

Conceptualizing “the Tourist”:
A critical review of UNWTO
definition

By Joey GHANEM

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Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction	3
Relevance of the subject and objectives	5
Personal motivation	6
Methodology.....	7
Structure of the Master Thesis	9
Chapter 2: Critical analysis of the universal definition of “the tourist” and contemporary revision of the concept	10
Evolution of the term “tourist”	11
Visitors, Tourists and Travelers	13
Movement outside the usual environment.....	15
Duration	20
Purpose.....	22
Leisure, Experience and Satisfaction	27
Chapter 3: Findings and Discussion	32
Future research	38
Bibliography	39

Chapter 1:

Introduction

Over the last decades, the tourism sector has witnessed a continuous and exponential growth. For the sixth consecutive year, the tourism industry has outpaced the growth of the global economy (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2017) and has been exceeding important economic sectors such as the oil exports, food productions and automobiles (UNWTO, 2016). Based on this reality, the tourism sector is a crucial industry to study and develop, due to its worldwide magnitude.

Tourism arises from the movement of millions of individuals which leads to the development of numerous and multifaceted activities, opportunities and approaches related to this industry (Page, 2014). Indeed, it involves various subjects such as psychology, sociology, economy, geography, etc. Tourism can thus be seen as “an umbrella concept” (Lundberg, Krishnamoorthy, & Stavenga, 1995, p. 4), in which multiple disciplines are linked. Due to this interdisciplinary and complex subject, defining tourism is critical, as the meaning of tourism might differ depending on the field of study (Mason, 2015).

To ground on this matter, the tourist can thus be considered as the key element of the tourism industry. It is the essence, the human element, of this field. Defining a tourist is an essential entry to study tourism (Bowen & Clarke, 2009; Candela & Figini, 2012; Leiper, 1979; McCabe, 2005; Netto, 2009): It is the heart and foundation of the tourism industry (Nash, 1981; Tribe, 2009). However, when looking deeply at the analysis of the tourist in different fields (psychology, sociology, anthropology, geography, economy, etc.), no unanimous definition is approved.

The present study aims at filling this gap by contributing to the debate of defining “the tourist”, by stepping into the different approaches covered in previous literature, as well as highlighting key concepts, such as the movement of people and the psychological subjective perceptions, that can play a crucial role in the contemporary conceptualization of the tourism industry.

1.1 Relevance of the subject and objectives

Even though the word “tourist” originated more than 200 years ago, as it has been said, there is no unanimous consensus when defining a tourist (S. L. J. Smith, 1989; Wang, 2000). Such issue in setting a definition is due to the complexity of the field. Some researchers have studied the tourist from a conceptual perspective. However, the attention given to the conceptual aspect of the term tourist has not been enough to create a unified and universal definition (Candela & Figini, 2012; Pearce, 2011). On the other hand, since tourism is a multidisciplinary subject that encloses many disciplines (geography, economy, psychology, sociology, etc.) and many perspectives (tourist perspective, destination perspective, business perspective, residents perspective, etc.), a single definition has not succeeded in enclosing the different facets of a tourist (Briones-Juarez, Tejeida-Padilla, & Morales-Matamoros, 2009). The most accepted definition applied in the tourism sector, is set by the World Tourism Organization and was put in action for technical and statistical purposes. Such definition does not take into account many fields and impacts of the tourism industry. Thus, it is affecting many researches that are non-economical, technical or statistical oriented. Having a pure statistical definition is not enough to conceptualize the tourist in the different fields of tourism. Thus, a gap is identified: the lack of a holistic, universal and unanimous definition of the term “tourist” for research purposes.

Based on this gap, the main objective of this research is to give a critical review of UNWTO official definition of a tourist, looking at the different key concepts that build up this definition. In order to achieve the main objective, this research will analyze the key components of the definition of a tourist: Movement outside the usual environment, Duration and Purpose; in contrast with identifying a more psychological and sociological approach to complete and conceptualize the tourist. The investigation will try to find common grounds and borders between these two approaches based on the gap found in the original definition of UNWTO, in order to try and come up with a suggestion of a new definition that takes into account the complementary key concepts.

