



# Weather perceptions, holiday satisfaction and perceived attractiveness of domestic vacationing in The Netherlands



Jelmer Hendrik Gerard Jeuring

Department of Cultural Geography, Faculty of Spatial Sciences, University of Groningen, Landleven 1, Postbus 800, 9700 AV Groningen, The Netherlands

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Weather Salience (WxS) is studied in domestic camping context ( $n = 326$ ).
- WxS relates positively to attitudes toward domestic tourism and to holiday satisfaction.
- Lower WxS increases indifference about holiday weather.
- Higher levels of WxS enhance feelings of being away from home due to weather.
- Weather based differences between home and away are perceived on local level.

## ARTICLE INFO

### Article history:

Received 11 July 2016

Received in revised form

12 December 2016

Accepted 26 January 2017

### Keywords:

Domestic tourism  
Tourism climatology  
Satisfaction  
Camping  
Weather salience  
Destination image  
The Netherlands

## ABSTRACT

Despite variable and relatively cool summer weather, domestic vacations in countries around the North Sea are an important type of tourism. However, relations between weather and domestic tourism in this region remain understudied. A quantitative research ( $n = 326$ ) among domestic camping tourists in The Netherlands explores perceived personal significance of the weather, operationalized as Weather Salience (WxS), and its relation with attractiveness of domestic vacationing, adaptive touristic behavior and perceived differences between home and destination. Results show that WxS relates positively to attitudes toward domestic tourism and to holiday satisfaction. While higher levels of WxS enhance feelings of being away from home due to the weather, lower WxS increases indifference about holiday weather. Weather differences between home and destination are perceived but depend on region, accommodation type and WxS levels. Implications for (domestic) tourism climatology research are discussed and potential lessons for stakeholders employing tourism activities in temperate climates are provided.

© 2017 The Author. Published by Elsevier Ltd. This is an open access article under the CC BY license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

## 1. Introduction

Weather and climate have received considerable attention in tourism research in the last decade. They are major drivers for tourist travel (Becken & Wilson, 2013), shape tourist experiences (Jeuring & Peters, 2013) and are part of the imaginaries of destinations all over the world. However, the influence of weather conditions differs considerably per destination and type of touristic activities (Lohmann & Kaim, 1999). In other words, weather impacts are strongly context sensitive. Also, not all places are blessed with favorable climatic circumstances for tourism (Denstadli, Jacobsen, & Lohmann, 2011) and few destinations are able to consistently deliver on promises of blue sunny skies or white

powdered mountain peaks. At almost all tourist destinations, variations in the weather may, at times, result in sub-optimal, unfavorable and occasionally even dangerous weather conditions (Jeuring & Becken, 2013). Thus, tourism stakeholders need to prepare for and adapt to such weather conditions, either physically or mentally (de Freitas, 2003). In sum, this makes weather variability an important factor to consider for local tourism management stakeholders, for example in terms of providing bad weather facilities (Rauken, Kelman, Steen Jacobsen, & Hovelsrud, 2010), adequate and timely risk communication (Ayscue, Curtis, Hao, & Montz, 2015; Jeuring & Becken, 2013; Scott & Lemieux, 2010) or managing destination images (Hamilton & Lau, 2004).

A particular context pertains to domestic tourism taking place in temperate climates, such as northwest Europe. The weather in this region is highly variable and even in summer 'ideal' weather

E-mail address: [j.h.g.jeuring@rug.nl](mailto:j.h.g.jeuring@rug.nl).

conditions for tourism and recreational activities are far from guaranteed (Lohmann & Kaim, 1999; Matzarakis, de Freitas, & Scott, 2007). It is therefore that many people living there travel South, in search of warmer, drier and more comfortable weather, if only temporarily. Moreover, it has been stated that weather and climate in northern Europe is unfavorable for tourism (Nicholls & Amelung, 2015). Still, domestic tourism in countries around the North Sea is the main type of tourism in these areas, arguably opposing the hegemonic directions of push and pull factors found in many tourism contexts (Prayag & Ryan, 2010). While domestic tourism in northwest Europe is an understudied topic (Canavan, 2015; Jeuring & Haartsen, 2017), the role of the weather in the imaginaries, experiences, motivations and behavior of domestic tourists in this region has received even less attention. An understanding of the role of the weather in this context is of importance for unravelling motivations for domestic non-visitation (Gardiner, Grace, & King, 2015), enhancing tourist experiences in 'suboptimal' meteorological climates, and providing geographically and temporally tailored weather facilities in such regions (Lohmann & Kaim, 1999). Further, various studies mention that tourists from nearby are more likely to cancel a holiday or move on to another destination due to inclement weather or bad weather forecasts (Becken & Wilson, 2013; Denstadli et al., 2011), thus making tourism businesses that mainly depend on proximate tourists especially vulnerable to weather variability. Moreover, weather appears to play an important role in perceptions of geographical otherness and (un)familiarity (Jeuring & Peters, 2013). Since perceptions of otherness are among the core motivations for tourist behavior, weather as a factor affecting the level of perceived (dis)similarity between home and away should be studied in order to better understand domestic tourism experiences.

