for tourist reception can be seen as a two-edged sword as it has its risk to promote crowding, ecological landscape degradation, and development of natural areas (Øian et al., 2018, p. 32). In general in Nordic countries, crowding issues, public infrastructure congestion, and degrading impacts on environment caused by increased tourism volumes have become a concern (Øian et al., 2018, p. 13).

In general, tourist numbers dropped globally 65 % in the first half of 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak (UNWTO, 2020), and the environment of "fear, anxiety, and insecurity" is interpreted to influence people for a long time (Uğur and Akbıyık, 2020, p. 11). However, as Fredman and Margaryan (2020, p. 20-21) believe, nature-based tourism is likely to stay as a highly significant form of travel also in the post-Covid-19 world. In fact, already by now, the existing enthusiasm for nature recreation has been boosted even further due to the recent Covid-19 pandemic (Fredman & Margaryan, 2020, p. 14). For example in Oslo, the capital of Norway, there was a tremendous 291 % increase in outdoor recreational activity during the lockdown (Venter, Barton, Gundersen, Figari & Nowell, 2020, p. 1), and access to "open space for dispersed use in attractive environments functioned as a substitute and refuge for a large part of the population during the COVID-19 situation" (Venter et al., 2020, p. 5). In Finland, interest in national parks has been studied to have increased during lockdowns (Souza et al., 2021, p. 4). Social distancing, a measure to control the global pandemic, includes e.g. reducing social contact with other people, avoiding crowded environments, and minimisation of travelling (Sigala, 2020, p. 316). It can affect to people's ideas of health risks, unpleasant tourism experiences, and insecurity (Sigala, 2020, p. 316). Social distancing can also

considerably influence on how leisure and travel activities, such as hiking, other outdoor activities, and nature-based tourism in general are experienced and evaluated (Sigala, 2020, p. 316).

Along with the enormous popularity of nature-based tourism, national parks have grown as significant tourist attractions (Puhakka & Saarinen, 2013, p. 411; Juutinen et al., 2011, p. 1231). Therefore, it is no wonder that nature-based tourism in national park settings has gained significant research interest, too, both internationally (see e.g. Potts et al., 1996; Manning, 2009; Livina & Reddy, 2017) and in Finland (see e.g. Puhakka, 2008; Juutinen et al., 2011; Puhakka & Saarinen, 2013; Äijälä, 2015). In addition, e.g. Salmela and Valtonen (2019) have studied their own experience in Pyhä-Luosto National Park in Finnish Lapland with the method of walking-with, which is a scholarly method involving "embodied, sensuous, and affective practice of walking" (Salmela & Valtonen, 2019, p. 21, referring to Springgay & Truman's, 2018, book project).

National parks are studied to have potential for both domestic and international tourism, and to "play a major role in leisure and recreation of the population of urban areas" (Livina & Reddy, 2017, p. 179). Sometimes the popularity of outdoor creation is so tremendous that it creates crowding: as Elmahdy et al. (2017, p. 21) note, referring to Becken and Job (2014), crowding has been recognised as a constantly growing phenomenon in particular protected areas. This can be problematic as many visitors in natural areas such as in national parks are studied to prefer as little contact with other people as possible, being also "demanding in terms of the desire to have a large amount of resources to themselves" (Wall, 2019, pp. 29). In this study, perceived crowding is defined in detail in subchapter 2.2.2. Along with crowding, the natural environment of national parks is being "exposed to more extensive wear", which can pose a threat to conservational and recreational value of these areas in case this visitor increase is not sufficiently controlled (Kangas et al., 2006, pp. 458).

2.1.1 Nature-based tourism in the Finnish national parks

In Finland, there are 40 national parks in total. All of them are larger than 1,000-hectare protected areas, managed by Metsähallitus, Parks & Wildlife Finland (Metsähallitus / National parks are Finland's natural treasures). National parks can be found from the very southern parts of the country to all the way up to Lemmenjoki in the northern Lapland. Nature-based tourism in Finland has been

significantly focused on the national parks (Puhakka, 2008, p. 49; Øian et al., 2018, p. 31). Metsähallitus has generated sustainability principles which aim to guide sustainable tourism operations in the national parks, nature areas, and historical sites that are managed by Parks and Wildlife Finland (Øian et al., 2018, p. 31, citing Metsähallitus).

Conservation can be considered as the primary purpose of Finnish national parks (Puhakka, 2008, p. 47, referring to Metsähallitus, 2000, p. 9-10, see also Heinonen, 2007; Metsähallitus / National parks are Finland's natural treasures), but in addition to "ensuring biodiversity", the role of national parks in Finland is to give visitors "the opportunity to relax and enjoy nature" (Nationalparks.fi / National parks: Finland at its finest). The role of tourism in national park environments is constantly increasing (see e.g. Puhakka and Saarinen, 2013, p. 427, referring to Heinonen, 2007): in 2020, there were, in total, almost four million (3,957,800) visits to the national parks in Finland (Metsähallitus, Parks & Wildlife Finland, 2020), which was 734,400 visits more than in 2019 (Metsähallitus, Parks & Wildlife Finland, 2019). Although visitor numbers have grown, flows of visitors are not evenly distributed between national parks, which has been visible particularly in national parks of northern Finland located in close proximity to major tourist destinations (Puhakka, 2008, p. 49, see also Heinonen, 2007, p. 305, and Puhakka, 2007, p. 136-140).

The increasing touristic use of national parks can be understood to be reflected also to planning documents: in the 1980s and 1990s, official national park planning documents in Finland dealt with "park visitors" and "hikers", whereas in the plans of 2000s also terms "tourists" and "clients" were used (Puhakka & Saarinen, 2013, p. 418). Also, the term nature-based tourism have been used in such documents since the end of 1990s along with previously used hiking, outdoor recreation, and sightseeing (Puhakka & Saarinen, 2013, p. 418, citing e.g. Metsähallitus, 1986, p. 1). Juutinen et al. (2011, p. 1231) remind that increasing tourist numbers can create a challenge for protected area management as they are required to balance "between conservation goals, the needs of the tourism business, and the interests of visitors". In Finland, different managerial measures have been taken in national parks (e.g. building facilities for recreation, land-use zoning, and visitor guidance) in order to direct visitors, facilities, and negative impacts mainly to the national parks' recreational parts (Puhakka & Saarinen, 2013, p. 423). Visitors of national parks have been studied to consider the park management to be "at a good level" in Finland (Juutinen et al., 2011, p. 1236). Metsähallitus regularly implements visitor surveys for each national park (and also other nature areas under their

management) in order to gain information e.g. about visitor satisfaction, and interests and wishes of visitors.

2.1.2 The Outdoor etiquette as a guide to responsible nature-based tourism in the Finnish national parks

In Finland, one can enjoy the benefits of the legal concept of everyman's right, meaning that "everyone has the right to enjoy nature anywhere in the Finnish countryside regardless of land ownership" by e.g. walking, camping, and picking wild berries and mushrooms (Nationalparks.fi / Everyman's Right). However, this right does not allow disrespectful behaviour towards the nature or other people, even though this statement is argued to leave room for interpretations (Tuulentie & Rantala, 2013, pp. 177). As Tuulentie and Rantala (2013, pp. 178) state, along with increase in e.g. recreational use of nature, also potential for conflicts around everyman's rights has grown. To promote responsible outdoor recreation, Metsähallitus has published guidelines for visitors of national parks and other nature areas, named as the Outdoor etiquette. These guidelines are available in six languages on Metsähallitus' website. They are briefly introduced below, as found from the Metsähallitus' English website (Nationalparks.fi / Outdoor Etiquette).

According to the Outdoor etiquette, one should be respectful towards the natural environment and its inhabitants, meaning that e.g. littering is not allowed. Pets should be kept on a leash, and one should not approach wild animals. Plants need to be consider as well: trampling of them e.g. while photographing has been recognised as a problem in many areas. The Outdoor etiquette advises to camp and lit campfires only where it is allowed, and to be aware of possible grass or forest fire warnings. For making a campfire and cooking sausages, one should not harm living trees e.g. by pulling bark or cutting sticks from them. In order to prevent erosion, one should use signposted trails instead of visitor-made ones.

Other visitors should be considered, too, when hiking e.g. in national park settings. For example, the Outdoor etiquette advises to show consideration towards those who are staying in a hut overnight, as they may be tired after their hike and therefore would like to enjoy some peace and quiet. Also, the firewood should not be used wastefully. When travelling in large groups, it is recommended to book a campsite for one's private use, if it is possible in the destination. In times of the Covid-19 pandemic,

there are also additional guidelines, such as keeping appropriate safety distance to others, only travelling when healthy, and bringing food that does not require to be cooked on a fire to avoid campfire sites that can get very crowded, as visitors should "strictly avoid all crowded resting sites" (Nationalparks.fi / Guidelines concerning coronavirus Covid-19). In addition, for example in nature centres, different pandemic-related safety measures are applied.

2.2 Overtourism

Even though the phenomenon itself has already existed for decades, the term 'overtourism' was introduced as recently as in 2006 (Dodds & Butler, 2019a, pp. 1), and in scientific literature it did not appear before 2017 (Szromek, Hysa & Karasek, 2019, p. 7155, referring to Peeters et al., 2018). However, there already are multiple definitions available for the term (UNWTO, 2018, p. 4), perhaps due to the phenomenon being complex and multidimensional (Koens, Postma & Papp, 2018, p. 4385). According to one of these definitions, overtourism can be perceived to mean "the impact of tourism on a destination, or parts thereof, that excessively influences perceived quality of life of citizens and/or quality of visitors experiences in a negative way" (UNWTO, 2018, p. 4).

Recently, overtourism has grown to be even "one of the most discussed issues" in the field of tourism, both in the popular media and academia (Koens et al., 2018, p. 4384). Indeed, academic and popular literature share overtourism-related concerns, such as too many tourists at a same location, inappropriately behaving tourists, crowding, and loss of authenticity (Dodds and Butler, 2019a, pp. 1). However, despite of increased attention, overtourism-related research is still argued to be only "in the initial phase", with "numerous gaps in our knowledge of the reasons and solutions" to the issue in question (Zemła, 2020, p. 1729). Koens et al., (2018, p. 4384) argue that even though the concept of overtourism has gained increased interest, it should be more clearly defined as it currently leaves room for several interpretations.

Many of destinations facing challenges of overtourism are urban centres, big cities that offer a lot to do and to see, often including "iconic and unique features" (Dodds & Butler, 2019b, p. 519). These attractions are considered as "world-famous sites and sights" that potential tourists often want to see instead of choosing other, less popular, destinations to visit (Dodds & Butler, 2019b, p. 519) – even though there are numerous other destinations "that would give almost anything to be afflicted with

the problem of too many tourists" (Cheer, Milano & Novelli, 2019, pp. 227). Some examples of these kind of tremendously popular urban centres are Times Square in New York and the Eiffel Tower in Paris (Dodds & Butler, 2019b, p. 519). However, it does not necessarily require a huge number of tourists to a place to suffer overtourism. As Wheeler (2019, pp. xv) points out, "ten people can be a serious crowd" when approaching the top of Mount Everest.

The concept of carrying capacity is strongly linked to the overtourism discussion. Carrying capacity can be defined as the maximum number of people that can use a certain facility without causing an "unacceptable decline in the quality of the environment", or such decrease in the quality of the experience (Wall, 2019, pp. 33). As Wall (2019, pp. 33) points out, focusing only on the visitor numbers can be problematic. Instead, there are other types of capacity that need to be considered as well, such as the willingness from the behalf of locals to accept visitors, and the capacity of "ancillary facilities" such as certain number of parking sites and accommodation (Wall, 2019, pp. 33).

The concept of carrying capacity is widely used, but also other approaches have been utilised, such as the concept of the limits of acceptable change, also known as LAC (Wall, 2019, pp. 34, referring to Cole and McCool, 1997, and Cole and Stankey, 1997). Even though remarkable amount of research has been conducted about carrying capacity, practical attempts to determine and implement carrying capacity to areas such as national parks have in some cases proved to be unsuccessful (Manning, 2005, pp. 131). Determining how much impact (e.g. "soil compaction" and crowding) is too much for an area to cope with, can be identified as the primary difficulty (Manning, 2005, pp. 131). Therefore, it seems reasonable that approaching the issue of overtourism with the idea of limits of acceptable change, it is required to define "what changes are acceptable", potentially with inputs of various stakeholders, since acceptable levels of use can only be determined after there are clear goals and objectives (Wall, 2019, pp. 34). Also the purpose of places in question need to be considered: same solutions do not apply e.g. for a nature reserve and a theme park (Wall, 2019, pp. 34). For instance, for national park management in Finland, the managerial framework of Metsähallitus has its foundation in LAC approach (Puhakka & Saarinen, 2013, p. 423).

2.2.1 Significance of proper destination management in coping with overtourism

Still, further knowledge is needed on how and why "overtourism symptoms are occurring", and how these symptoms should be dealt with (Cheer et al., 2019, pp. 229). Overtourism can be seen as a significant obstacle for ensuring sustainable development of a destination (Szromek et al., 2019, p. 7165). As Potts, Goodwin and Walpole (1996, pp. 209) point out, the problems relating to overcrowding and carrying capacity are not easy to resolve. However, Wheeler (2019, pp. xvii) states that many of problems caused by overtourism could be taken care of with proper management measures. Cheer et al. (2019, pp. 227) agree by noting that the core of the overtourism problem is not tourism itself but its planning and management instead. For example, traffic congestion, water shortages, and sewerage issues "are all problems that can be readily foreseen with an expanding population", and therefore some of the tourism income could be directed "to the problems that come with it" (Wheeler, 2019, pp. xvii). Potts et al. (1996, pp. 211-212) note that even if visitors are willing to help solving problems of e.g. a national park by paying more for their visits, "nothing will improve without a revision to the allocation of funds generated by tourism". Goodwin (2019, pp. 132) adds that although there may be some elements contributing to excessive visitor numbers that are "beyond local control" (such as airports and cruise lines, according to the examples Goodwin gives from Barcelona), the tourism and overtourism management in general "is always the responsibility of local government".

In overtourism management, distributing tourist numbers evenly for entire year, as well as visitor dispersion away from the most popular and therefore crowded sites can be perceived as crucial (Gretzel, 2019, pp. 71). In natural settings, however, it can be argued that rather than dispersing the use to a wider area, it could be more sustainable to concentrate the use to areas that are less sensitive and have more tolerant types of vegetation (Juutinen et al., 2011, p. 1237, citing Hammitt & Cole, 1998, and Kangas et al., 2007). It has been studied that in this way, the impacts on e.g. certain bird species and also most likely on other wildlife can be minimised (Juutinen et al., 2011, p. 1237, referring to Kangas, Luoto, Ihantola, Tomppo & Siikamäki, 2010 and Mallord, Dolman, Brown & Sutherland, 2007). For sustainable development of destinations, it is also important to figure out how visitors evaluate the crowds: if a destination is considered as crowded, tourists may experience "negative psychological impacts at the destination, and vice versa" (Jin et al., 2016, p. 977).

Currently, two main managerial approaches can be identified: resource and visitor management (Wall, 2019, pp. 35). The resource management approach can include measures such as taking care of vegetation by watering and fertilising it in order to help it recover from degradation, as well as creating ways to ensure "the safe passage of wildlife across highways" (Wall, 2019, pp. 35). The visitor management approach tries to manipulate "the number, spatial distribution and behaviours of visitors", e.g. by specifying activities that are allowed in a certain area (Wall, 2019, pp. 35), or controlling tourist flows with pricing measures such as entrance fees (Jin et al., 2016, p. 979). In the context of this Master's thesis study, however, it is worth mentioning that in terms of Finnish national parks, adding entrance fees could strongly be in collision with the idea of everyman's rights (Tuulentie & Rantala, 2013, pp. 182). When conducted in an extreme way, visitors can be entirely prohibited from visiting popular attractions in order to protect them (Wall, 2019, pp. 34). This has been done e.g. for the Lascaux Cave in France: visitors are nowadays forbidden to visit the original one, and instead they are guided to a replica of it that is located nearby (Wall, 2019, pp. 34).

Potts et al. (1996, pp. 217) remind that if a site such as a national park fails to "maintain its ecological integrity it will lose its amenity value, and without further development the problems of visitor overcrowding will continue to worsen". Therefore, crowding management can be perceived essential (Jin et al., 2016, p. 977). For example, the management measure of destination zoning contributes to "crowd dispersal, conflict control, and particular areas preservation" (Jin et al., 2016, p. 979). To avoid overcrowding in natural parks and to relieve pressure on the "over-utilized" park areas, a "methodology for relocating trails" could be developed according to visitors' preferences and simultaneously keeping the environmental limitations in mind (Luque-Gil, Gómez-Moreno & Peláez-Fernández, 2018, p. 102).

2.2.2 Perceived crowding and the tourism experience

Perceived crowding, which in this study is also called as crowding or overcrowding, is one of the major concerns related to overtourism. Crowding happens when too many people visit a destination simultaneously, and can occur between visitors or between locals and visitors (Neuts & Nijkamp, 2011, p. 1). As Zemła (2020, p. 1732) refers to Milano (2017), congestion has been a research interest already for years. Previous research seems to be mostly focused on "crowding related to outdoor recreation" (Jacobsen, Iversen & Hem, 2019, p. 53). For example, Zemła argues that the research

around tourism impacts often is interested in overcrowding in national parks or protected areas (Zemła, 2020, p. 1735). Also Neuts and Nijkamp (2011, p. 2) agree that the interest in overcrowding in tourism research has usually been "in recreational outdoor settings", and as Jin et al. (2016, p. 977) add, usually in Europe and the United States.