1.2 Personal motivation

When I first started to think about the subject of my master thesis, my interest was focused on researching about the political corruption, regarding the urbanization of coastal destinations, and its effect on tourism from a sustainable perspective. However, as I was going deeper into my research and education, I noticed that my professors and colleagues did not really approve UNWTO definition regarding the term “tourist”. It suddenly hit me. Why do I want to research about some issues in tourism when the most basic word of the tourism industry is not clear? I realized that the definition set by UNWTO for statistical purpose, was actually considered the only definition when defining a tourist among myself and my peers. As I thought that this idea might be out of mind, I decided first to consult with my advisor Dani Blasco. He was surprised of such initiative as the subject is so vast and can be risky if not well framed. But he was also excited as the approach of such master thesis is challenging. From that time, we put on hold my first research and started to look at articles regarding this topic, and searching if such analysis had already been conducted.

To our surprise, the problematic of defining a tourist is present in many books and articles. But few are the authors that actually developed this issue. With the continuous help of my tutor, and after reading more than a hundred researches, we were finally able to delimitate the subject and work accordingly. Moreover, as I am thinking of continuing my education, such research can be interesting to analyze since there are limitless ways and approaches that can be developed in the future.

1.3 Methodology

Due to the nature of this research, the methodology used is based mainly on literature review. This paper is a non-empirical research done through a pure qualitative systematic approach. The data base search was conducted through Science Direct Elsevier, Scopus, Google Scholar and Universitat de Girona library catalogue. First, the search of articles was limited to finding direct articles related to the definition of a tourist from 2010 up to the date. However, due to the lack of analysis done on this subject during this timeframe, a broader investigation had to be conducted: the selected researches were directly and indirectly linked to the topic; both qualitative and quantitative researches have been taken into consideration and unrestricted of any time limitation.

The UNWTO International recommendation for Tourism Statistics is the main primary data relied on. In addition, the research is based on secondary data based on academic publications from books, journals and reports. The most cited journal is the Annals of Tourism Research with more than 15 selected articles. The articles were divided and selected based on the three main pillars of UNWTO definition. The most important components found in these articles and which will be developed on a later stage are: Movement outside the usual environment, Duration and Purpose. Upon analyzing these three components of UNWTO definition of a tourist, based on statistical purposes, other approaches such as psychological, sociological and anthropological were found. In order to create a holistic approach, psychological, sociological and anthropological studies had to be taken into consideration. These “new” researches were classified, and essential key components were extracted using a basic thematic analysis approach. The analysis consisted on identifying keywords that appeared repeatedly in the literature, and hierarchically grouping them into broader concepts, but without the use of computer software. It is important to highlight that this part of the research pretends to be only a first attempt in highlighting ‘new’ concepts. These complementary concepts identified revolve around: Leisure, Experience and Satisfaction.

Limitations

Tourism is an industry subject to continuous changes: destinations are evolving by adapting to the demand; consumer behavior is changing due to the rise of technology, the socio-cultural changes and the increase in mobility. However, the presence of individuals is the only concept that cannot be eliminated from the tourism industry. For this reason, and due to the lack of time and resources to conduct a broader study, this research revolves around the definition of “the tourist”. This does not mean that the other concepts are not as important. In fact, this analysis could have taken another approach by defining and developing the definitions set by UNWTO regarding the other components of the tourism industry (e.g. destinations, consumers, suppliers, etc.) along with the definition of a tourist in order to critically review the entire tourism industry as defined by UNWTO.

Also, this paper does not take all the different disciplines’ definitions of a tourist. An interesting approach could have focused on creating a comparison table of tourist definitions set by the multiple disciplines of the tourism industry (e.g. marketing, economy, consumer behavior etc.). This research could have studied the definition of a tourist based on how each discipline defines a tourist, in order to create a unanimous definition if possible. Moreover, this research takes into account other perspectives such as destinations and tourists perception, without being the base of this thesis. Indeed, it could also be interesting to see how the stakeholders in the tourism sector see ‘the tourist’. For example: How a destination defines a tourist? What is a tourist in the eyes of residents? How do tourists self-categorize themselves?