This exploratory study aims to contribute to tourism climatology research, by focusing on domestic tourism in a temperate climate context. Geographically situated in Friesland, a province in the North of The Netherlands, the objective is to get an understanding of (1). The personal significance of the weather for Dutch domestic camping tourists; (2). The relation between personal significance of the weather and beliefs, attitudes and intention towards domestic tourism; (3). The perceived impact of the weather on destination choice, satisfaction with, and adaptive behavior during domestic camping holidays, and; (4). Weather-based perceptions of difference between home and away.

## 2. Theory

### 2.1. Image and experience of domestic, near home tourism

Ever since the arrival of affordable air travel, domestic holidays increasingly seem to have become the less attractive little brother of international tourism. Being able to travel further has not only led to a wider range of destination options and increased global competitiveness between destinations, it arguably has also polarized destination images through associations with geographical distance between home and away (Jeuring & Haartsen, 2017; Larsen & Guiver, 2013). However, despite the successful framing of tourism geographies along dichotomies where distant places are exotic, different and attractive, and where the proximate is familiar, mundane and to be escaped (Salazar, 2012), domestic holidays are far from obsolete. The contemporary global share of domestic holidays is far bigger than international holidays (UNWTO., 2014), which justifies an interest in the motivations and experiences of domestic vacationers.

Domestic tourism often takes places in a context that is relatively near or even within people's familiar, everyday life environment, hereby opposing the hegemonic imaginary of tourism being

a business of travel, adventure and discovery. While this may seem unattractive for some, for others this appears a key motivation to spend a holiday near home: it is the experience of not having to do anything at all that many domestic vacationers seek and appreciate (Blichfeldt & Mikkelsen, 2013), providing a unique experience of freedom (Mikkelsen & Cohen, 2015). At the same time, motivations are very practical, ranging from financial constraints that sometimes even result in a staycation (Bourdeau, 2012, pp. 195–204; Hall, 2009), to personal limitations due to family circumstances, or a mere preference for familiarity (Jeuring & Haartsen, 2017). This does not mean however that what can be called 'proximity tourism' (Diaz-Soria & Llordés Coit, 2013) or 'microdomestic tourism' (Canavan, 2013) does not allow for experiences of out-there-ness (Elands & Lengkeek, 2012; Lengkeek, 2001), fulfilling needs to escape and a sense of being away from home. To the contrary, in people's busy daily lives, doing nothing (including not travelling) can feel like being in another place (Blichfeldt & Mikkelsen, 2013), while unfamiliarity and otherness can be experienced close to home in many ways (Szytniewski & Spierings, 2014). Similarly, research on domestic vacationers in The Netherlands found that a certain mindset is instrumental to be able to see otherness and difference within familiar environments (Jeuring & Haartsen, 2017). Further, research on domestic tourism in Australia highlights generational differences in beliefs and attitudes towards domestic holidays (Gardiner et al., 2015), while such differences were absent with respect to international holidays.

In short, absolute geographical distance and perceived subjective distance are related in non-linear ways (Larsen & Guiver, 2013). This makes the context of domestic tourism both interesting and complex, particularly since it plays out on a spatial scale level where touristic experiences are woven into people's everyday lives. In this proximity tourism context, consumption and production overlap and the development and management of destination imaginaries are co-created and a responsibility of many local stakeholders (Jeuring & Haartsen, 2016). A tailored research approach is therefore needed, in order to understand the underlying motivational processes, the experiences and socio-economic benefits found in the context of holidaying domestically and near home. A potentially important factor that has thus far hardly been a topic of research in the context of domestic tourism is the weather. Given the importance of weather conditions in destination image, tourist motivations, experiences and holiday behavior, and the variable characteristics of Northern European weather, an exploration of this nexus seems worthwhile and timely.

### 2.2. Weather and tourism

Relations between weather and tourism are multiple, complex and nuanced. People travel to destinations to experience particular weather conditions, and tourism businesses depend strongly on favorable weather circumstances, be they warm and sunny weather for beach tourism (Moreno, Amelung, & Santamarta, 2008; Rutty & Scott, 2016) or enough snow to cover ski slopes (Gorman-Murray, 2008; Hopkins, 2013; Scott, Gössling, & de Freitas, 2008; Williams, Dossa, & Hunt, 1997). As such, weather conditions both enable and inhibit tourist activity across space and time.

Research on tourism climatology (Matzarakis, de Freitas, & Scott, 2007; de Freitas, 2003) has become a well-established niche in the field of tourism studies. It can be categorized into three fields of interest (Gössling, Abegg, & Steiger, 2016): regional climate indices (Matzarakis, Mayer, & Iziomon, 1999; de Freitas, 1990), weather and climate induced tourism flows (Becken & Wilson, 2013; Falk, 2015; Rosselló-Nadal, Riera-Font, & Cárdenas, 2011), and weather preferences and behavior (Hübner & Gössling, 2012; Lohmann & Hübner, 2013; de Freitas, 2015). Most tourism

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/5108477>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/5108477>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)