Crowding can be described as "a subjective feeling resulting from the presence of other people" (Wall, 2019, pp. 33), or "visitors' crowded feeling in a particular place" (Jin et al., 2016, p. 976). This is why the term 'perceived crowding' is commonly used in research (Jin et al., 2016, p. 977, citing Zhang and Chung 2015, Manning 2013, Lankford, Inui and Whittle 2008, and Whittaker, Shelby, Manning, Cole and Haas, 2011). Visitors tend to feel crowded when the amount of encounters with other people increases beyond their norms, whereas crowdedness is not felt when there are fewer fellow visitors on a site than expected (Jin et al., 2016, p. 979). Negative reactions to crowding and to "violations of personal space" can produce e.g. worry, feelings of unsafety in crowded environments, as well as disgust towards noise and "to what might be considered improper behaviour of fellow visitors" (Jacobsen et al., 2019, p. 54-55). In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, it is studied that perceived crowding may not directly decrease participation in leisure activities, even though the interest in them can diminish due to increased waiting times caused by crowding (Kim & Kang, 2020, p. 465). However, it can have an indirect influence as fears of risks to get infected through crowding may cause decrease in enjoyment of these leisure activities, further leading to decrease in participation (Kim & Kang, 2020, p. 465).

Also, cultures can differ "in their engagements with their surroundings and with people" (Wall, 2019, pp. 40). Jin et al. (2016, p. 976) agree, referring to Yagi and Pearce (2007) and Pearce (2013), that in the existing research related to crowding, nationality has been found to be a factor that influences on how visitors perceive crowding. Together with nationality, the cultural background of a traveller and their motivation can be seen as the main influential factors on how crowding is perceived (Jin et al., 2016, p. 977). As Luque-Gil et al. (2018, p. 94-95) refer to Graefe and Vaske (1987), perceptions of crowding are also dependent of e.g. the activity in question, as well as the environment where such an activity takes place.

Crowding is not always a negative contributor to experience. For example, in their study, Sanz-Blas, Buzova and Schlesinger (2019, p. 1519) found out that also "good crowding" exists. According to them, interaction with the crowd can contribute to the experience instead of ruining it. Indeed, crowding can actually even be "a positive part of the experience", particularly in urban settings (Wall, 2019, pp. 33). Social density can sometimes be even crucial in creating "a desired atmosphere for collectively oriented vacationers wanting to have fun" (Jacobsen et al., 2019, p. 64, citing Podilchak 1991). Therefore, the quality of experience does not necessarily decrease while the visitor numbers grow (Wall, 2019, pp. 33).

2.3 Overtourism and perceived crowding in national parks

Overtourism does not only exist in urban environments but also in natural areas, particularly in national parks, mountains, reserves, and polar regions (Szromek, Kruczek & Walas, 2020, p. 230). Excessive tourism in natural, architectural and historical places can harm the natural environment through e.g. "overpopulation and devastation in places attractive to tourists" (Szromek et al., 2019, p. 7155). A natural area can be impacted through "overcrowding, overdevelopment, unregulated recreation, pollution, wildlife disturbances and vehicle use" (Newsome et al., 2002, p. 19, citing Hvenegaard, 1994). For example in national parks, overcrowding can cause overuse of hiking trails and therefore erosion (Timmons, 2019, p. 998), and formation of visitor-made paths which contribute to environmental degradation (Timmons, 2019, p. 997, referring to Gilman, 2016).

As Jin et al. (2016, p. 979) refer to Frauman and Norman (2004) and to Bell, Fisher and Baum (1990), tourists often have specific motivations to visit destinations, such as "enjoying solitude, and relieving stress". Authors suggest that when these motivations cannot be met due to excessive congestion in a destination, perceived crowding occurs. Indeed, as visitors in e.g. natural parks tend to seek for and expect solitude from their visit, they usually perceive higher levels of crowding in comparison to other types of travellers (Luque-Gil et al., 2018, p. 101). As the Master's thesis study by Äijälä (2015, p. 62) agrees, national park visitors may prefer e.g. to avoid high seasons to be better able to enjoy recreation in nature without the presence of other hikers.

Large natural areas, including many national parks, allow visitors to scatter widely, which can make it difficult to manage them (Wall, 2019, pp. 29). Still, overcrowding can occur in national park environments, as some routes and attractions are more popular than the rest. Potts et al. (1996, pp. 208) set an example from Hwange National Park in north-west Zimbabwe, where the Ten Mile Drive is suffering from congestion as it is being used by tourists and tour operators more often than the other parts of the national parks, leading to congestion at the Ten Mile Drive. Lately, crowding in national parks has even become a widely recognised phenomenon (Timmons, 2019, p. 996). For example, national parks in the United States are reported to suffer from overtourism across the country (Simmonds et al., 2018), even though this does not apply to all of the national parks (Timmons, 2019, p. 987).

As Manning (2005, p. 129) states, "the increasing popularity of national parks presents both an opportunity and challenge". According to them, opportunity in this case refers to the mission required from the national parks to "provide for the enjoyment of the people", and challenge means the other mission of natural environment and wildlife conservation in national parks. 'Opportunity' in this context may also refer to nature preservation made possible by the "economic input" generated by visitation to protected areas (Elmahdy et al., 2017, p. 47). Indeed, number of tourists is a concern in national parks: growth can be perceived to increase environmental threats (Wall, 2019, pp. 29) and increasing popularity can even be understood as one of the most significant threats to national parks (Manning, 2005, pp. 129). On the other hand, decrease in numbers may potentially lead to insufficient funding for operating and maintaining the parks (Wall, 2019, pp. 29). In addition, despite of high visitor numbers, "the quality of visitor experiences has to be maintained at high level" particularly due to visitors then being more likely to appreciate and further support conservation efforts of national park resources (Manning, 2005, pp. 129).

3 UNDERSTANDING AFFECTIVE ATMOSPHERES

Affective atmosphere is the main theoretical concept for this study. As a necessary starting point in understanding affective atmospheres, ideas of the affective turn and affect theory are being discussed first. Then, I will scrutinise what is meant by affect, understanding that there are multiple divergent definitions for the term. Considering what is significant in terms of this study, I will mainly focus on how affect is defined in the social sciences – and a variety of uses of the concept still exists within this only academic field in question (Urry, 2013, pp. 48, referring to Thrift, 2004). Also, the concept of a body is described because it can be perceived central to affect theories, despite of them otherwise differing more or less from each other. In addition, tourism in general can be seen as "a profoundly corporeal experience" (Forsdick, 2016, pp. 68), and to better understand tourism encounters, their "emotional and bodily dimensions" need to be carefully examined (Buda et al., 2014, p. 106-107, referring to Tucker, 2009). Once these essential concepts for affective atmosphere generation have been introduced, I will focus on describing the term affective atmosphere itself.

3.1 Affective turn and understandings of affect theory

As Salmela (2017, p. 32) argues, from the modern perspective it can be perceived strange that only as late as slightly over fifty years ago affects and emotions were considered as "secondary" or "irrelevant" topics of academic research. However, since the mid-1990s (Slaby & Röttger-Rössler, 2018, pp. 1), there has been an increasing research interest in emotions and affects in humanities as well as in social and behavioural sciences, and this growing interest is often referred as the affective or emotional turn (Salmela, 2017, p. 32). Today, affect work utilises understandings of multiple disciplines, e.g. geography, sociology, gender studies, and anthropology (d'Hauteserre, 2015, p. 78) for exploring e.g. the "subtle layers of human experience" as well as the "modes of belonging and forms of attachment" (Slaby & Röttger-Rössler, 2018, pp. 1). By employing affect theories, researchers can attempt to approach different social and cultural situations as well as to experiences and actions (Rinne, Kajander & Haanpää, 2020, pp. 5). Affect theories have been utilised e.g. when different kinds of experiences related to space, place, and landscape have been researched (Rinne et al., 2020, pp. 16, referring to Navaro-Yashin, 2012 and Edensor, 2012).

Understandings of affect theories are divergent (Rinne et al., 2020, pp. 5). A psychologist Silvan Tomkins (1962) is recognised to be the first to theorise the concept of affect theory (Pimentel Biscaia & Marques, 2020, p. 4). Tomkins described affect as "physiological responses that then give rise to various effects, which may or may not translate into emotions" (Wissinger, 2007, pp. 232). Later the concept "has outgrown this field", especially due to the work of Brian Massumi, "who provided a reflective distinction between affect and emotion, thus highlighting the importance of intensity" (Pimentel Biscaia & Marques, 2020, p. 4). Philosopher Baruch de Spinoza's thoughts of affect are often quoted in the academic literature as well: e.g. as Slaby and Röttger-Rössler explain, after "the Spinozist perspective", affect is understood as something that "unfolds between interacting bodies whose potentialities and tendencies are thereby continuously modulated in reciprocal interplay" (Slaby & Röttger-Rössler, 2018, pp. 4). Also, thoughts of philosopher Gilles Deleuze have influenced on affect scholarship, such as the idea of affect being a force of social indeterminacy offering the possibility to scrutinise what is and to imagine what could be instead, and then further to notice that this instead is actually already occurring (Bakko & Merz, 2015, p. 8).

Seigworth and Gregg (2010, pp. 3-4) even suggest, that "there never will be" just one generalisable affect theory, adding that for this reason, for a beginner, familiarising oneself with affect theories might "feel like a momentary (sometimes more permanent) methodological and conceptual free fall". Their argument can be perceived relevant, as affect "ebbs and flows, turns in and out of itself, and finds new meanings, applications, and potentials through its scholarly use" (Bakko & Merz, 2015, p. 8). Indeed, the wide range of theories can also be perceived as an opportunity: "If anything, it is more tempting to imagine that there can only ever be infinitely multiple iterations of affect and theories of affect: theories as diverse and singularly delineated as their own highly particular encounters with bodies, affects, worlds" (Seigworth & Gregg, 2010, pp. 3-4). However, as subtly suggested in the previous sentence, the body is a shared central concept in many affect theories (Rinne et al., 2020, pp. 10), and therefore it will be discussed in more detail later in the subchapter 3.1.3.

3.1.1 Affect

The term affect has multiple divergent understandings, depending on a literature in which it is employed (Anderson, 2006, p. 734). For example, in behavioural sciences, affect is known as a general concept for various experiential states, including e.g. feelings, emotions, and moods, but with

a recognition that these states come with certain differences, for example in terms of their intentionality and duration (Salmela, 2017, p. 33). Some researchers understand affect as "a suite of typically longstanding moods to do with physiological arousal" (Tucker & Shelton, 2018, p. 67). From the field of social sciences, d'Hauteserre suggests affect being "beyond the senses that can be signified" (d'Hauteserre, 2015, p. 82), and describes it as "a feeling, that diffuses between individuals and within groups of people" (d'Hauteserre, 2015, p. 86). Also, Seigworth and Gregg describe affect as forces exceeding emotion (Seigworth & Gregg, 2010, pp. 1). However, referring to Boyd (2009) and Reddy (2012), d'Hauteserre (2015, p. 86) states that affect matters due to it being connected to some of the basic human emotions, such as getting the needed recognition from the others to be able to construct one's identity through the ability to move other beings. In addition, affect greatly influences on defining "atmospheres and the spaces/places they link bodies to" together with other sense-related elements (d'Hauteserre, 2015, p. 82). In the beginning, the interest in affect emerged from the need of understand areas of experience which cannot be described with representations, such as how we are touched or impressed by different places, and how we experience the atmosphere of a certain situation (Rinne et al., 2020, pp. 7).

Affects are equally related to the body and the mind, involving not only reason but also "the passions" (Hardt, 2007, p. ix). Affect can be understood as a "transpersonal capacity which a body has to be affected (through an affection) and to affect (as the result of modifications)" (Anderson, 2006, p. 735). As Hardt (2007, p. ix) states, affects illuminate the power to affect the world, and to be affected by it. Unlike emotions, affects are non-conscious: "below, behind and beyond cognition" (Martini & Buda, 2020, p. 683). As Urry (2013, pp. 52) states concisely: affect "resides (although not statically) in the gap between language and occurrence whereby it provokes reaction prior to acknowledgment". An affect becomes an emotion when "it is felt so intensely that it becomes consciously perceived" (Martini & Buda, 2020, p. 683). Differences and similarities of affect and emotion will be discussed more closely in the next subchapter.

Affect can be perceived social in a way it "constitutes a contagious energy, an energy that can be whipped up or dampened in the course of interaction" (Wissinger, 2007, pp. 232). As d'Hauteserre phrases it, affect is "a form of socialization that is always interpersonal, a form of unconscious communication" (d'Hauteserre, 2015, p. 81, citing Bondi, 2013, Eliot, 1952, and Pile, 2010). Some literature understands affect "as a relational force", and therefore, it is something that "circulates to

link humans into social bodies" (d'Hauteserre, 2015, p. 79, referring to Deleuze, 1995, and Ettlinger, 2006). As d'Hauteserre also notes, when an affect is recognised as positive, it allows the body "to gain power and thus become joyful", and this enjoyment can then be understood as not only embodied but also social by nature (d'Hauteserre, 2015, p. 82). Affect can "describe a relation to the physical, to the other people present, or even to the self" (d'Hauteserre, 2015, p. 79). It is inherently unconscious but can be perceived to have "a dynamism, a sociality or social productivity" (Wissinger, 2007, pp. 232).

For example, Slaby and Röttger-Rössler (2018, pp. 2) understand affects "not as processes "within" a person, but as social-relational dynamics unfolding in situated practices and social interaction". According to this understanding, affect ties human subjects "into shared environmental (e.g., social, material and technological) constellations, which in turn shape modalities of agency, habit and self-understanding" (Slaby & Röttger-Rössler, 2018, pp. 2). On the other hand, the individual nature of an affective experience should not be forgotten either (Urry, 2013, pp. 53), as personal experiences and history influence on how humans create meanings and function in the world (Rinne et al., 2020, pp. 15). Seigworth and Gregg (2010, pp. 2) agree affects being simultaneously "intimate and impersonal".

According to Wissinger (2007, pp. 232), "the concept of affect resolves some of the difficulties of treating forces that may only be observable in the interstices between bodies, between bodies and technologies, or between bodily forces and conscious knowledge". Affect can be understood to "constitute a drive, force, or intensity", which however seems untranslatable to words as affects are at least close to, if not completely, impossible to observe (Li, 2015, p. 27). As affects are constantly changing (Martini & Buda, 2020, p. 683), and perceived as a "non-representable sense" (d'Hauteserre, 2015, p. 81), one concern related to them is related to their representation: which methods should be adopted to be able to represent them (Martini & Buda, 2020, p. 683). D'Hauteserre reminds that even though affective events cannot be represented thoroughly, it does not mean that these events do not exist (d'Hauteserre, 2015, p. 81).

As d'Hauteserre (2015, p. 79) notes, "there is no general agreement on a definitive definition of affect". Rinne et al. (2020, pp. 5) add that due to having multiple different definitions, it is not always

clear what is meant when speaking of affects. Indeed, affects are not unambiguous (Rinne et al., 2020, pp. 6), but instead they can be perceived as a complex concept. Reflecting on the literature presented in this subchapter and attempting to conveniently summarise a concept that is highly multidimensional and divergent, in this Master's thesis study I understand affect as a non-conscious bodily state, kind of a pre-emotion that does not only occur within a body but also between bodies. It causes some kind of a reaction in human (and possible other) bodies experiencing it, which sometimes leads to a consciously recognised emotion.

3.1.2 Affect and emotion

As can be noted from efforts to define affect in the previous subchapter, often the understanding of the concept touches more or less the interrelation or division between affect and other terms such as emotion and feeling. As Hardt (2007, p. ix) phrases it: "A focus on affect certainly does draw attention to the body and emotions". Researchers have diverse understandings of whether or not emotions and affects can be considered as synonyms (Rinne et al., 2020, pp. 9). Sometimes, even a strict distinction between emotion and affect has been made by some scholars (Li, 2015, p. 18), whereas other authors do not believe such a distinction to be useful, or even possible (Martini & Buda, 2020, p. 683, citing Ahmed, 2004, and Wetherell, 2015). Anderson (2006, p. 734) argues, referring to Pugmire (1998) and Solomon (1992), that in social sciences and humanities and their "multiple engagements" of the topic, affect and other terms such as feeling, emotion, mood, passion, and intensity, have often been "morphed into one another".

As Carter (2019, p. 203) points out: "Affects only become observable when they are manifest as emotions". Also Buda (2015, p. 3) states, that affect can "manifest in resonances of emotions such as fun, joy, fear, anger and the like". For example, in tourism context, emotions such as excitement and frustration may influence the anticipation of travel as well as how the travel destination is experienced onsite (d'Hauteserre, 2015, p. 82). Feeling aroused by collectively diffused affect cannot be ignored, whether negative or positive (d'Hauteserre, 2015, p. 80, referring to Dufrenne, 1973). The main reason for affect to be so challenging to put into words is that it is "prior to language": "non-presented feeling or feeling before it has become signified" (Urry, 2013, pp. 52). Therefore, verbalisation of affective experiences is often implemented by using emotion-related vocabulary, as emotion and affect can be "very close to each other", sometimes even so close that they can be experienced as the

same (Rinne et al., 2020, pp. 26). Therefore, emotion can be understood as a way to verbally describe affective experiences (Rinne et al., 2020, pp. 26).

3.1.3 Body

Affects exists in intensities passing between bodies, whether human, nonhuman, or other, at times even sticking to them (Seigworth & Gregg, 2010, pp. 1). Human and other beings are corporeal (d'Hauteserre, 2015, p. 80), and the term body cannot be limited to e.g. boundaries of skin, but is rather defined as bodies' "potential to reciprocate or co-participate in the passages of affect" (Seigworth & Gregg, 2010, pp. 2). This concept of body is vital for affect as it functions as a mediator, or a transmitter for affect (Urry, 2013, pp. 52). As Seigworth and Gregg (2010, pp. 1) phrase, "affect is persistent proof of a body's never less than ongoing immersion in and among the world's obstinacies and rhythms, its refusals as much as its invitations". Indeed, even though affect is something that cannot be verbalised, it "has a bodily expression as the body reacts to the intensities it experiences" (Pimentel Biscaia & Marques, 2020, p. 5).