This investigation leaves apart the pejorative connotation given to “the tourist”. Due to the increasing success of tourism worldwide, tourism models that do not manage their carrying capacity properly have sometimes become a threat for the sustainability of destinations, as well as for the harmony in the cohabitation of tourists with residents and other economic and social activities. In the next years, there is a possibility of observing an increase in the number of researches looking at these issues. However, the present research has not analyzed the possible effects of such perspectives on the definition of a tourist.

1.4 Structure of the Master Thesis

This document is divided into three main chapters. The first chapter has already been developed and covered the introduction, relevance of the subject, objectives, motivation, methodology and the structure of this paper.

The second chapter is a literature review focused on questioning UNWTO definition. First, a quick overview of the history of the term “tourist” will be presented before introducing the difference between a tourist, a visitor and a traveler. Such differentiation was put in place to weight the tourism flow from an economical (statistical) perspective. UNWTO definition will be presented in order to identify three main components of the definition which will be analyzed separately: Movement outside the usual environment, Duration of the trip and the Purpose. Each category starts first with the UNWTO description and recommendations of the key component in question, before critically analyzing the official definition by studying other approaches. This assessment between the different approaches will lead to the identification of additional key concepts, based on a psychological and sociological approach, when defining a tourist: the Experience, Leisure and Satisfaction.

Finally the last chapter revolves around the main findings of this study along with a suggested new definition that merges both traditional and complementary key components. The proposed updated definition is of course subject to debate and might engender future researches

Chapter 2:

Critical analysis of the universal definition of “the tourist” and a contemporary revision of the concept

This chapter will be divided into three main parts. First, a quick overview of the evolution of the term tourist will be presented. The second part will discuss the difference between visitor, tourist and excursionist before developing UNWTO definition regarding the tourist. This section will identify three main key components: Outside the usual environment, Duration and Purpose. These three main criteria will be explained and developed separately by first presenting the UNWTO approach before critically analyzing it. Finally, the last part will suggest new essential and complementary key elements of the tourist definition, based on a more psychological and sociological approach. These approaches will lead to find the “Experience, Satisfaction and Leisure” as essential components when creating a holistic perception of a tourist.

2.1 Evolution of the term “Tourist”

It is believed that the term “tourist” was probably first used by Stendhal (1838) in “Mémoires d’un touriste” (McCabe, 2009). One of the earliest definitions defines tourists as “people on temporary trips away from home who also spend money derived from their home area and not from the place being visited” (Ogilvie, 1933; Shaw & Williams, 1994, p. 68).

In 1937, the League of Nations considered a tourist an individual “who travels for a period of 24 hours or more in a country other than that in which he usually resides” (Shaw & Williams, 1994, p. 66). This early definition revolves around international tourists and included a time frame limitation to a tourist by having to stay an overnight. Also, this definition implies that all travelers are tourists due to the lack of purpose in the definition. Conversely, students, residents, people travelling to work, commuters and travelers that do not stay in a country for more than 24 hours were excluded from this definition.

In 1950 the International Union of Official Travel Organizations (now UNWTO) modified the previous definition by including students staying for less than a year as tourists.

A decade later, and at the Conference of International Travel and Tourism held in 1963, UOTO introduced a differentiation between a visitor and a tourist depending on the minimum length of stay. A visitor is to spend less than 24 hours whereas a tourist more than 24 hours.

In 1967, and upon an examination of this last definition, the United National Statistical Commission proposed to distinguish between these two types of travelers depending on the overnight stay (S. L. J. Smith, 1989).

In 1968, the International Union of Official Travel Organizations (now UNWTO) based the definition of a tourist on the visitor: “a visitor is defines as the person who travels to a country other than that of residence, for any reason other than paid work” (Candela & Figini, 2012, p. 25). Such definition introduces the motivation which excluded any purpose including any kind of remuneration.

In 1981, the WTO published a “Technical Handbook on the Collection and Presentation of Domestic and International Tourism Statistics” as a result of an international conference held in 1976. UNWTO suggested that an international visitor is “an individual entering a country that is not his usual place of residence”. This definition excludes migrants or seeking employment including people depending on them, diplomat or militants, refugees, nomad, border workers or going for more than a year.