As Blackman and Venn (2010, p. 9) phrase, bodies can be understood as entirely entangled processes, and defined by their capacity to not only affect but also to be affected. D'Hauteserre (2015, p. 80) adds that bodies tend not only to share, but also to seek encounters with other bodies through their senses. By participating in bodily activities, one sees and judges the world through their senses (Markuksela & Valtonen, 2019, p. 7). In advance, it cannot be forecasted "what a body can do, what a mind can think – what affects they are capable of" (Hardt, 2007, p. ix). In an affective experience, state of the body changes to a different one, which can be weaker or more powerful in comparison to the earlier state, and this change usually occurs in relation to something that can impact (Rinne et al., 2020, pp. 10, citing Wetherell, 2012). This impact can be, for example, another human body, or a collective atmosphere of a mass event (Rinne et al., 2020, pp. 10). This understanding in mind, also a national park visit, particularly when the park is crowded, can be understood as a potentially affective experience. The next subchapter will further examine the role of affect in tourism experiences and bodies participating to it.

3.2 Affects in tourism, and the travelling body

In their study, Buda, d'Hauteserre and Johnston (2014, p. 106) point out that "emotions and affect matter", and express their desire for an affectual and emotional turn in tourism research. They also state that the absence of affect and emotion from previous tourism research has been noticeable, and instead, emotions have been scrutinised as quantitative variables (Buda et al., 2014, p. 107). The previously mentioned emotional and affectual turn is then suggested to be a solution in filling this research gap (Buda et al., 2014, p. 107), and in fact lately, affect, along with emotion and feeling, has increasingly been considered significant in studies of tourism places and encounters (Tucker & Shelton, 2018, p. 66).

For examining emotions and affects that are produced through tourism procedures, Tucker and Shelton (2018, p. 66) suggest it to be essential to study them in terms of what they do or have potential to do, instead of considering them as "ends in themselves". Also, Buda et al. (2014, p. 112) suggest there to be a lot of potential for future tourism research relating to affects and emotions. They also state affects, emotions, and feelings being comprehensive enough to be diversely utilised "in relation to many forms of tourism such as adventure tourism, cultural tourism, and wellness tourism, amongst many others" (Buda et al., 2014, p. 112). Currently, affect in tourism has been studied e.g. in relation to dark tourism (see e.g. Buda, 2015, Pimentel Biscaia Marques, 2020 and Martini & Buda, 2020).

Affect is studied to shape how one experiences a place (d'Hauteserre, 2015, p. 79, referring to Anderson, 2009, and Duff, 2010). Moving to and within a travel destination "means being affected by the place and its other occupants", even if the stay was only temporary (d'Hauteserre, 2015, p. 82). Tucker and Shelton (2018, p. 67) even argue, citing Duff (2010, p. 881), that in order to experience a place, one must be affected by that place. In general, travel destinations are able to provide multiple possibilities for travellers to be affected (d'Hauteserre, 2015, p. 86). Affect can be understood "as an adhesive that creates – "makes" – things by binding subjects to objects and places" (Carter, 2019, p. 201). Being involved with objects and places that move and touch travellers motivates these people to travel (Carter, 2019, p. 201, referring to MacCannell, 1999 and Urry & Larsen, 2011). As Carter (2019, p. 201) summarises: "tourists seek to be touched, to be moved, to be affected". Of course, one does not solely be affected by others when travelling, but equally has the

bodily capacity to affect and move others, humans and nonhumans. This capacity can be understood as agency (Kim, 2020, p. 10, citing Latour, 2017, p. 5).

In this Master's thesis study, I will adapt d'Hauteserre's definition of tourism as "encounters which generally involve engagement, relations, and/or negotiations" (d'Hauteserre, 2015, p. 78). As d'Hauteserre notes, these encounters are often short since tourism can be perceived as "restless movement, passage, and flows" (d'Hauteserre, 2015, p. 78). However, despite of their briefness, tourism encounters "always involve the use of more senses (as well as the emotions such engagement provokes) than just gazing by what seems like automata" (d'Hauteserre, 2015, p. 78). Buda states that encounters between travellers, local tourism operators and places are shaped by affects which can be found "in visceral intensities that circulate around" (Buda, 2015, p. 3).

As d'Hauteserre (2015, p. 78) notes, tourism entrepreneurs and workers, tourists as well as locals are all influencing the generation of "affect vibes" in travel spaces. Indeed, tourism experiences are co-created, and this requires affective, emotional, and embodied engagement with a place (Haanpää & García-Rosell, 2020, pp. 229). Therefore, these experiences can be understood as "lived and performed through the body in relation to the places where they happen" (Haanpää & García-Rosell, 2020, pp. 229, referring to Veijola & Jokinen, 1994). This aspect is of particular interest from the point of my study as it is especially emphasised in the context of nature-based tourism, where the natural environment, weather, and other non-human actors such as dogs, can significantly contribute to one's experience (Haanpää & García-Rosell, 2020, pp. 229-230, referring to Rantala, Valtonen & Markuksela, 2011, and Salmela, Valtonen & Miettinen, 2017).

According to Forsdick (2016, pp. 68), travelling makes it possible for bodies to pass through places more or less familiar to them, and to experience different forms of friction created between them and these places. These actions further form the foundation of what will eventually come out as a travel narrative (Forsdick, 2016, pp. 68). In order to better understand such tourism encounters, their "emotional and bodily dimensions" need to be carefully scrutinised (Buda et al., 2014, p. 106-107, referring to Tucker, 2009). This makes sense, as travel in general can be understood as "a profoundly corporeal experience" (Forsdick, 2016, pp. 68). When examining social behaviour, e.g. travellers deciding whether or not to visit a certain destination again, it would be useful to consider corporeal

reactions together with other elements, such as economic and cultural aspects (d'Hauteserre, 2015, p. 78). Buda describes affective tourism as "the ways in which affects, emotions and feelings are accessed, felt, experienced and performed in encounters between touring bodies and places" (Buda, 2015, p. 3). Indeed, affects and emotions can be perceived to circulate in travellers' bodies, shaping their experiences (d'Hauteserre, 2015, p. 82). In general, travel can be understood as "key moments", in which travellers' expectations are high and potentially emotional as well (d'Hauteserre, 2015, p. 82). These sensations may then result in generation of different affective atmospheres, which further define how a particular destination is being experienced (d'Hauteserre, 2015, p. 82, referring to Duff, 2010). Next, the concept of affective atmosphere will be introduced in detail in the following subchapter.

3.3 Affective atmosphere

Lately, there has been a growing research interest in affective atmospheres (Tan, 2021, p. 2), e.g. in the field of cultural geography (Lupton, 2017, p. 1). Lupton (2017, p. 1) defines the term affective atmosphere well as follows: "feelings that are generated by the interactions and movements of human and nonhuman actors in specific spaces and places". In addition to human and nonhuman bodies, also objects can be understood to have a significant role in affective atmosphere creation (Tucker & Goodings, 2017, p. 630). According to Anderson (2009, p. 78), atmospheres can be understood as "the shared ground from which subjective states and their attendant feelings and emotions emerge".

Spatiality can be perceived to integrally relate to affective atmospheres (Anderson, 2009, referring to Böhme, 2006). As Shaw (2014, p. 89) points out, affective atmospheres are "always geographical", tied to a certain place, and usually also to a certain period of time. In the generation of these feelings, not only the place itself but also shared rules, practices, and laws attached to it are essential (Lupton, 2017, p. 3). Affective atmosphere can have a significant influence on how people sense, think, and feel about certain space as well as about other actors they encounter in that space (Lupton, 2017, p. 1). This understanding is an essential and highly interesting cornerstone of my study, as a national park environment most certainly involves multiple actors, both humans and nonhumans (the latter in this study being mainly understood as all other forms of living organisms but people, however they can also include objects and the place itself). Moreover, a national park provides a setting for different

kinds of human-human, and human-nonhuman encounters – which both are included in the area of interest in this work.

One is not only affected by an affective atmosphere, but also contributing to it (Lupton, 2017, p. 1). Humans and nonhumans have an equally important role in affective atmosphere generation (Lupton, 2017, p. 2). Sensing of an atmosphere is "conditioned by the body" (Shaw, 2014, p. 93), and therefore, affective atmospheres can be experienced not only collectively, but also individually. People in the same space may respond to different elements of that space, leading them to experience different affective atmospheres (Lupton, 2017, p. 2, referring to Simpson, 2017, and Anderson, 2009). On the other hand, collective experiences may occur when people are gathered together to a particular situation at a particular place (Tan, 2021, p. 5). Even when there is a collective, shared feeling present in an affective atmosphere, Tucker and Goodings (2017, p. 630) remind that an atmosphere does not have "a fixed singular identity defined by some form of generic feeling or experience shared by all", but instead it is subject to ongoing changes. Whether experienced collectively or individually, affect, memory, and experience are altogether contributing to how one reacts to affective atmosphere around them (d'Hauteserre, 2015, p. 81).

The concept of affective atmosphere does not strictly differentiate affect from emotion (Anderson, 2009, p. 80), which is why also in this study, affects and emotions are scrutinised as overlapping parts of experience. Indeed, as Tan (2021, p. 3) points out, within a changing atmosphere, there are several layers of not only affective but also emotional outcomes. When scrutinising the idea of 'a changing atmosphere' for a moment, I would like to emphasise the concept of interruption as a significant contributor to affective atmospheres. Interruptions can be understood to refer to "ways in which the flow of experience is disrupted, causing bodies to move or behave unexpectedly" (Lupton, 2017, p. 7, referring to Hollett & Ehret, 2015). This way, they can noteworthily contribute to and alter the affective atmosphere. I would like to provide an example of these interruptions from the research by Haanpää and García-Rosell (2020, pp. 235), where they describe an experience from a husky safari, stating that actions of dogs had a significant influence on the experience. For instance, they mentioned to have described in their field diary that when one of the dogs suddenly defecated, writer became more or less worried "that some of it will fly over" them. As Haanpää and García-Rosell (2020, pp. 235) themselves state, this event was unexpected, affective, and occurred between different actors,

human and nonhuman – which is why I propose it to be a perfect example of an interruption in the flow of experience.

At the same time, an atmosphere can be understood to exist and to not exist (Anderson, 2009, p. 79, referring to Dufrenne, 1973). However, an affective atmosphere does not just appear out of thin air, but is composed by bodies in a certain space (Anderson, 2009, p. 80). Simultaneously, this co-created atmosphere can be consciously felt and subconscious (Lupton, 2017, p. 3, referring to Ellis, Tucker & Harper, 2011). As affective atmospheres can be difficult to describe in words, qualitative and interpretative research methods are often utilised in their research, focusing e.g. on subconscious practices, actions, and routines (Lupton, 2017, p. 3, citing Anderson & Ash, 2015, Vannini, 2015, and Thrift, 2008). Research practices focusing on feeling, embodied practice, and action, but also on language and discourse can be understood to be of great importance when studying affective atmospheres (Lupton, 2017, p. 8).

4 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Narrative research and narratives in tourism research

This study follows a narrative research approach, as narration "represents a powerful empirical tool for interpreting personal experiences" (Servidio & Ruffolo, 2016, p. 153). Storytelling comes natural to human beings, and stories "provide coherence and continuity to one's experience and have a central role in our communication with others" (Lieblich et al., 1998, p. 7). In narratives, experienced life events are structured to have a beginning, middle and an end (Puusa, Hänninen & Mönkkönen, 2020, p. 216).

In the context of tourism, oral and written travel stories have been shared throughout the history nearly in every culture (Tivers & Rakić, 2012, pp. 1). As Riessman (2008, p. 4) states: "Narrative is everywhere, but not everything is narrative". For example, can be perceived that every touristic site constructs narratives (Rickly-Boyd, 2010, p. 262), and that "the natural attitude" of travellers is "narrativistic", as producing a story is essential for defining, describing and reasoning touristic events (McCabe & Foster, 2006, p. 3). Human beings produce narratives to order and structure their life experiences (Moen, 2006, p. 56). Tourism experiences are argued to have "a story-like quality to them" as travellers "tend to flamboyantly and richly narrate experiences to new friends met whilst away, and also to old friends and relatives back home" (McCabe & Foster, 2006, p. 3). Narratives can even be perceived fundamental when constructing tourism experiences, leading tourists to adopt means of storytelling in order to share the main events of their travel experiences with others (Servidio & Ruffolo, 2016, p. 153). Travel narratives are studied to be "not only an essential ingredient in the construction of personal, collective and place identities but are also important in the process of contemplating, experiencing, remembering and disseminating travel and tourism experiences" (Tivers & Rakić, 2012, pp. 1). A particularly interesting insight from the perspective of this Master's thesis study is presented by Tucker and Shelton (2018, p. 66), when they propose the combination of narrative and affect to be "what gives tourism much of its worldmaking power".

As its name suggests, narrative research is about working with different kinds of narrative materials (Squire et al., 2014, p. 7), such as interviews, autobiography, memoir, archival documents, and photographs (Riessman, 2008, p. 4). Narrators' stories about their lives and experiences can be

perceived as an efficient way to learn about the inner world of these narrators (Lieblich et al., 1998, p. 7), which is why narrative approach is employed on this work. As Lieblich et al. (1998, p. 9) argue, using narrative methodology "results in unique and rich data that cannot be obtained from experiments, questionnaires, or observations" (Lieblich et al., 1998, p. 9).

The narrative research approach believes narratives to be the primary way of explaining and understanding human life and relationships (Puusa et al., 2020, p. 216). Narratives can be collected in oral, written, and visual forms (Riessman, 2008, p. 3). When the research interest is in individual experiences, individual interviews and requests to write can be perceived as the most efficient ways of data collection (Puusa et al., 2020, p. 221). For example in Finland, asking people to write about their experiences has been a commonly used way to collect data (Puusa et al., 2020, p. 221, referring to Hasanen, 2013). However, especially in an interview situation, a narrator tends to consider researcher's expectations and therefore storytelling in these situations is a result of interaction (Puusa et al., 2020, p. 222, see also e.g. Hyvärinen, 2010).

4.2 Data collection as written narratives

Written narratives can refer e.g. to memoir, autobiography, archival documents, and diaries (Riessman, 2008, p. 4). For some research purposes, necessary narratives already exist e.g. in forms of a novel or a speech, whereas sometimes "the narrative materials come into existence as part of the research" (Squire et al., 2014, p. 7). The latter was the case for this Master's thesis work, as I collected the data for this study as written narratives. For narratives to be generated as a part of the research process, research participants can be asked to produce narratives, either in oral, written, or visual form (Squire et al., 2014, p. 7). For this study, I designed an invitation to write to request people to share their experiences in a written form.

I wrote the instruction of the writing invitation both in English and Finnish to lower the threshold of participation: all narrated crowding experiences from Finnish national parks are equally precious data for this Master's thesis study, so I wanted to assure that language would limit participation as little as possible, and also that non-Finnish-speaking national park visitors could be able to participate. Before publishing the writing request, I also considered whether or not I should ask any background

information such as age or gender from the participants. I ended up with a conclusion that only the content of the written narratives was relevant when considering my research questions, not the demographics of people behind those narratives, as the only group I was exploring was the national park visitors of Finnish national parks in general, and not any specific group of people.

In the invitation to write, I encouraged narrators to share their experiences from at least one of the national parks of Finland, but it was equally allowed to include multiple overcrowding experiences and different national parks on one narrative. The only limitation was on the time period: all of the narratives collected must be timely situated on the time period of the Covid-19 pandemic. In other words, I asked participants to write about their national park experiences during the Covid-19 pandemic, but otherwise they were allowed to write freely. To the invitation to write, I included six supporting questions, as I wanted to encourage as many people as possible to participate, realising that writing does not necessarily feel as a natural way of communication for everyone. The supporting questions were the following: What inspired you to visit the national park? How was your outdoor experience like? In what kind of situations overcrowding occurred? How did it feel, how did you react to it? Did crowded environment somehow alter your outdoor experience: did it make you to do something differently than you had planned beforehand? Did the experience somehow differ from your possible previous national park visits? However, in the end, it was up to the narrators themselves if they wanted to utilise those questions on their writing or not, and I did not intend to intervene the writing processes too much. The invitation to write in its entirety is introduced in Appendix 1.

The invitation to write was shared via Facebook groups “Kansallispuistot tutuiksi” (174 120 members by 30 March 2021), which could be translated as Getting to know the national parks, and “Suomen, Norjan ja Ruotsin Kansallispuistot” (National parks of Finland, Norway and Sweden), previously named as “Kansallispuistot kuvina ja reissukertomuksina” (16 361 members by 30 March 2021), which I freely translate as National parks as images and travel stories. I chose to publish the writing request on those groups as they were meant for individuals interested in visiting national parks, and also had a strong focus on sharing national park experiences as pictures and written text. In addition to these, I approached Metsähallitus and Retkipaikka via email, as both of them have a strong focus on national parks and outdoor recreation in Finland, asking if they could share the invitation to write. They agreed, and therefore the invitation was shared also on the Facebook channels of Metsähallitus and Retkipaikka, and I also shared it on Retkipaikka’s Facebook group called “Retkipaikka –

luontoseikkailijoiden ja retkeilijöiden kohtaamispaikka" (49 867 members by 30 March 2021). To boost the data collection even further, I also successfully asked if the invitation to write could be shared to students at University of Lapland through email distribution.

In qualitative research, it important to carefully choose who are the best informants for the purposes of the research in question: participants should have as much knowledge as possible of the phenomenon that is being researched, or to have personal experience about the topic (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018, p. 98). As previously explained, all these groups and sites were connected to either directly to national parks or outdoor recreation, and therefore, I considered them as relevant places to find research participants. The only forum that may seem like a more random choice is the email distribution list. However, as I presumed that there could be outdoor and national park enthusiasts also among the university students, I perceive it was a good idea to share the invitation to write to them as well.

The data collection period took place from 3 March to 4 April 2021. Winter holiday weeks, and partially also the Easter bank holidays were going on in Finland during the data collection period, which I figured to be positive from the point of my research, as I considered that people could potentially be more on the move due to having holidays, and also more eager to tell about their experiences if they had happened very recently. By the deadline, I received 11 written narratives. To preserve the anonymity of the participants, I printed out these narratives from the email box, excluding senders' names and every piece of their contact information. To differentiate the narratives from each other, I only numbered them as 'Narrative 1', 'Narrative 2', and so on.

4.3 Introduction of the collected data

As mentioned, the data consists of 11 written narratives. One of them was written in English and 10 in Finnish. Their length varied between approximately 0,5 and 3 pages. In total, there were 16 pages of text in these narratives (Times New Roman, font size 12, line spacing 1,5). The amount of these narratives may not be very large, but instead I found them to be rich in content (Lieblich et al., 1998, p. 9): after the first read-through of the collected materials I perceived them to be thoughtfully written and to provide good material to be analysed. Therefore, I considered the data collection process

successful. Also, in general, gaining a large quantity of data is not the primary goal of qualitative research of any kind, so I decided that the collected data was sufficient for working with the research questions of this Master's thesis research and did not see the need to e.g. extend the time period for writing.

Six narratives were located in one of the Finnish national parks, and five of them included two or more national parks. In total, 25 % of the Finnish national parks (10 out of 40) were presented in the data, covering national parks mainly from the southern (4) and northern parts of Finland (4). In few of the narratives, the name of the national park was not mentioned directly, but they were easy to identify as the trail choices were clearly mentioned. One of the locations mentioned was not a national park even though it was another type of an outdoor area, so it had to be excluded from the count. However, as this excluded location was mentioned in a narrative that included also national parks, I did not have to exclude the entire narrative from this research. Also, in one of the narratives visited national parks were not named, but it was mentioned that the person sharing their experience had visited national parks within a certain area (which involves more than two national parks), and as I did not want to make potentially false interpretations, I also excluded these national parks from the statistics presented below. However in this case, too, I did not see the need to exclude the narrative as, after all, it was situated in national park settings, involving multiple national parks.

The following national parks were mentioned in the narratives (in brackets how many times each national park was mentioned):

Nuuksio (4)
Sipoonkorpi (3)
Oulanka (2)
Pallas-Ylläs (2)
Repovesi (2)
Etelä-Konnevesi (1)
Helvetinjärvi (1)
Koli (1)
Riisitunturi (1)
Urho Kekkonen (1)

4.4 Analysis process

I first struggled to find an analysis method that would fit well for analysing written narratives, but also to be adequate when working with affects in experiences. To me, the analysis process was full of experiments with different analysis methods, as well as of 'eureka moments' evoked by these experiments. Before starting the process, I had a vague idea of employing content analysis for the data, and indeed, categorical content mode of narrative analysis together with inductive content analysis procedures was a useful beginning. As Lieblich et al. (1998, p. 163) point out: "Synthesis between form analysis and content analysis can prove very fruitful", and I consider this to be the case in my study. By combining categorical content approach and inductive content analysis measures with categorical form analysis and close reading, I was better able to also reach the deeper layers of the narratives than if I would only had employed categorical content mode of narrative analysis. In addition, as my aim was to provide the reader (and to myself) a clear insight to the findings of this study, I decided to also create a core story that could introduce the affects present in the data, and potentially also reflect the affective atmosphere which has its foundation on these affective reactions. Next, I will briefly introduce the methods I used and explain the steps of the analysis process more in detail.

4.4.1 Analysis methods used in this study

Narrative analysis is not a one straightforward one-size-fits-for-all analysis method. Instead, there are multiple ways of analysing narrative data. For example, thematic and structural analysis are some ways to approach narrative materials (see Bold, 2012, and Riessman, 2008), as well as dialogic/performance analysis, and visual analysis (see Riessman, 2008). Although narrative research is usually understood qualitative by nature, also quantitative practices can be employed in narrative analysis (see Elliott, 2005), which I perceive to well demonstrate how divergently narratives can be dealt with for various research purposes. Each approach results in different ways of understanding a research phenomenon, leading to unique findings (Riessman, 2008, p. 12).

According to Lieblich et al. (1998, p. 12), there are two main dimensions in narrative analysis: holistic versus categorical, and content versus form. Under these two main dimensions, there are four modes of reading a narrative (holistic-content, categorical-content, holistic-form, and categorical-form)

(Lieblich et al., 1998, p. 12-13). The categorical approach for analysing narratives is adequate when the primary interest of the research is a phenomenon or a problem shared by a group of people, whereas the holistic approach is more efficient when the main focus is on the individual as a whole and their life story (Lieblich et al., 1998, p. 12).

When conducting a narrative research, core stories are often created in order to indicate e.g. what kind of meanings, attitudes, and general patterns of thought and action are related to the phenomenon that has been narrated about (Koppa / Narratiivinen analyysi). Creating core stories can mean conducting summaries of individual narratives to ease the analysis process (Emden, 1998, p. 35). It is also possible to create one collective core story from the data to indicate the similarities found in the narratives, which is useful in terms of creating a holistic picture of the data, but problematic in a way it covers the diversity of individual narratives (Hänninen, 2002, p. 33).

The categorical content mode of narrative analysis and inductive content analysis

I scrutinised the collected narratives by following the idea of categorical content mode of narrative analysis (also called as categorical content analysis) which is one of the narrative analysis approaches introduced by Lieblich et al. (1998). As Lieblich et al. (1998, p. 112, referring to Manning & Cullum-Swan, 1994, and Riessman, 1993) note, this categorical-content mode can basically be understood as equal with the term content analysis, which in fact, has been "a classical method" for conducting narrative research in sociology, education, and psychology. This is why also in this research, practices of the traditional (inductive) content analysis is used side by side with the understanding of Lieblich et al.'s idea of the categorical-content perspective.

Content analysis is based on reasoning and interpretation, and its purpose is to proceed from the empirical data towards a more conceptual understanding of a phenomenon that is being researched (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018, p. 127). Usually, inductive content analysis, according to Tuomi & Sarajärvi (2018, p. 122, referring to Miles & Huberman, 1994), has three main phases: 1) data reduction, 2) data clustering, and 3) data abstraction. In the phase of data reduction, parts of the data that are irrelevant for the research purposes are excluded (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018, p. 123). In data clustering, similarities and differences are examined from the data, and concepts describing the same

phenomenon are connected to form lower categories (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018, p. 124). With this same principle, the clustering process continues by forming upper categories, then main categories, and finally integrative categories that are connected to the research questions (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018, 124-125). In the abstraction phase, the relevant information is differentiated from the rest of the data, and is then used to form theoretical concepts (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018, p. 125).

Some authors deal the idea of using content analysis to analyse narrative materials with caution. For example, Wells (2011, p. 44) states content analysis to be a way to "conceptualize all of the independent themes that are present in a narrative", yet failing to "provide a way for investigators to link those themes in relation to an evolving plot or story". In addition, Riessman (2008, p. 12) argues that approaches focusing on categories "eliminate the sequential and structural features that are hallmarks of narrative", but admits these research approaches to be useful when "combined with close analysis of individual cases" (Riessman, 2008, p. 12, see also e.g. Riessman, 1990). On the other hand, Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2018, p. 122) note that content analysis aims to organise the collected research data into a clear and compact form without losing the information the data includes.

The categorical form analysis and close reading

Equally to categorical-content approach, also the categorical-form analysis belongs to the categorical dimension of narrative analysis (Lieblich et al., 1998). The categorical-form analysis mode is interested in "discrete stylistic or linguistic characteristics of defined units of the narrative", which can mean e.g. what kind of metaphors are being used by the narrator (Lieblich et al., 1998, p. 13). It aims to gain a deeper understanding of the data in comparison of solely scrutinising content (Lieblich et al., 1998, p. 141), which is why I presumed categorical form approach to work well together with the practice of close reading. Context can be perceived significant in categorical analysis: for instance, in the example study by Lieblich et al., can be noticed that familiarity with the content of the entire narrative, narrator's linguistic choices, and the broader social context are all important elements to be considered in the analysis (Lieblich et al., 1998, p. 164).

Close reading has its roots in literary theory (Bizzocchi & Tanenbaum, 2011, pp. 289), but its "focused attention" can be understood equally important when conducting e.g. narrative research

(Riessman, 2008, p. 11). Brummett (2019, p. 2) states close reading to be a mindful practice of reading, aiming to deeper understanding of meanings arising from the text being read – similarly to the categorical form analysis approach introduced above. In addition, close reading aims to recognise meaningful connections between these previously implicit elements of a text, as well as broader themes involved in a text (Schur, 1998, p. 5). Schur (1998, p. 5) compares ignoring of how a text is formulated or articulated to "reading with blinders on", thereby stressing the significance of close reading. Close reading may assist in getting a more thorough understanding of a text, but one should bear in mind that in the end of the day, the end result is still an interpretation. As Schur (1998, p. 5) point out, there is no such thing as one, correct interpretation of a text.

The categorical content analysis process in this study

After the deadline for data collection was passed and I had printed out all the narratives I had received, I started the analysis process by carefully reading through all the collected data. At first, I only read every narrative through individually with an open mind, without highlighting anything from them yet, only trying to get as thorough overall impression of them as possible. Already after the very first read-throughs, some clear themes emerged from the narratives. I was delighted to note that the narratives seemed to be thoughtfully written, which I think was why I was able to empathise with them so well. For example, I found myself feeling annoyed when a narrator vividly described irresponsible behaviour they had encountered during a national park visit, and even laughed in disbelief once when a narrator wrote about a misconduct: "How is that even possible?" I wondered. Later I noticed this kind of corporeal engagement of a researcher (Sparkes & Smith, 2012, pp. 65) being present throughout the analysis process, which was definitely useful particularly in the phase of interpreting affects from the narratives.

After familiarising myself with all of the narratives I read them through again, this time using colourful markers to highlight all the words and sentences I perceived relevant considering the purpose of my study. Already at this phase I used different colours to highlight different themes that emerged from the text (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018, p. 123). Careful highlighting produced me "content universes", sections to set apart from the rest of the text for further scrutiny (Lieblich et al., 1998, p. 112). Once I was done with highlighting, I proof-read all the narratives through once again to make

sure that I had not missed any relevant piece of information from the content universes. Then it was time to create own, separate Word documents for the content universes of each narrative and start to closely examine them one by one. I also perceived this to be a convenient phase to translate the 10 Finnish-written stories' content universes to English. I experienced this step time-consuming, as the texts had to be handled with care in order to not lose any significant nuances in translation, or to not distort the meanings involved in the narratives by e.g. wrong choice of words when translating. However, it draw my focus more closely on the language and e.g. to word choices and metaphors narrators were using, which I found useful in terms of gaining a thorough understanding of the data.

As explained earlier in the theoretical framework, vocabulary of emotions can be utilised when verbalising affective experiences as affect and emotion can be close to each other, or sometimes even experienced as the same thing (Rinne et al., 2020, pp. 26). I employed this possibility for this Master's thesis study by highlighting all emotion- or feeling-related words and expressions from the written narratives. I perceive this approach well justified as affects can be considered observable only "when they are manifest as emotions" (Carter, 2019, p. 203). I would also like to stress Urry's (2013, pp. 52) definition of affect as "non-presented feeling or feeling before it has become signified". Therefore, I perceived highlighting passages of text that involve emotions or feelings from the research data to allow examination and identification of affect-laden experiences that had possibly lead to these verbally recognised expressions. This approach helped to notice some interpreted affects from the texts. However, I was convinced that quite an amount of affects still remained unnoticed after this procedure.

Lieblich et al. (1998, p. 113) suggest the next phase of categorical content analysis to consist of reading through the content universes as openly as possible and defining the major categories that emerge by doing so. However, at this point I felt that there was so much and so diverse information in the narratives that I could not define any categories yet without them appearing as too vague. Of course, Lieblich et al. (1998, 113) remind the phase of category definition being "a circular procedure" involving e.g. careful reading, suggesting categories, generating ideas for additional categories, and refining the ones that already exist – instead of straightforwardly defining categories and sticking with them. As they also note, at this phase a researcher needs to find a balance between creating several subtle categories that preserve the richness of the text but require careful sorting of the material, and defining a few broader categories which are convenient to use but which may reduce

the complexity of the text. This notion in mind, I considered the process of inductive content analysis (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018) to be potentially useful as it basically involves both: first creating wider and more subtle categories, which will finally be sorted into broader categories – without losing the path back to lower categories and all the way to the sentences picked from the narratives (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018, p. 125-126). It also allows a clear way of reducing the data and therefore, to notice relevant themes emerging from it.

At the data reduction phase, I created a three-column table individually for each narrative: sentence, reduced expressions, and possible bodily reactions. To sentence columns, I picked all relevant sentences I had earlier highlighted from the content universes, and then made reduced expressions out of them to the second columns being aware that this reduction needs to be conducted in a careful manner in order to not lose any information of the original sentences (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018, p. 123). The purpose of the third column was to gather all bodily reactions I could notice from the narratives, but eventually this column was left empty at this phase as I felt there was too many things at the same time to be focused on, and I did not want to make any hasty interpretations.

Once all the relevant sentences were reduced, I collected all the reduced expressions from all narratives to one collective table, as it is possible to form categories either this way or individually from each narrative (Lieblich et al., 1998, p. 113). Then I started the practice of clustering, by scrutinising these reduced expressions to find similarities and differences that they might have with each other (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018, p. 124). When I found expressions with similar content, I located them together to form a lower category (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018, p. 124). In total, I formed 18 lower categories. From this, I similarly continued to create upper categories (which I found 11 in total). After identifying upper categories, I continued the process and formed six main categories based on the upper categories defined earlier. When still going further with clustering the data, I ended up with four integrative categories: 1) managerial issues and potential solutions, 2) emotions, potential affects, and situations in which they occur, 3) things that influence national park experiences and in which ways they influence them, and 4) general observations on national park crowding. The measures taken in this phase indicate well the similarity of categorical content approach and inductive content analysis: they form the majority of the process of inductive content analysis, but can also be understood as the step of sorting the material into the categories, which is a part of the categorical content analysis (Lieblich et al., 1998, p. 113).

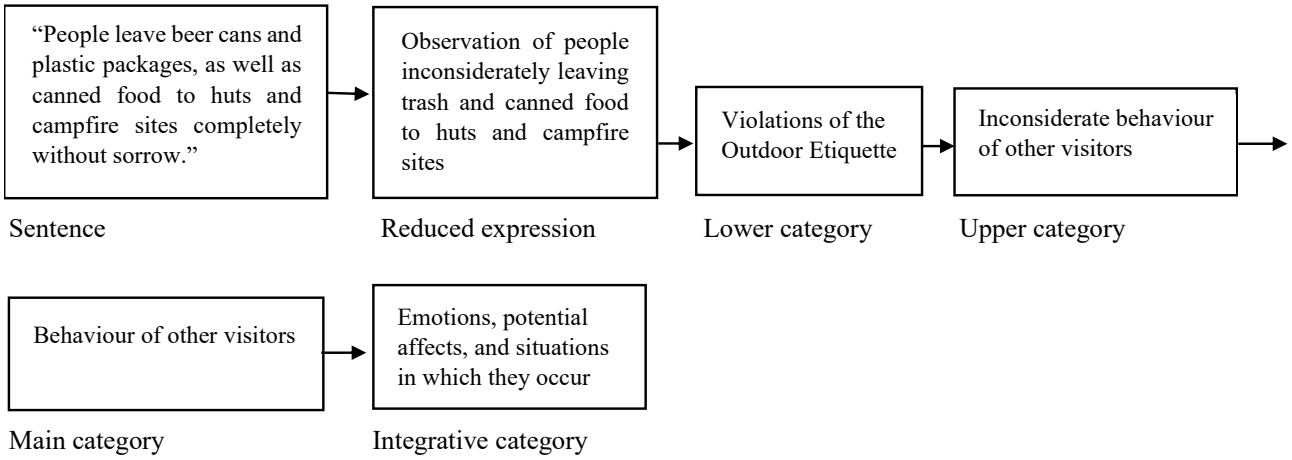

Figure 1. Example of the phases of inductive content analysis process, following the approach introduced by Tuomi & Sarajärvi (2018).

The first three integrative categories matched well with my research questions, so at this point they were definitely considered as the main themes. The fourth integrative category, "general observations on national park crowding" did not directly fit my research questions. It consisted, as its name suggests, of crowding observations at general level which did not seem to belong to any of the other integrative categories but which, however, seemed something potentially significant so they could not to be ignored. At the phase of abstraction, the researcher usually eliminates material that does not fit to their research purposes (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018, p.). I considered leaving out the data from the integrative category of general observations, but did not end up doing it yet, as I felt that I should not exclude any aspect of the narratives in order to fully understand their meanings.

All in all, the categorical content approach, employed together with inductive content analysis measures, was a good start for organising the data in a form that was easier to examine than the original narratives. After this process, I had an understanding of the main themes the data involved, which made it easier to notice the possible directions I could head next. Affects are my main interest in this study which is why I first decided to focus on the themes of "emotions, potential affects, and situations in which they occur", and "things that influence national park experiences and in which ways they influence them".

Core story creation

While implementing the categorical content analysis I found some similarities between the narratives, which is why I thought that it might be useful to form a core story to get, and also to give a reader a better understanding and kind of a "summary" of the findings I had gathered from the written narratives. In short, core story creation is a method to manage raw data achieved from the collected narrative materials (Petty, Jarvis & Thomas, 2018, p. 1), and it is often employed in narrative analysis to indicate what kind of general ways of thinking and acting, meanings or attitudes are related to the phenomenon that is being narrated about (Koppa / Narratiivinen analyysi). As Lieblich et al. (1998, p. 114) state, the findings of each category formed during the process of categorical content analysis "can be used descriptively to formulate a picture of the content universe in certain groups of people or cultures", which I understand to support the idea of creating a collective core story.

My idea was to create and utilise the core story already in the analysis phase as a tool to organise the findings in a clear way to be better able to scrutinise them. However eventually at this point, I did not find the core story very useful yet, as it pretty much lacked "the main thing", which was affective expressions, and therefore did provide almost nothing in understanding the main theme of this Master's thesis study. However, as I still perceived it useful to introduce the key findings (affects and the affective atmosphere) to a reader in the results chapter in an entertaining form, I continued to work with this core story later, once I had better recognised affective reactions from the narratives. This complete core story, along with other results gained by employing this analysis process, will be introduced in the chapter 5.

Categorical-form approach and close reading in this study

"What next?" I wondered when the categorical content analysis and the first attempt of the core story were implemented. I still felt that I had missed something relevant from the data: I knew now what were the main themes emerging from the data, and understood better e.g. in which situations crowding occurred in national park settings, but understanding of the most important aspect, affects, was still vague. Sure, I had noticed some directly and indirectly written emotional and affective reactions during the categorical content analysis and collected them into Word tables, but I did not know what

exactly to do with these findings yet. Moreover, I felt that somehow, the red thread was still missing. Then I remembered Anderson's (2009) academic article about affective atmospheres I had read earlier, and I read it again to refresh my memory. I realised that this was exactly the red thread I had been missing so far! Yet, to get an idea of an affective atmosphere that could potentially be occurring in a crowded national park, I had to find a way to recognise the affects first from the narratives, as they are no less than one of the key elements of such an atmosphere (Tan, 2021, p. 3, referring to Edensor, 2015). Finally, after several hours of further reading of literature about affective atmospheres, as well as of analysis methods for narratives in general, I got the idea to employ the practice of close reading together with categorical-form approach. Also, after this finding, I refined my theoretical framework to cover the concept of affective atmosphere in more detail, as previously I had only mentioned it very briefly.

Multiple times while reading through the narratives, I noticed that there were sentences which did not include any words that could be understood to directly relate to affects or emotions, but still I got the feeling that there might have been affects hidden behind certain choices of words. I could not ignore this observation, as thinking "beyond the surface of a text" is essential for a good narrative analysis (Riessman, 2018, p. 13). As Schur (1998, p. 7) points out: "the text is said to harbor forgotten, unnoticed, hidden, latent, repressed, concealed, esoteric, overfamiliar, implicit, ignored layers". Therefore, I figured out that my thesis work could benefit from combining the categorical-content perspective loosely with the categorical-form approach, as the latter deals with e.g. looking for the deep structures of the text (Lieblich et al., 1998, p. 163), emotionally charged narration, and what kind of metaphors the narrators were using when writing about their experiences (Lieblich et al., 1998, p. 13). I perceived that with this approach it could be possible to notice aspects from the narratives that would have been missed if only working with the categorial-content mode (Lieblich et al., 1998, p. 141). As Riessman (2008, p. 11) reminds, a narrative analyst does not only examine the content to which language refers, but also how the experiences have been narrated. Also, I found the practice of close reading useful to be employed together with this categorical-content mode of analysis, as with close reading it would be possible to go beyond the "uniform, superficial meanings" (Schur, 1998, p. 3).

Finally, I ended up with going back all the way to the content universes of the narratives, as otherwise it would have been difficult to examine the entire content universes, as they were previously divided

into different categories. To be better able to spot the possible latent, or 'hidden', affects from the texts, I first highlighted all the sentences I perceived as emotionally (or bodily) charged. Then I decided to carefully read these passages of text through, reflecting them to my own national park crowding experiences: what were my bodily responses, or emotions, in similar situations? Particularly at this phase I felt it useful that I had had a handful of own experiences from national parks and also from other kinds of outdoor recreation areas from the past year, as it really helped in being corporeally engaged with the data. I could relate on many of the events narrators wrote about, being experienced similar occurrences by myself. Of course, I still cannot know for sure if narrators were experiencing the situations they wrote about similarly than I had, but I was a lot more confident with my interpretations as I was able to reflect narrators' experiences to my own.

I continued with creating tables, as I found them useful in organising the data in a clearer form, which then helped me to scrutinise the narratives in more detail. Also, the idea in categorical form analysis is not only to recognise certain instances from the texts, but also to count them (Lieblich et al., 1998, p. 14). Therefore, first, I made a four-column Word table where I collected affects I noticed from the narratives (when examining both the original narratives and the content universes), the numbers of how many narrators in total wrote about each of these affects (whether directly or latently), one example sentence from each affect (directly citated from the narratives), as well as comments e.g. if I had to clarify the affect definitions or if I noted the same affect to repeat multiple times in some of the narratives. This idea was originally inspired by Pihlainen's Master's thesis (2016, p. 34-35), where they had created a table of affects found from the data, how many times in total they were present on the texts, how many narrators spoke about the affect in question, and an example sentence of each affect. With this step, I was of course able to find affects from the narratives, but also to see how often they were present in national park experiences and therefore, how significant part they were playing in forming an affective atmosphere.

Affects found from the narratives	How many narrators wrote about this affect (directly or latently)	Example sentence from the narratives	Comments
Surprise	3	"Thus, no disturbing volume of people, but it was some kind of a "low season" period of time, which is why I was slightly surprised of the popularity of Nuuksio."	
Satisfaction	5	"All in all, a pleasant visit, and probably obvious that there is never completely silent in Nuuksio due to the location."	
Frustration	4	"Some people do not bother to dodge at all, which is why you have to think all the ways how to get further away."	

Table 1. Example of the Word table for affects interpreted from the narratives.

At this phase, I found the idea of interruptions in the flows of experience (Lupton, 2017, p. 7, referring to Hollett & Ehret, 2015) interesting and significant also for my study. Therefore, I went experimental with the narratives and focused on the possible interruptions they involved – perhaps this could be helpful in understanding a crowded national park's affective atmosphere in a more holistic way. I made yet another Word table, this time with two columns. To the first one of them, I located sentences from (and couple of times even beyond) the content universes which I noticed to include some kind of a change in action, usually from the behalf of the narrator, but in some cases also from the behalf of others. To the second column, I wrote a short, reduced description of what kind of an interruption I interpreted each of these sentences to include.

Sentence(s) from the narrative	Interruption of the flow of experience
"Still: people sure vanish to the fell trails, but to the easily accessible places one had to walk in a line."	Other people walking momentarily close to narrator; potentially leading to feelings of frustration/annoyance
"However, in late autumn, there were so many people that we made our trips primarily during evening time. Just to not bump into other people very much, (and) this was successful."	Narrator had to change the time for their national park visits to avoid crowds
"Except for Friday evenings, all lean-tos were full of people which is why we made long walks without a proper stop."	Due to crowds, narrator was unable to stay at lean-tos; instead, narrator made long walks without a proper stop

Table 2. Example of the Word table for interruptions in the flows of experience.

Eventually, paying attention to possible interruptions in the flows of national park experiences came in very useful in making sense of the data. In fact, I perceived the concept of interruption relating so significantly in affective atmospheres that it needed to be centrally included in my study. Also, it gave a proper name to ideas I wanted to study in this Master's thesis which I was unable to verbalise clearly earlier, which is why I specified my research questions to include the idea of interruptions.

4.4.2 Research ethics and reliability

Informed consent is a significant feature of ethical research practices, meaning that the research participants need to be clearly informed of what they are participating in (Wiles, 2013, p. 25). In this work, I implemented informed consent in the invitation to write. I briefly informed potential narrators in Finnish and in English about the purpose of the Master's thesis study. It was then explained that the original narratives would only be read by me, as well as that texts would be handled, and research results presented in a way an individual narrator would not be identified. I also mentioned in the writing invitation that the participation was voluntary and could be withdrawn at any point, as well as that the narratives would be confidentially stored by me and disposed once the research process was ready. Also, I informed participants that the Master's thesis process would follow the principles for responsible conduct of research dictated by the Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity. Finally, I encouraged participants to contact me if they had any further questions.

In ethical research, also anonymity of participants plays an essential role (Wiles, 2013, p. 50-51). Even though this study did not deal with any particularly sensitive topics, the narratives were, after all, participants' personal understandings and opinions of their experiences. Therefore, anonymity of participants was still carefully considered by deleting participants' names from the written narratives I received by email, already before the first time reading them through. Along with their narratives, a few writers told about themselves, e.g. in which town they were living, educational background, and health-related details. As I did not only consider this information to be irrelevant for the research purposes, but moreover as I strictly wanted to protect narrators' anonymity, I deleted these pieces of information in the early phase of forming the content universe for each narrative. When working with the data, I separated narratives from each other by naming them as 'Narrative 1', 'Narrative 2', and so on. Also, confidentiality was protected as identifiable information of the participants was not disclosed at any phase (Wiles, 2013, p. 42).

As majority of the narratives were written in Finnish, I had to translate them to English. In this process, I aimed to ethical translation, "to make the source text evident" instead of pursuing fluent English translation of narratives (Qoyyimah, 2014, p. 4, referring to Venutti, 1995, Spivak, 1993, and Guavanic, 2001). In other words, I tried not to lose any nuances of the original data in translation.

Narrative research deals with interpretations, and interpretation is always "personal, partial, and dynamic" (Lieblich et al., 1998, p. 10). In order to work with narrative data, dialogical listening of at least the three following voices is required: narrator's voice, the theoretical framework (providing "the concepts and tools for interpretation", and reflexive monitoring of reading and interpretation, which means being self-aware when drawing conclusions from the data (Lieblich et al., 1998, p. 10, referring to Bakhtin, 1981). In this process, I familiarised myself with the narratives, trying to be as sensitive to what each narrator wanted to say as possible (Lieblich et al., 1998, p. 10). When interpreting, I reflected situations of which narrators were writing about to my own similar national park experiences from past about a year whenever possible, in order to better justify those interpretations. Of course, still some intuition was needed (Lieblich et al., 1998, p. 10), particularly when examining latently expressed affective situations. At times, I had no personal experience of situations which narrators were describing in their stories, and after all, there is no guarantee that narrators were experiencing situations, feelings, or affects the same way I would have. However, reading each narrative through multiple times allowed me to notice new aspects from the storied experiences, and therefore also to understand their narrators constantly better (Lieblich et al., 1998, p. 167-168). Furthermore, I presume this procedure to have been helpful when making interpretations.

5 CROWDED NATIONAL PARK AS AN AFFECTIVE ATMOSPHERE

In this chapter, I will introduce the findings of this study. For examining emotions and affects that are produced through tourism procedures, Tucker and Shelton (2018, p. 66) suggest it to be essential to study them in terms of what they do or have potential to do, instead of considering them as "ends in themselves". Therefore, the results of this study do not only focus on presenting affects that could be found from the data, but also on examining situations in which these affects occur. Also, interruptions altering the affective atmosphere, as well as the potential of these interruptions in shaping a visitor's experience of a national park as a space during perceived crowding.

5.1 Affective (and emotional) responses identified from the written narratives

When pursuing understanding of affective atmospheres, it is not necessarily meaningful to completely differentiate affects from emotions (Anderson, 2009, p. 80). In this study, in total, 20 affects were interpreted from the data, and I would say that majority of them could also be understood as emotions. The four most commonly used affects (all of them present in five narratives) were satisfaction, inconvenience, annoyance, and sadness and being upset. All of the affects circulating in crowded national park settings are presented in the Figure 2 below.

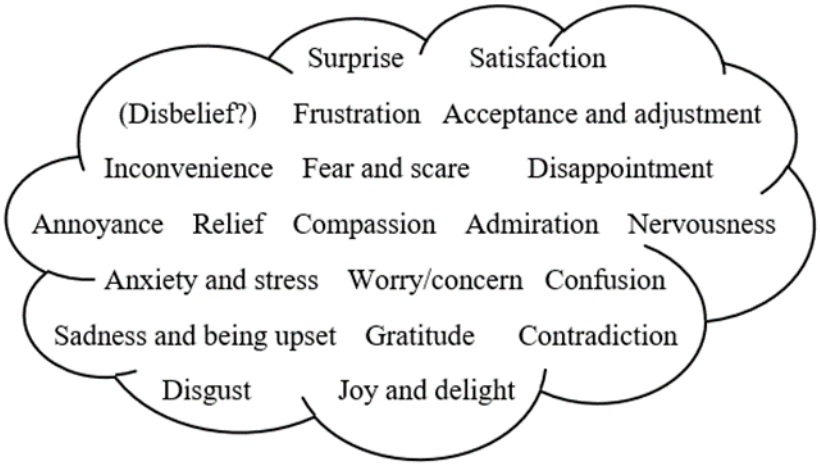

Figure 2. Affects present in the affective atmosphere of a crowded national park.

Sense of safety and familiarity are the key elements of emotional stability, and this can sometimes be in contrast with travelling, as the latter involves unfamiliar landscapes and situations (d'Hauteserre,

2015, p. 83, referring to Svasek & Skrbis, 2007). Therefore, in their study, d'Hauteserre (2015, p. 83) ponders whether encounters between tourists could provoke "trust and liking", or fear, indifference, and hostility. When examining affective reactions identified from the data of this study, I would perhaps exclude hostility, but otherwise suggest all of these sensations being more or less present in crowded national park settings, particularly during a global pandemic. Indeed, both positive and negative affects were present in the written narratives. Common negative affects seemed to be frustration, anxiety and stress, worry/concern, and disappointment. More random affects identified as negative were fear and scare, confusion, contradiction, disgust, and nervousness. Affects understood as positive were compassion, admiration, joy and delight, as well as relief. Also, affective reactions of acceptance and adjustment, and gratitude were interpreted from the data. In addition, the affect of surprise was present in three narratives, and it could be understood either positive or negative depending on the context.

5.2 Situations in which these affects occur

Based on the data, particularly encounters with other hikers, different nonhuman actors, and crowded national park facilities have significant influence on affect generation. Therefore, these situations are also important in formation of the affective atmosphere. Next, I will introduce and explain these situations involving affective and emotional responses more in detail.

5.2.1 Other human visitors as contributors to the affective atmosphere

Shared practices, rules, or laws attached to a place influence on a generation of an affective atmosphere (Lupton, 2017, p. 3). In national park settings, the Outdoor etiquette is a set of regulations which should be followed in order to keep the experience responsible and pleasant to everyone involved, from human to nonhuman actors. Therefore, it makes sense that understanding of the Outdoor etiquette, as well as its followings and violations seemed to significantly define how encounters with other hikers were felt. Altogether, seven narrators wrote about their observations related to the Outdoor etiquette. Findings agree with Äijälä's (2015, p. 73) notion that hikers violating the Outdoor etiquette may, at least partially, ruin a national park visit, whereas other visitors obeying the etiquette are not considered to disturb the experience.

As narrator 6 phrases it, the negative experiences have been *largely influenced by conduct of other hikers*. Narrator 4 writes about the observation that in times of the Covid-19 pandemic, many hikers have probably visited national parks for the first times in their life, *and in general without familiarising themselves with the etiquettes on how to act* – which may have felt annoying to narrator who presumably was not either a first-time hiker or unfamiliar with the Outdoor etiquette. In general, annoyance, but moreover being upset was strongly present in the experiences related to the Outdoor etiquette violations. In narrative 6, narrator summarised their feelings of being upset, annoyance and frustration, as well as compassion towards the nature, by stating that they felt that people do not actually care about the nature, but have some kind of *a parasitic relationship with it*.

The Outdoor etiquette advises to show consideration to other people arriving to a hut as they are potentially tired after a day's hike and willing to enjoy some peace and quiet (Nationalparks.fi / Outdoor Etiquette). However, according to the data collected for this study, this was not always the case. As the citation below suggest, this may have lead narrators to feel upset, and to cause them inconvenience. Also bodily actions were involved, and will be examined more closely together with interruptions in the flows of experience in the subchapter 5.3.

> *On the wooden beds for sleeping, there were people's hiking backpacks and belongings spread around and when I asked for a possible place to sleep, no one even tried to make me room. Finally, I left out to the rain to mount my own tent, which eventually turned out to be a good solution. In my opinion, crowded time really brought out the selfishness and rude behaviour in people. When it rains outside, all friendliness and manners of courtesy flew out the window.* (Narrative 4)

According to narrators, also the Outdoor etiquette's general recommendation of being considerate towards the others during outdoor recreation was being violated, which was likely to cause affective responses. As narrator 6 mentioned, *hikers acting selfish, indifferent or rude* towards them made narrator feel upset. Also, bypassing situations on trails were experienced problematic at times, when e.g. duckboards were narrow (narrative 3), and other hikers did not make any effort to dodge and then narrator was forced to *think all the ways how to get further away* (narrative 10). Encounters between hikers and cyclists were not problem-free either. As narrator 10 describes: *Cyclists come across everywhere and majority of them driving fast, without making any sound until they pass you which*

then scares you. In their study, d'Hauteserre (2015, p. 83) states that tourists have the desire to feel welcomed, which could apply to national park visitors as they are nature-based tourists. I would say that when the Outdoor etiquette is violated by being impolite towards other hikers, this feeling of being welcomed is being decreased or even absent. These experiences can be interpreted to have caused a wide variety of negative affective responses, such as being upset, inconvenience, frustration, confusion, annoyance, and scare. Even feelings of disbelief might have occurred when confronting the following kinds of inconsiderate behaviour from the behalf of fellow hikers:

> *During a week on the UKK (Urho Kekkonen National Park) hike in the autumn I saw, among other things, camping on the helicopter emergency landing site, people were told to move away when coming to a hut since the hut was full (3 persons in a 6 persons hut), a couple washed laundry at Luirojärvi by heating up all the laundry water with the camping gas stove of the hut, approximately 10 kettleful of water, because it is nicer to carry clean laundry.* (Narrative 4)

Loudness of fellow hikers was considered as disrespectful behaviour towards the peace of nature, and towards other visitors. For example, narrator 6 wrote that loud people, as well as *large groups of hikers getting drunk and playing loud music somewhere* have made them feel upset during their national park visits. Loudness of children was latently expressed by narrator 3, as they mentioned that *the vivid behaviour of children disturbed the experience*. All in all, children in national parks evoked some emotional and affective reactions (such as annoyance, being upset, and compassion towards nature) in narrators. At times, the behaviour of children was seen problematic, as they played in a way that narrators experienced to be harming the natural environment – or were *playing with nature*, as phrased in narrative 6. In practice, according to narrator 6, this meant e.g. *ripping foliage and trees from the ground*. Moreover, narrators wished that parents would have advised their children on how to stroll in the natural environment in a way that is respectful for the nature and also for other hikers:

> *It is important to take children to the nature but also to advice how to stroll in there respecting the nature and other visitors*. (Narrative 3)

In addition, in narrative 3, narrator described how they had felt scared for the children when they went to dangerous places such as to the edges of a gorge. In their research, Salmela and Valtonen (2019, p. 23) described that they were visiting a national park and had children walking with them, and noted these children to be "tearing and breaking the branches from trees" at times – reminding the researchers of the ethical challenges one might confront when walking in the nature with other human beings whose considerations "of the norms and principles of care" differ from one's own. I perceive these different understandings and their encounters on hiking trails as potentially significant contributors to the affects experienced during a national park hike – not only in the case of the children and their ways to experience the nature, but in other matters as well.

Not only the violations of the Outdoor etiquette, but also responsible and polite behaviour of fellow hikers draw a few narrators' attention. These pleasant experiences potentially contributed to the affects of satisfaction, and even surprise. In narrative 1, narrator mentioned that during their national park visit, the other hikers *seemed to behave very responsibly*, which could potentially influence the feelings of satisfaction. Also, narrator of narrative 8 wrote that already earlier they had encountered the practice of changing few words with fellow hikers coming across on trails, but mentioned that this particular visit was the first when they saw that a stranger was even been asked to take a picture of a group at a sight. This could potentially add the affect of being surprised to the experience. It was also mentioned in the narrative 8 that hikers walked in their own groups, giving way to others in bypassing situations, which as a polite act probably contributed positively to narrator's experience.

5.2.2 Contribution of nonhuman actors in creating the affective atmosphere

Nonhuman actors are contributing to the affective atmosphere, too (Lupton, 2017, p. 2, referring to Coole & Frost, 2010, Whatmore, 2006, and Labanyi, 2010). Particularly dogs accompanying hikers were observed and evoked affective or emotional reactions on few narrators. This agrees with Aula's (2018, p. 86) research findings, where they recognised dogs as companions having the potential to influence on social space, and e.g. on drawing attention. Narrator 5 recalled being surprised to encounter only one person and a dog, when clearly expected that particular trail to be more crowded – here the encounter can be interpreted as positively surprised. In narrative 10, narrator wrote that they would even prefer to encounter dogs instead of people walking them. There were also dog-related observations in the data with a more negative tone. According to the Outdoor etiquette, dogs are allowed but should be kept on a leash in national parks (Nationalparks.fi / Outdoor Etiquette).

However, narrators observed hikers to violate this regulation (*hikers letting their animals loose in the forest without a harness*, narrative 6). As a result, dogs were felt as annoying or upsetting. Also, barking of dogs was negatively contributing to the affective atmosphere at times, whether being the sound of barking in general (*Barking of dogs -- disturbed the experience*, narrative 3), or when it was directed towards narrator at the trail (narrative 6).

In addition to dogs, observations related to the soil and trees were mentioned in the narratives. For example, narrator 6 wrote that during their hike, they had seen several visitor-made campfires outside the allowed areas for campfires during the fire warning period, as well as even cut trees. Seeing the soil burnt by a campfire (narrative 6) or littered made some of the narrators feel sad, upset, and compassionate towards the natural environment. As narrator 4 wrote: *Sadly, I noticed that in general during my hikes I saw a lot more litter and uncleanliness in the nature. People leave beer cans and plastic packages, as well as canned food to huts and campfire sites completely without sorrow*. Also harming of trees, such as *foliage or trees cut from the forest to make a campfire* (narrative 6) was experienced upsetting.

There was also one specific nonhuman actor described in seven narratives, which (hopefully) may not have even been present in national parks, yet had a powerful agency in influencing narrators' experiences in different ways: the Covid-19 virus. Based on the data, I perceive different Covid-19 pandemic-related aspects to have functioned mostly "as background influencers" for many affects generated, and decisions and actions taken while visiting a national park during crowded time. This finding agrees with Kim and Kang (2020, p. 9) who suggest Covid-19 having mostly indirect influence on leisure activities participation. Changes were noticed by narrators when hiking during the times of Covid-19, in comparison to outdoor experiences before the pandemic had started. For example, *hygiene-related guidelines were added on the toilet walls, which was something that was not there during the "normal conditions"* (Narrative 1). Some narrators perceived many hikers to have been increasing the amount of outdoor recreation in national park settings, or to be visiting national parks for the first time during the times of the Covid-19 pandemic. On the other hand, some of the narrators also told to be these first-timers themselves, or the ones having increased the amount of their national park visits:

> *We visit national parks every few months for outdoor recreation and this has been increased during the times of corona. The thought has been to go outdoors now when it is recommended to restrict social interaction and to avoid crowded public spaces. Clearly others have had the same idea as we have noticed that also many others have been increasing outdoor recreation in national parks or trying it for the first time.* (Narrative 2)

Based on the data, can be understood that along with the increasing amount of national park visits, also annoying *occurrences and nuisances* (narrative 6) have significantly increased since the pandemic started, in comparison to visits that took place before the times of pandemic. However, narrator 6 also point out that the Covid-19 is only one reason for increase in crowding-related issues (such as violations of the Outdoor etiquette). In their narrative, narrator pointed out that *national parks are advertised, especially on social media so of course people will see that and visit*. Social media was also present in the following narrative, in the context of travelling during the pandemic:

> *Part of the journey to Riisitunturi National Park, I had to travel by public transportation, and I wondered, whether or not I could post pictures from the national park trip in social media, since I was, after all, hundreds of kilometres away from my home place during a Covid-19 pandemic – would I confront disapproval for my decision to travel, having to use public transportation for my trip? Myself, I am an active user of social media, and capturing a trip to pictures is, to me, an important part of the travel experience. After all, I ended up posting the pictures, and I did not confront disapproval.* (Narrative 8)

As the citation above indicates, this narrator was likely to go through sensations of stress, worry/concern, and eventually also relief. They were well aware that using public transportation for travelling – or being *hundreds of kilometres away* from their home place in general - was not particularly recommended during the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, despite of considering themselves as active social media users who perceive capturing of pictures as an essential part of a travel experience, they had to carefully consider now whether or not to post pictures from their national park visit to social media as there was a possibility to confront social disapproval from the behalf of other social media users. However, finally they decided to share the pictures on social media, and it did not lead to social disapproval.

> *I noticed to pay attention in a different way than before to foreign-speaking hikers and to wonder why they were not following the strong recommendation to stay at their home place – which, though, was contradictory as I had also travelled hundreds of kilometres to reach the outdoor destination in question.* (Narrative 8)

As previously presented citation from the data indicates, language has also a small role in affect generation in settings of a crowded national park during the times of a global pandemic. Encounters with foreign-speaking hikers made narrator 8 to feel contradictory wondering why these other hikers were not following the strong recommendation to stay at one's home municipality while simultaneously being aware that narrator themselves was far away from their home at that time. Previously, narrator had not paid so much attention to foreign-speaking hikers, and based on the narrative can be presumed that this notion was evoked by being aware of Covid-19 and restrictions and regulations related to it. On the other hand, a friend of narrator 7 was not a Finnish speaker, so they were left confused in the previously described situation in which an elderly person snapped at them in Finnish that one has to maintain safety distance:

> *Once an elderly person came across, snapping at us that one must maintain distance. My friend did not speak Finnish and wondered why that person was being snappy. I had the feeling of people being afraid and therefore irritated.* (Narrative 7)

In addition to confusion, the situation described above can be interpreted to have contribution in affect generation for all sides involved in it, first of all, by evoking an angry or at least irritated reaction from the bypassing hiker, which can be understood to be strongly linked to the pandemic. As narrator felt, that person could have been afraid of the Covid-19 and therefore "being snappy". Narrator themselves can be interpreted to have felt compassion towards that snappy fellow hiker by having the understanding of the ongoing pandemic situation having the potential to cause feelings of fear and irritation in people.

In previous research it is suggested that people might think that Covid-19 disease would not be so infectious outdoors, and therefore behave in unsafe ways during outdoor activities (Kim & Kang,

2020, p. 465, citing Lidia & Cao, 2020, and Setti et al., 2020). However, this presumption seems to be contrary to the data of this work. Narrators described their own actions for safety during their national park visits (*And sure you tried to keep distance to others during these trips in order to e.g. maintain safety distances*, narrative 7), as well as wrote about the responsible behaviour of other hikers:

> *Instead, at the top of Ukko-Koli, there were a lot of people and people were queueing their turn to the sights to take pictures. However, I did not pay attention that safety distances etc. would have been endangered recklessly.* (Narrative 5)

In their study, Kim and Kang (2020, p. 9) found out that the pandemic does not directly decrease participation in leisure activities but instead, fears of risks of getting infected through crowding could cause decrease in enjoyment of these activities, which further decreases participation. Also, social distancing may influence people's perceptions of insecurity and health risks, as well as of unpleasant tourism experiences (Sigala, 2020, p. 316). In addition, social distancing has the potential to significantly affect how leisure and travel activities (e.g. hiking and other outdoor experiences) are experienced and evaluated (Sigala, 2020, p. 316). When looking at the written narratives, can be said that this was the case at times in national park environments. Sometimes, concerns related to safety and health risks, such as fear of getting infected by the virus, had even the potential to prevent an experience from occurring. For example, narrator 10 wrote that earlier they had visited a nature center close to a national park *very often*, but not even once during the times of Covid-19, even though they found the themes of art exhibitions interesting. Further, they described this to be *a pity*. This can be interpreted to have highly contributed to negative affect generation, causing e.g. sensations of sadness and being upset. As they pointed out: *The art would have been so great. But it would not be great to get infected by corona*. Even if a national park visit would not have been completely prevented, issues related to Covid-19, such as restrictions and increased crowding, still seem to have more or less of a potential to shape national park visits. Even though one would not avoid crowding due to fear of getting infected by the disease, they may still avoid congestion due to it decreasing the quality of outdoor experience:

> *As a rather young, normally healthy person I, sure, am not afraid to catch a corona infection when outdoors, but for the sake of pleasant hiking in the nature I would not*

necessarily leave to Nuuksio at the most crowded hours, even in the normal conditions. (Narrative 1)

Due to a restaurant lockdown in Finland, narrator 8 had to think an alternative way to nourish themselves during a hiking day as they were prevented entering a restaurant or a service station (*I think that my trip would have been quite similar without the Covid-19 pandemic, but I think, that then instead of plentiful packed lunch I would have stopped at some restaurant/service station to eat on the way back*). Overall, more careful pre-planning seems to be involved in national park visits in times of the pandemic, as noted by one of the narrators:

I would say that during corona crowding is (as previously stated) way bigger, so from its behalf it has influenced on the outdoor experience. Earlier (before the Covid-19 pandemic) visiting national parks was much more worry-free, now one have to do a little more planning beforehand. (Narrative 2)

However, the side effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and the restrictions and regulations it had brought along seem not to be only negative. Narrator 8 described how, during a restaurant shutdown, there was a hut called the Corona café in close proximity to a national park's parking lot that sold light snacks and refreshments, which could be enjoyed outside the hut. Narrator mentioned that this cafe made them delighted. Previously, these kinds of huts selling coffee and snacks within a natural area are studied to divide visitors' opinions in terms of being acceptable constructions in wilderness areas (Hallikainen, 1998, p. 98). Based on narrative 8, I would suggest these kind of commercial structures to potentially be perceived more acceptable during e.g. a restaurant lockdown: visitor finds it positive being able to find available restaurant services after being restricted or prevented to utilise such services. In addition to delight, I would interpret satisfaction with a national park experience to have emerged even though it took place in times of Covid-19, when considering e.g. the following citation:

Even though there were a lot of people in Rykiniemi and Ukko-Koli, I did not feel uncomfortable and in my opinion people were in their own company. (Narrative 5)

The above mentioned citation from narrative 5 can be interpreted to well summarise thoughts of many of the narrators: national park visitors are still, despite of the global pandemic, more or less able to comprehend a national park "as a safe place for an enjoyable experience" (Kim & Kang, 2020, p. 465). I would suggest this to be result of collective consideration of safety that was expressed in the narratives to have occurred from the behalf of both narrators themselves, and fellow hikers visiting the place at the same time. Of course, this cannot be generalised, and also in the narratives, different pandemic-related aspects were more or less decreasing the enjoyment of a national park visit.

5.2.3 Role of national park facilities in affective atmosphere generation

Material objects are of great significance in creation of an affective atmosphere (Tan, 2021, p. 2). They can even be perceived as an inseparable part of creation and development of human and nonhuman actors and their interrelatedness (Aula, 2018, p. 76). This was well visible in the written narratives collected for this study: different national park facilities were integrally present in the data as locations where crowding occurred. Materials have their potential in "providing the mental and physical resources" to contribute bodily experiences (Tan, 2021, p. 2, citing Thrift, 2008), and indeed, different affects were generated at different facilities during narrators' national park experiences. Starting with parking lots, they were observed to be full or about to fill by eight narrators by the time narrators were arriving onsite. This could potentially have caused feelings of inconvenience, or even annoyance in visitors, when trying to find a spot to park their cars, but eventually also satisfaction when a free parking spot was found. Satisfaction could interpreted to be present also when it was easy to find a place to park even though there were *there were several cars parked* (Narrative 1).

Only one narrator mentioned that there was a queue to the toilets. However, the high volumes of use of these toilets were visible also in three other narratives in different ways. According to narrator of narrative 4, *at times, the toilets are in such a horrible condition that one rather goes to the forest*. This observation can be interpreted to involve the affective reactions of disgust. Also, narrator 9 wrote that toilets were full, due to high volume of use. Apparently, the condition of toilets depended on a national park in question and the timing of the visit, since narrator 1 mentioned that toilets were *in a very clean condition*. This kind of an observation can be interpreted to maintain the presumably pleasant atmosphere, or even to advance it.

On trails, affects were present when other visitors came across, or were otherwise walking close to narrators, which could potentially have contributed to negative affects such as annoyance or frustration. As narrator 9 pointed out, *people sure vanish to the fell trails, but to the easily accessible places one had to walk in a line*. The duckboards on trails were narrow at times, which lead narrator 3 to experience bypassing situations with other people as challenging at times. As three narrators mentioned, sights were also crowded at times. For example, narrator 5 mentioned that *at the top of Ukko-Koli, there were a lot of people and people were queueing their turn to the sights to take pictures*.

Five narrators mentioned about confronting crowding at locations in national parks where hikers could rest, either for a brief moment or overnight, such as campfire sites, lean-tos, camping areas, and huts. Narrator 9 also added that trash cans were full, *when people cannot hike in a litter-free way*, which can be understood to refer to trash cans at resting sites. In their work, Äijälä (2015, p. 65) noted that for some hikers, reaching the next resting place strongly contributed to their satisfaction. In terms of my study, can therefore be understood that for some hikers, being not able to enter a resting place due to congestion prevented generation of these feelings of satisfaction. Instead, in addition to inconvenience, this potentially generated the affective responses of frustration and annoyance, but also acceptance.

> *If there would not have been so many people, I would have stayed at the resting places and sights for a longer time and utilised e.g. campfire sites for eating packed lunch, etc. Now I went for a shorter trip and kept moving almost all the time.* (Narrative 7)

At times, the inconvenience of full campfire sites was recognised in terms of having to wait one's turn to prepare food at the campfire, but combined with a notion that one could influence on the situation e.g. by taking adequate cooking equipment with them for a hike:

> *Campfire sites were usually full of people cooking their packed lunches and in case one wanted to prepare food, one had to wait almost without exception. This really was not a problem and if one had had e.g. Trangia with them, one can easily cook farther away.* (Narrative 4)

However, encounters at campfire sites could be also a pleasant contribution to the experience. As it is stated in narrative 11: *Of course it is pleasant to meet people on the campfire sites and to chitchat with them*, which leads to suggest that visitor encounters can generate positive affects in terms of creating a "connection between strangers, a momentary feeling of unity", as it is stated by d'Hauteserre (2015, p. 83). This momentary feeling of being connected and united with other visitors, as well as the importance of green outdoor areas, such as national parks in this case, in helping people to emotionally cope with negative, stressful changes in life (Lupton, 2017, p. 4, referring to Bell, Wheeler & Phoenix, 2017), was recognised by one of the narrators as follows:

> *And maybe one could even feel that we are together in this situation, that all of us need the support from the nature and it felt good that also others had found it. Therefore it was, in a way, a shared nurturing experience of nature connection, at some collective level.* (Narrative 7)

Campfire sites were not the only resting places where crowding appeared as a challenge. Difficulties occurred also when visitors wanted to overnight in national parks. For instance, due to congestion, narrators felt it difficult at times to find a place to mount their tents, which can be interpreted to have caused inconvenience in terms of having to make more effort to find a suitable place for the tent. However, also potential sentiments of satisfaction emerged when such place was eventually found:

> -- *when I reached the beach there were tents right next to each other, but luckily I noticed that the beach still continues through a little forest and on that part of the beach there were only a one couple with their dogs and tent, so I settled on the other side of the beach.* (Narrative 5)

What I noticed in terms of facilities as contributors for affect generation was that national park visitors are, according to the written narratives, simultaneously gathered e.g. to parking lots, resting sites, and toilet queues. Therefore, I would suggest these places as particularly favourable areas in experiencing shared emotions and being commonly affected by the atmosphere (Tan, 2021, p. 5).

5.3 Interruptions shaping the affective atmosphere

In general, one can be moved by affects, and affects can also attach e.g. a national park visitor to the place and other beings occupying it (Haanpää & García-Rosell, 2020, pp. 231, citing Ahmed, 2004, p. 10-11). Multiple human and nonhuman agencies exist and operate within a space simultaneously, influencing each other's lives in unpredictable ways (Aula, 2018, p. 74), which can be understood as interruptions. In national park environments, particularly encounters with other hikers, especially in situations in which crowding was perceived, seem to have a great potential in causing interruptions in visitors' experiences.

For instance, interruptions were experienced when the regulation of being considerate towards other hikers arriving to a hut was violated. As previously introduced, narrator 4 wrote about their experience of wanting to sleep in a hut but there were already people who did not make the slightest effort to make them room by moving their hiking backpacks. This probably unexpected turn in the flow of experience was likely to cause a negative affective reaction in narrator, leading their body to exit the hut and to mount their tent in the rain. In the other case related to this theme, other hikers entered the hut when narrator was already in there, wrenching the doors open because they were feeling hot after a hike, without a word to others in the hut:

> *-- Later, the same couple came to another hut feeling hot and wrenching the doors of the hut open because they were feeling hot. Well maybe it is hot when one hikes 20 km with 30 kg on one's back and comes from the cool (outdoors) to inside where it is warm. No talk to the others but only the "me, me" attitude.* (Narrative 4)

This interruption was likely to have evoked feelings of inconvenience in the body of narrator who already was in the hut, perhaps relaxing or even sleeping comfortably, as cool air suddenly entered the place. Also feelings of being upset and potentially annoyed were likely to have emerged due to the selfish behaviour of others. For these reasons, this interruption could also have led to tension between narrator and these other hikers.

Some interruptions (such as seeing parts of the national park environment to be littered, and being scared by cyclists who rode pass narrator in fast speed without making any sound) altered moods of visitors, and could also have involved bodily reactions, even though they were left undescribed in the written narratives. At least based on the written narratives, these situations did not lead narrators to take any further action, either. Also, previously described negative encounters with children and dogs altered the affective atmosphere by causing e.g. feelings of annoyance, being upset, compassion towards the nature, and scare. On the other hand, when narrating about some of the situations, also bodily actions were described. In earlies studies, weather has been identified to have the nonhuman agency to guide corporeal activities occurring in nature settings (Markuksela & Valtonen, 2019, p. 24, citing Rantala, Valtonen & Markuksela, 2011), and I was able to recognise this insight from the written narratives (*At daytime, it started to rain which made all of the fellow hikers to search for a shelter*. Narrative 4). Also, seeing traces of human activities such as something in the national park area to be damaged, or rules to be broken evoked affective responses in narrator 6 which led to recognised feelings of being upset, and to bodily reaction of speeding up their walking pace:

> *I tried to walk away from that area as soon as possible, and inform the national park (usually through social media) if rules were broken or something was damaged.* (Narrative 6)

In addition to encounters with humans and nonhumans, also material objects are potential contributors in making bodies to move in certain ways (Tan, 2021, p. 2, referring to Thrift, 2008), which basically suggests materials to be plausible contributors to interruptions. In the context of this study, not only national park facilities as material objects, but moreover crowding at these facilities seemed to have quite of an influence on interruption generation, as many of the interruptions explained in this subchapter are caused by national park facilities such as huts and parking lots being full.

In majority of the narratives, parking lots were completely or almost full by narrators' time of arrival. This potentially caused interruptions in the flows of experience already in the beginning of national park visits, as narrators' mood may have changed (e.g. from pleasant to feelings of inconvenience or annoyance) when seeing such congestion, and also bodily actions had to be taken in form of driving around the parking place before being able to enter the national park which one had been looking

forward to. On the other hand, finding a parking spot for one's car could have changed the mood again from unpleasant feelings to satisfaction.

> *I had to look for a place to park for more than one time in order to find one. Eventually I found one bigger parking lot which I then utilised also later.* (Narrative 7)

Increased waiting time can negatively contribute to the experience (Kim & Kang, 2020, p. 465). Therefore, situations that involve queueing (e.g. queuing to toilets or to sights to take pictures), could be interpreted to evoke not only negative affects but also interruptions to the experience as they force hikers to stop momentarily when they are already looking forward to start their hiking experience, or to be able to take those travel pictures. Also, in the context of toilets, according to narrator 4, *at times, the toilets are in such a horrible condition that one rather goes to the forest*. This observation can be interpreted to include not only the affective and emotional reaction of disgust, but also interruption and a bodily action as one potentially did not use the toilet as they had planned to do, but instead went to the forest to look for another place to defecate.

When on hiking trails, interruptions were likely to occur when other hikers came across, walked in close proximity to narrators, or when trails were otherwise experienced as crowded. This potentially altered the presumably pleasant atmosphere by changing the mood of narrators (and perhaps also the others) more or less towards annoyance or frustration, e.g. when another group of hikers was already walking *on heels* of narrator 2 and their company. This may also have led narrators' bodies to e.g. speed up their walking pace to get rid of these other visitors walking in a close proximity to them, although this was not mentioned in the narratives. Also, the previously introduced situations in which bypassing fellow hikers did not *bother to dodge at all* (narrative 10), and a person snapping to narrator and their friend about maintaining safety distance (narrative 7), can be considered not only as affect generators but also as interruptions on trails, potentially leading to negative sensations such as inconvenience, frustration, being upset, and confusion. In addition to causing changes in moods of visitors, these kind of crowding-related interruptions occurring on trails had the power to make visitors to think the ways they could pass other hikers when these others were not willing to dodge (narrative 10), and to make these travelling bodies e.g. momentarily to stop, or to depart from the marked trails (narrative 2, narrative 7).

On the most crowded routes we try to anticipate the departure time and at times to depart from the trail for a moment or alternatively to stop, somewhere where is no other people. (Narrative 2)

In the nature, I usually like to stroll alone and there I enjoy the peace and being alone. So now there were a lot of people on the trails and resting places. For this reason I tried to look for more remote routes and departed from the trails more often than I would have normally done. I searched resting places from there, outside the trails and sat, for example, on a rock to rest for a while. I also noticed that I was slightly more nervous than normally in the nature, as I had to give some thought of when and where the others were walking. (Narrative 7)

In terms of resting places, five narrators mentioned about confronting crowding at places in national parks where hikers could rest, either for a brief moment or overnight, such as campfire sites, lean-tos, camping areas, and huts. This congestion is likely to have caused interruptions in the flows of experience and practical inconvenience, such as having to skip a break at a campfire site due to it being crowded (e.g. Narrative 7), forcing body to keep moving when it was oriented for having a brief moment for regaining energy. Also, firewood onsite was observed to be wet (Narrative 4) and therefore inadequate for making a campfire as planned, and a site to be ran out of firewood (Narrative 9), also preventing one from making a campfire for cooking their packed lunch. These interruptions may have also caused hiking bodies to either keep moving without a break, or to find out an alternative way or location for preparing and enjoying one's packed lunch.

5.4 Interruptions shaping experiences of space

Tourism sites are encountered by bodies and the places around these bodies (Haanpää & García-Rosell, 2020, pp. 230). Moving bodies understand spaces in particular ways which are not only related to materialities and temporalities within a specific space, but also to the spaces they have experienced previously (Haanpää & García-Rosell, 2020, pp. 230). Indeed, how one perceives a space, and as d'Hauteserre (2015, p. 81) adds, experience, is connected to memories. Moreover, an affective atmosphere can have a significant influence on how people sense, think, and feel about certain space as well as about other actors they encounter in it (Lupton, 2017, p. 1). Drawing from these theoretical

insights and findings from the data of this study, can be interpreted that memory in terms of previous national park experiences and spaces in which they were produced may influence on how visitors perceive the space of a crowded national park. Based on their previous understandings of national parks as spaces and experiences generated within these spaces, visitors could potentially also build certain expectations for their national park visits.

Space itself can be perceived as "undergoing continual construction", instead of being something pre-existing or fixed (Thrift, 2009, pp. 86). Therefore, in this study, it was interesting to find out, how crowding-related situations shaped national park visitors' experience of space. Previously, it has been researched that one of the expectations visitors in natural areas often has is to have as little contact with other people as possible (Wall, 2019, pp. 29). National park visitors are suggested to look after and expect solitude from their visit, and therefore to be more sensitive to perceive crowding than other types of travellers (Luque-Gil et al., 2018, p. 101). Also, as Äijälä (2015, p. 63) points out, in nature, one expects to hear sounds of wind and streams, and when successful, this is a positive contribution to the overall experience. On the other hand, e.g. sounds made by cars are not culturally understood to belong as a part of nature experience (Äijälä, 2015, p. 63). This can also be considered to apply to sounds caused by crowding. For example, as narrator 11 states: *There is restlessness in the crowds. Sounds of nature, scents, the feeling of wind on the skin are easily left unexperienced*. All in all, in this study, narrators seemed to have a clear vision of what kind of aspects did not positively contribute to national park visits. For instance, as narrator 9 mentioned:

> *The Hetta-Pallas route is being made more robust for enabling the masses and cycling, and that is when you sure lose something when the only thing more that is missing from a path for a "city atmosphere" is streetlights.* (Narrative 9)

The "city atmosphere" in the citation above is an interesting choice of words and describes well how visitors associate different expectations for a city and for a national park: national park is likely being perceived as an area where one can enjoy the peace of nature, feel connected with the nature, and temporarily escape from one's more or less urbanised living environment. Therefore, one does not wish to experience a "city atmosphere" when visiting a national park. This can be justified with previous literature: bodily practices taking place in outdoor settings are understood as particularly refreshing, and are the opposite for one's daily life (Äijälä, 2015, p. 64, citing Macnaghten & Urry,

2001). When this attempt and expectation for enjoyment and detachment of daily life woes is not fulfilled due to confronting crowding, or constructed facilities that are not perceived acceptable for wilderness areas but understood to belong to cities instead, affective responses leading to recognisable disappointment are likely to be experienced. This idea is supported by the experience of narrator 6, who wrote that certain natural areas *mean a lot* to them, indicating that they are familiar with these areas and have pleasant associations with them based on previous visits. However, they describe how they have felt upset whenever visiting these places nowadays, due to encountering *people with their children damaging nature, annoying pets and loud people*, which they think to be *too much*. This clearly does not positively contribute to their idea of spending time in natural environments important to them, but leads them to mention that *it's the same as being in the city in that case*.

Indeed, the desire for peace and quiet of nature was clearly something participants of this study were looking forward to when visiting a national park, and to which they have potentially even been more or less used to during their previous visits in non-crowded times. Due to congestion, the expectation of quietness and solitude left unfulfilled at times, which was directly described by three narrators and could be latently identified from some of the other narratives, too (e.g. *We had thought that we would enter a quiet wilderness, middle of stunning sceneries*, Narrative 3). This can be interpreted to have contributed more or less to negative sentiments such as feelings of disappointment, being upset and inconvenience. However, as a few narrators pointed out, one's own attitude was of great significance in dealing with congestion in national parks:

> *Even though the outdoor experience can at times be frustrating due to the crowds, one's own attitude influences a lot on how successful the trip is going to be. Good forethinking and a long fuse help.* (Narrative 2)

> *So, then I just worked on my attitude towards walking in the nature and accepted that there are also others.* (Narrative 7)

It is studied that affects may not have such an influence on tourists who consider a destination for the first time, as they have not had the chance to be "touched" by the place yet (d'Hauteserre, 2015, p. 87). This is why I would suggest that first-time visitors could potentially be more easily 'impressed by the destination' in a positive way, so to speak, and therefore not so sensitive to negative aspects

of it (e.g. to crowding), either, as there is no previous visits on that very same location to which one could compare their experience (e.g. *I had not visited Riisitunturi earlier, and the national park was magnificent!,* Narrative 8.) Of course, new visitors may already have a certain idea of the destination based e.g. by images they have seen, and when arriving to the destinations, they have the desire to "revisit emotions aroused by images from the destination" (d'Hauteserre, 2015, p. 83).

However, affects experienced during previous national park visits (and memories of them) can have an influence on determining whether to re-visit the destination or not (d'Hauteserre, 2015, p. 87). For example, narrator 10 wrote as follows: *In winter we have dropped the trail strolling and only walked on the roads close to our apartment, because we want to avoid people and entering walking trails is so difficult and on them one has to give way to those fatbikers, so it is a no thanks for entering the trails from our behalf.* As this example indicates, if travel either to or within a destination was felt challenging, one may not consider returning there (d'Hauteserre, 2015, p. 84). However, not that many destinations are felt as completely repulsive despite difficulties they may involve (d'Hauteserre, 2015, p. 84), which was observable also from the written narratives. Despite of challenges or inconvenience they confronted during their visits, many of the narrators eventually mentioned their experience to be not that bad after all, which follows the finding by Äijälä (2015, p. 65) about challenges even refining the experience for the better. This observation leads to suggest that visitors may, after all, potentially give the place another visit later in life. Instead of abandoning the place based on their previous visit, narrators mentioned e.g. to be giving more effort in planning their visits so they would run smoother than the previous ones they had had:

> *However, in late autumn, there were so many people that we made our trips primarily during evening time. Just to not bump into other people very much, (and) this was successful.* (Narrative 10)

Indeed, even though visitors would not completely give up on visiting certain destinations, affective situations and interruptions during their visits clearly contributed to more careful planning of future visits, and also added the amount of planning that had to be made already during the ongoing visit. Could be perceived that when considering future visits, visitors wanted to be better able to avoid certain areas or situations which were earlier experienced to cause potential inconvenience,

nervousness, worry and concern, or sadness and being upset, or were otherwise experienced troublesome.

All in all, crowding seems to influence on how one experiences the space. Potentially based on their previous experiences, or expectations, visitors often perceive a national park as a site defined by peace and quietness of nature. Due to congestion, this understanding is often forced to change, as crowded national park as a space may remind more of a city than a place where *one can normally just go with their woes and relax* (Narrative 7). This may further lead to negative affective responses as the "city atmosphere" is usually not what one tends to expect and to look forward when visiting a national park. However, visitors also understand the significance of one's own attitude in dealing with crowding in a national park, which may mitigate experienced negative sensations and to influence on ways how the space will be experienced.

5.5 Affective atmosphere of a crowded national park as a core story

Adapting the idea of a core story, a method often employed in narrative analysis (Koppa / Narratiivinen analyysi), I wrote a fictional narrative which demonstrates all the affects I was able to identify from the individual narratives in one collective story. This core story is based on the data and in addition to introducing the affective and emotional reactions that are potentially present in national park environment during congestion, this core story aims to reflect the potential affective atmosphere of a crowded national park. All passages of text written in *cursive* are directly citated from the content universes of the data. Rest of the sentences that are "supporting" the story are based on the narratives as well.

> It was a Friday last summer when I headed to a national park for a daytrip. Soon I found out that I was not the only one with this idea: the parking lot was already full at the starting point of the trail. Therefore, I *had to look for a place to park for more than one time in order to find one*, which caused slight **inconvenience**. However, *eventually I found one bigger parking lot*. Next, I headed to toilets, only to notice that *there was queue* to them, too. On the queue, I wondered if all of those people were from areas nearby or if they violated the recommendation to stay at one's home municipality due to Covid-19 restrictions which, however, was **contradictory** as I had also left my home place to visit the national park in question. When I was then able to open the door

of the toilet, I noticed it to be in quite of *a horrible condition*, which made me feel **disgusted** and to rather go to the forest.

When I was finally able to start my hike, it did not take long to notice that *the national park was magnificent!* Seeing the beautiful nature really filled me with **admiration**. However, **sadly**, *I saw a lot more litter and uncleanliness in the nature* than I had seen during my previous hikes that occurred before the Covid-19 pandemic had started. Litter and another damage made for the nature by national park visitors made me feel **compassion** towards the natural environment. Few times I saw campfires in disallowed places, which was really **worrying** considering that it was a fire warning period taking place at that time! I assumed that in times of the Covid-19 pandemic, *many hikers may probably have been on the move for the first times, and in general without familiarising themselves with the etiquettes on how to act* and this observation made me slightly **annoyed**.

I observed that other *hikers walked in their own groups*. Once I was asked to take a picture of a group of hikers, which was a bit **surprising**, but otherwise there was not much contact between me and other visitors. At times I noticed that some of the other hikers *did not bother to dodge at all*, and therefore, I had *to think all the ways how to get further away.* Some of them were quite *loud*, which I did not perceive to be very respectful towards the nature or other people who wished to enjoy the peace and quietness outdoors. Once I saw an elderly person to snap at couple of other hikers about maintaining safety distance, which made one of them to look quite ***confused*** – perhaps that person was a non-Finnish speaker and did not understand why the hiker coming across them had such an angry tone? At times I even thought that many people seemed to *have forgotten that happy hiking spirit and respect for nature at home and packed selfishness and competitiveness with them*. For these reasons, I noticed to feel quite **upset**. Also, *I had the feeling of people being **afraid** and therefore irritated*. On the other hand, I also observed polite behaviour from the others. For example, some of the fellow hikers *gave way to others* when coming across on narrow trails.

And at resting places crowds, crowds, crowds: people kept coming from every points of the compass, with all kinds of gadgets. Indeed, *all lean-tos* and other *campfire sites were full of people cooking their packed lunches and in case one wanted to prepare food, one had to wait.* Already beforehand, I had presumed that this would be the case, which is why I did not even take anything to eat with me and *made long walks without a proper stop*. Still, I must say that it was bit of a

disappointment to encounter so many people during my day trip, as I had thought that I *would enter a quiet wilderness, middle of stunning sceneries* once I arrived to national park settings. However, *I just worked on my attitude towards walking in the nature and* ***accepted*** *that there are also others* visiting the national park at the same time – after all, *the place was worth of seeing and I sure understand its popularity*. While walking pass a camping site I noticed it being quite crowded, which is why some of the hikers had to find a place for their tents *from relatively far away from a field nearby.*

I could say that the negative experiences I encountered during my hike *were largely influenced by conduct of other hikers.* Also, I think that *there is restlessness in the crowds. Sounds of nature, scents, the feeling of wind on the skin are easily left unexperienced.* In general, I realised that I was paying more attention to other people than during my previous hikes before the pandemic, and *noticed that I was slightly more* ***nervous*** *than normally in the nature, as I had to give some thought of when and where the others were walking*. What I also noticed to be new in my hiking experience was that I could not just post pictures from my trip without considering carefully whether or not I would potentially confront social disapproval when doing so – after all, I was travelling outside my home municipality during the Covid-19 pandemic. This was a bit **stressful**, but it was a **relief** when I ended up posting the travel pictures and did not confront disapproval.

However, I still consider the national park visit as, *all in all, a positive experience*. In other words, although there was a bit of a challenge at times, *one got* ***adjusted*** *to it* and after all, *I experienced the trip to be very successful* and was **satisfied** with it. Of course, I am also **happy** that people have found nature and are getting support from there during difficult times, and I think it is good that parents are taking their children outdoors. However, *I would have wished that the parents would have taken care of their children in a more responsible way as well as respecting the peace of the nature by walking quietly*. What I also realised was that *even though the outdoor experience can at times be* ***frustrating*** *due to the crowds, one's own attitude influences a lot on how successful the trip is going to be.* Also, *paying attention to the weather, time of the week and location of the hike makes a big difference* in the experience. What I felt really **grateful** about was knowing that there are national park administrators and people who *collect the trash and traces left by these other people, as well as keep hiking as an open and free of charge hobby for all*.

6 CONCLUSIONS

The main purpose of this Master's thesis study was to find out, how is the affective atmosphere of a crowded national park like. As affects, together with material objects, have a significant role in affective atmosphere generation, it was necessary to find out what kind of affects were present in visitors' bodies in crowded settings in the Finnish national parks, and also in which kind of situations these affects occurred. Also, an affective atmosphere is something that is constantly changing and evolving. Therefore, interruptions in the flow of national park experiences were examined as they have the potential to alter the affective atmosphere, and further also the national park experience. As an affective atmosphere is strongly spatial by nature, it was also interesting to study in which ways previously mentioned interruptions shaped the visitors' experience of space. This final chapter will outline the findings of the study, examine the limitations and methodological choices of this work, as well as propose ideas for further research.

6.1 Outlining the research results

Lately, in Nordic countries, crowding-related issues caused by increased flows of tourists have become a concern (Øian et al., 2018, p. 13). Also, the constantly increasing popularity of nature-based tourism (Newsome et al., 2002, p. 8), boosted even further by the global Covid-19 pandemic and its restrictions (Fredman & Margaryan, 2020, p. 14) has been visible in Finnish national parks as congestion (Tuomainen, 2020). In this study, I drew from these starting points to examine, how perceived crowding in Finnish national parks is experienced by visitors: what kind of affective reactions it potentially provokes in them, how is the overall affective atmosphere of a national park during crowding and in times of the Covid-19 coronavirus pandemic, and how this affective atmosphere may be shaped by different interruptions occurring during the visit. In addition, I studied how these interruptions could potentially influence on how one experiences the space. Experiences being in the centre of attention, narrative approach was implemented in data collection and analysis, utilising the understanding of affect theories.

In total, I interpreted a variety of 20 affects from the written narratives, and verbalised them with emotion-related vocabulary (Rinne et al., 2020, pp. 26). Four of the most often present affects seemed to be inconvenience, annoyance, sadness and being upset as well as – what I find interesting -

satisfaction. I think this observation actually describes many of the narratives well: even though different struggles and negative feelings were experienced during the hike, by the end of the narrative, narrator could still give a positive overall evaluation of their national park visit, or to mention that after all, majority of the hiking experiences have been pleasant. Some of the affective and emotional reactions were described directly, but majority of them was latently expressed and needed more interpretation, which strongly relied on my own national park experiences during the times of Covid-19.

Affects and the affective atmosphere were generated in encounters with other hikers and nonhuman actors. Interestingly, many of the affects were related to situations were the Outdoor etiquette was followed and, moreover, violated. From the nonhuman beings, dogs and the Covid-19 virus can be understood to be the most influential actors in creation of affective and emotional responses. Also national park facilities, and particularly crowding at these facilities seemed to have quite of an influence on affect generation. These situations also caused interruptions to narrators' experiences, some of them leading to alteration in moods, whereas some of them also influenced on bodily actions (e.g. departing from the marked trail after perceiving it to be crowded). These interruptions had the potential to shape visitors' experience of space by influencing their memories and expectations that had the potential to further influence on consideration of future visits, often leading to more careful pre-planning of these visits.

At times, based on the data, similar situations led to divergent affective and emotional outcomes as situations were experienced differently by different individuals. For example, most of the narrators mentioning that there were other people at a campfire site decided to avoid the location, whereas one narrator described it to be pleasant to encounter other people at a campfire site. Also, sometimes I could understand narrators being responding to divergent elements of the national park environment, which potentially led them to experience partially divergent affective atmospheres (see Lupton, 2017, p. 2, referring to Simpson, 2017, and Anderson, 2009). I would even suggest that as a national park is a large area that allows visitors to disperse widely (Wall, 2019, pp. 29), it is more than likely that multiple affective atmospheres instead of just one may occur simultaneously.

It is important to note that the elements of affective atmosphere generation and alteration, even though introduced separately one by one in this study, are not at all disconnected from each other, but instead very much intertwined. This was well visible when I scrutinised some of the citations found from the data and had to consider more than once to which category I should locate them. For instance, there was the situation in which narrator described another hiker to have snapped at them and their friend about maintaining safety distance, leading their non-Finnish speaking friend to feel confused, and the narrator feeling compassionate as they realised that people may be afraid and therefore irritated. In this singular situation, there were multiple affects present (anger/irritation, confusion, compassion), and likely also interruptions in the flow of experience.

By paying attention to affects and affective atmosphere in the context of national parks during crowded times, this study contributes to academic literature related to affective atmospheres as well as to crowding in nature-based tourism destinations. As previously mentioned, crowding in natural environments is a constantly growing phenomenon, tremendously boosted by the general interest in nature-based tourism activities as well as the global coronavirus pandemic and its restrictions, which is why it needs to be studied from different perspectives. Therefore, the effort of this Master's thesis work can be considered important.

Participants had divergent ways of narrating their crowding experiences in national parks, and they described a great variety of different observations in their narratives. This can definitely be perceived valuable in terms of gaining data that is rich in content, but also as a limitation as few of the research findings had to be made solely based on a singular narrative, or maximum of two narratives as they were the only ones including similar ideas. Also, some affects were only present in a singular narrative. I understand this limitation to occur due to quantitively small amount of data, 11 narratives. However, narrative research does not aim for creating generalisations but rather to understand individual experience. Also, in narrative research, the data that is plentiful and unique in content can be perceived as important as the quantity of data in other types of research approaches that utilise e.g. surveys. In addition, as affect theories and the definition for affect are highly divergent, the research results for this study are achieved by utilising my possibly limited understanding of affect theory and affect. Also, my interpretation was actively employed throughout the analysis process, particularly when identifying the affects. Therefore, another researcher with different understanding of affect theories and affect, and different interpretation could have made different findings. This limitation is,

however, common to narrative research, as this research approach is interpretative by nature (Lieblich et al., 1998, p. 9).

6.2 Potential for this kind of a research for generation of managerial insights

When reflecting the research process, I would suggest this kind of a study (qualitative, narrative, focusing on affects) to have a potential in providing new, interesting approach for collecting and analysing data about national park visitors, their interests and wishes, and potentially also in providing novel managerial insights. First, in general, qualitative data, such as interview transcripts, written materials collected, or observation of activities, allows to deepen the understanding gained by employing quantitative methods, and is particularly beneficial when significant quantitative variables are unclear (Black, 1994, p. 425). In the national park management context this could mean e.g. getting more detailed information about the wishes visitors have regarding to their visits in natural areas. Also, qualitative approach can assist identifying the adequate variables to be measured with quantitative methods (Black, 1994, p. 426). Further, using narrative approach can be perceived as a useful addition to traditional methods such as surveys, or even an alternative for them (Lieblich et al., 1998, p. 1). Analysing of narrative data may be time-consuming, but it results in "unique and rich" data, which cannot be achieved by employing e.g. questionnaires (Lieblich et al., 1998, p. 9; 11). Therefore, it could be fruitful to employ narrative practices also in studies that aim for national park development.

With studies of affect, it is possible to pursue understanding of different social and cultural situations, experiences, and actions, as well as things that influence human beings without them necessarily being consciously aware of it (Rinne et al., 2020, pp. 5). This understanding is important as affects and emotions can steer our ways of thinking, making decisions, and taking action (Rinne et al., 2020, pp. 6). In this study, a variety of affective and emotional reactions emerged from visiting national parks during crowded time. Understanding, considering, and further examining these kinds of reactions could potentially produce novel insights for national park management. As an example of ideas emerging from affective findings, I would like to mention that as narrator 10 wrote that earlier, they had often visited a nature center close to a national park, but not even once during the times of Covid-19 even though they find the themes of art exhibitions interesting, which they mentioned to be

a pity. This immediately led me to think about safe ways for visitors to visit nature centres even during the global pandemic, e.g. live streaming one or multiple exhibitions from nature centres.

With focus on affects, in addition to the possibility of entirely new ideas, one can examine previous findings from a new perspective to see whether or not results of this new approach support existing results or not. For instance, in this study, one of the findings was that campfire sites were often full, which led visitors to e.g. make longer walks without a proper stop for eating packed lunch, or to hope that maybe in their future visits it would be possible for them to stop at a campfire site, if it was not so crowded. Based on that notion could be interpreted that perhaps there could be a desire for more campfire sites, which then agrees with findings of Master's thesis by Kittilä, where travel companies' representatives were studied to wish for more resting places, such as huts, lean-tos, and campfire sites, to Pallas-Yllästunturi National Park (Kittilä, 2013, p. 77). I would also suggest affective approach, preferably combined with narrative practices, to be a great way to have a different, perhaps more holistic, perspective and understanding on visitors, their wishes, and satisfaction with their national park visits.

Finally, paying attention to affects could be helpful in noticing different potentials that e.g. a place or its occupants may have. For example, in their study about affects in urban community gardening, Willman (2015, p. 42) found out that the citizens, resident-driven activities, as well as the experience-based knowledge of citizens can be seen as an asset and a resource that could be more utilised in city planning and management. Likewise, affects could be utilised in the context of national park management to note what kind of potential e.g. visitors may have – such as the visitors' compassion towards the natural environment that was present in some of the narratives, and therefore potential willingness to help taking care of natural park environments they feel compassionate for.

6.3 Evaluation of the methodological choices

As previously discussed, even though I consider this kind of a study providing useful tools for gaining novel managerial insights, I recognise that the methodological choices of this work have their limitations. First of all, I found written narratives to be a highly interesting form of data, yet at times more demanding in terms of examining affective reactions than I had thought beforehand, even if I

was able to utilise emotion-related vocabulary. If I would re-do this study again with written narratives as data, instead of asking participants to write freely about their crowding experiences in national parks, I could consider defining the topic of narratives more strictly in the invitation to write so that narrators could focus more clearly on how they *felt* their national park experiences during perceived crowding. Then again, as affects are pre-conscious by nature, they would still probably be more or less latently expressed in the data, requiring my careful interpretation. Alternatively, narrative interviews could be considered, as this would allow researcher to also observe the body language of participants while they are narrating their national park experiences, which could potentially make it easier to recognise affective and emotional reactions related to these experiences.

Once I had started the data collection, I got two feedback messages from potential participants about an online survey form being perceived as more convenient way for sending narratives than e-mail. I considered this option in the planning phase of data collection and thought that it could potentially be perceived a better option for e-mail in terms of anonymity: even though I deleted all personal information from the narratives on the very early phase, narratives delivered e.g. as an open question answer through Webropol would not have required any personal information in the first phase. However, as I was not collecting narratives about any sensitive topics and as I was committed to processing the narratives in an ethical way, I still consider that e-mail data collection was an adequate option – and after all, I do not consider it to be that much slower way to send narratives than an online survey form.

In the end, I consider the analysis process outcome to be quite successful, even though at times I felt it was kind of a "learning by doing experience". I found it as useful starting point to combine Lieblich et al.'s (1998) idea of categorical-content mode of narrative analysis together with inductive content analysis as it allowed me to notice and organise themes from the narratives, and based on them to see in which direction I should go for next with analysing the written narratives. At this point, also my first attempt to create a core story revealed the shortcomings of the analysis process: "the main thing", affective reactions, were still very vaguely examined. Therefore, I had to consider of what method I should proceed with. A good narrative analysis goes beyond superficial scrutiny of a text, which is why I considered it to be useful to continue the analysis process with the combination of categorical-form mode of narrative analysis, introduced by Lieblich et al. (1998), and close reading. Also, it was a conscious choice to be as corporeally engaged with the data analysis process as possible, and to

reflect narrators' national park experiences at crowded times to my own experiences I had had from the past year. If I would have done something differently, it would have been a systematic practice of writing fieldnotes during my hikes in settings of crowded national parks to support interpretation processes in the phase of analysis. Also, e.g. the scholarly methods of walking could have been employed.

I had also a bit creative kind of an idea for refining and supporting my interpretations of affects present in narratives, which I would probably had tested if I would have more time. This idea was first inspired by Lieblich et al.'s (1998, p. 113-114) advice related to categorical-content analysis and the phase of sorting the materials into the categories, which could involve two or more judges "to create higher sensitivity to the text and its meaning to different readers". I would have liked to have this kind of higher sensitivity in terms of interpretation of affects, so I thought about a group activity in which I would have read passages of texts from the data to a small group of people who would then have written down, what kind of emotional or bodily reactions they would personally attach to each situation. Alternatively, the core story could have been utilised in this exercise, for example by reading it out loud for the group as a story for "imaginary journey". This way the group could potentially be more able to empathise with the situations described in the story, or to "imagine inhabiting the body of another" (Sparkes & Smith, 2012, pp. 69). After the exercise, I could have compared the written emotional and bodily reactions with how I had named the affects present in each situation. Of course, even though I would have had enough time for implementing this exercise, Covid-19 restrictions could still have potentially prevented this activity, at least face-to-face, but perhaps it can be utilised in some later research. Next, I will make more suggestions for future studies.

6.4 Ideas for further research

As far as I know, in addition to this Master's thesis study, affective atmosphere of a crowded national park – or affective atmospheres of national parks in general – have not been studied so far, which enables multiple approaches for further research. For example, affective atmosphere of a national park could be examined during a non-crowded time in order to compare how might crowded and non-crowded atmosphere differ with each other. Also, a study similar to this one could be conducted in national parks of some other country, or with a focus on people from certain cultures. This could result in understanding of how much visitors' nationality or culture may influence on dealing with

crowding in natural environments, and therefore potentially also on affective reactions, as nationality and cultural background have been studied to have a significant influence on how crowding is perceived (Jin et al., 2016, p. 977). In addition to these suggestions, it would be interesting to understand whether or not there are differences in affective atmospheres between different national parks in Finland, as my Master's thesis work collectively scrutinised all of them.

In their research, Tan (2021, p. 3) asked research participants to write about their feelings and thoughts on their mobile phones when being affected by a performance, as it was presumed to be an easier way for the participants to express their feelings than verbally telling about them in a context of unstructured interview. Also, in future research of affects and outdoor recreation in national park settings, participants could be asked to write about their feelings and ideas directly onsite, not afterwards. Further, I would suggest it to be a good idea to ask future research participants to take pictures along their way, and potentially write a narrative of the experience afterwards. Photographing could be a faster and therefore perhaps more convenient way to document the visit in comparison to writing notes onsite, walking constantly with a mobile phone in hands, which could disturb the outdoor experience.

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APPENDIX 1. The invitation to write in Finnish and in English

KIRJOITUSKUTSU SUOMEN KANSALLISPUISTOJEN KÄVIJÖILLE

/ INVITATION TO WRITE FOR VISITORS OF FINNISH NATIONAL PARKS

FI (in English below)

Oletko vieraillut ainakin yhdessä Suomen kansallispuistoista Covid-19-pandemian aikana, ja sattunut paikalle ruuhkaiseen aikaan? Haluaisitko kirjoittaa kokemuksestasi? Opiskelen matkailututkimusta Lapin yliopiston Tourism, Culture and International Management -maisteriohjelmassa ja pro gradussani tutkin kävijöiden ruuhkautumiskokemuksia Suomen kansallispuistoissa: millaisia nämä kokemukset ovat olleet ja millaisilta ne ovat kävijöistä tuntuneet.

Osallistuminen on vapaaehtoista, ja voit halutessasi perua osallistumisesi ilmoittamalla siitä minulle sähköpostitse. Voit kirjoittaa täysin vapaamuotoisesti ja niin pitkästi tai lyhyesti kuin haluat, joko suomeksi tai englanniksi. Halutessasi voit käyttää kirjoittamisen tueksi seuraavia kysymyksiä: Mikä innosti lähtemään kansallispuistoon? Millainen retkikokemuksesi oli? Millaisissa tilanteissa ruuhkautuminen ilmeni? Miltä se tuntui, miten siihen suhtauduit? Muokkasiko ruuhkautuminen jotenkin retkikokemustasi: teitkö jotain sen takia eri tavalla kuin ehkä muuten olisit tehnyt? Poikkesiko kokemus mahdollisista aiemmista kansallispuistokäynneistäsi?

Lähetäthän kertomuksesi alla olevaan sähköpostiosoitteeseen viimeistään 4.4.2021! Alkuperäiset kirjoitukset lukee ainoastaan allekirjoittanut. Tekstit käsitellään ja tutkimustulokset esitetään siten, ettei yksittäistä kirjoittajaa voi niistä tunnistaa. Alkuperäiset kirjoitukset säilytetään luottamuksellisesti tutkimuksen teon ajan, jonka jälkeen ne hävitetään. Pro gradu -työskentelyssä

noudatetaan Tutkimuseettisen neuvottelukunnan ohjeistusta hyvästä tieteellisestä käytännöstä. Vastaan mielelläni mahdollisiin tarkentaviin kysymyksiin aiheeseen liittyen.

Ystävällisin terveisin,

Henna Hirvonen

Lapin yliopisto

kansallispuistokokemukset@gmail.com

EN

Have you visited at least one of the national parks in Finland during the Covid-19 pandemic, and found it to be crowded? Would you like to write about this experience? I study tourism research in the Master's degree programme of Tourism, Culture and International Management at the University of Lapland. In my Master's thesis I am studying national park visitors' overcrowding experiences in Finnish national parks: how have these experiences been and how visitors have experienced them?

Participation is voluntary, and you can withdraw your participation by informing me via email. You can write as much or as little you want, and stories can be written in English or in Finnish. If you want, you can utilise these supporting questions in your writing: What inspired you to visit the national park? How was your outdoor experience like? In what kind of situations overcrowding occurred? How did it feel, how did you react to it? Did crowded environment somehow alter your outdoor experience: did it make you to do something differently than you had planned beforehand? Did the experience somehow differ from your possible previous national park visits?

Stories can be sent until 4 April 2021 to the email address below. Original narratives are only read by

me. Texts are processed and research results are presented in a way writers cannot be identified. Original writings will be confidentially stored until the Master's thesis study is completed, and then writings will be disposed. The Master's thesis process follows the principles for responsible conduct of research dictated by the Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity.

If you would like to have further information regarding the study and the use of the research data, please do not hesitate to email me!

Kind regards,

Henna Hirvonen

University of Lapland

kansallispuistokokemukset@gmail.com