The purpose of the trip has been developed to include recreation, medical treatment, religious, family, sports, conferences, studies and transit to another country. Tourists are thus defined as visitors staying overnight consequently excluding excursionists (S. L. J. Smith, 1989).

2.2 Visitors, tourists and travelers

From then, many authors in different fields of the tourism industry, define a tourist based on UNWTO definition (Pearce, 2011; Shaw & Williams, 1994; Suvantola, 2002). The part below will start by defining the tourist based on UNWTO definition. Such definition will require presenting the differences between visitors, tourists and travelers that were put in place to weight the tourism industry, in order to understand and discuss the official definition of UNWTO of a tourist by analyzing the key concepts that enclose this definition.

According to the definition of UNWTO “a visitor (domestic, inbound or outbound) is classified as a tourist, if his/her trip includes an overnight stay” (UNWTO, 2014, p. 12).

At first sight, the definition appears to be simple and not complex, which might lead to a misinterpretation of the word “tourist” if not considered properly. In order to understand this definition, it is essential to look at the major components of this definition. The first key component playing a major role in understanding what is a tourist, is the word “visitor”. This term needs to be defined in order to be able to develop and understand the definition of a “tourist” deeply. The second critical key component revolves around an overnight stay, considering that otherwise the tourist will be considered as a same-day visitor and not a tourist.

The term “visitor” includes both tourists and “same-day visitors”. Such differentiation was put into action for pure statistical purposes (Suvantola, 2002). A visitor is defined as “a traveler taking a trip to a main destination outside his/her usual environment, for less than a year, for any main purpose (business, leisure or other personal purpose) other than to be employed by a resident entity in the country or place visited. A visitor (domestic, inbound or outbound) is classified as a tourist (or overnight visitor), if his/her trip includes an overnight stay, or as a same-day visitor (or excursionist) otherwise” (UNWTO, 2014, p. 13).

Such definition is much more complex and developed than the definition of a tourist. It involves three main criteria in order to be considered a tourist: Movement outside the

usual environment, Duration and Purpose. These key components have to be taken into consideration since to be a tourist, it is crucial to be a visitor first.

These entries were added for technical purpose thus, data from visitors, tourists and travelers are collected and analyzed separately. A traveler is considered to enclose more than a visitor, since a traveler considers all movements done by an individual regardless the purpose and the duration of the trip. In this case, travelers are any person that moves outside a country (Bowen & Clarke, 2009). Suvantola (2002) suggests defining the tourist from a qualitative approach and dividing them into two categories: the conventional and non-conventional tourists also known as tourists in opposition to travelers. The difference between a tourist and a traveler is, in this case, not based on the purpose of the trip as UNWTO states, but on the behavior and motivation of the tourist (Wang, 2000).

As it has been mentioned, the division between visitor, tourist and excursionist was put in place for statistical purposes. Burkat and Medlik (1981) put key measurements to study tourist's statistics. The first measurement revolves around weighting the volume of tourism such as the number of night spent or the number of trips done (Ogilvie, 1933; Shaw & Williams, 1994). A “tourist” is then defined by statistical organizations to control the flow of tourism (Shaw & Williams, 1994). While other believe that having a wide definition help register a higher number of tourist thus raising the tourist statistics to gain more funds (Pearce, 2011).

The second measurement focuses on the value by stressing on the monetary aspect of the tourism industry. Expenditures of a tourist and the amount spent in different categories (Burkart & Medlik, 1981; Cooper, Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert, & Wanhill, 2008), is measured for economical purposes. Tourists are seen as exports and imports units that need to be monitored in order to enhance the economy (Bowen & Clarke, 2009). Stressing on that thought, Lickorish and Jenkins (1999) consider tourism as mainly an economical concept, tourists are injecting at the destination money previously earned. Defining tourists is important to be able to calculate expenditures at a destination. Nearly a century ago, Ogilvie (1933; after Shaw & Williams, 1994, p. 68) was already defining the tourist from an economical perspective: “people on temporary trips away

from home who also spend money derived from their home area and not from the place being visited”.

Finally, the last key measurement considers the profile and measures two different aspects: the profile of the tourist and the profile of the trip. The profile of the tourist focuses fully on the tourist as an individual taking into account aspects such as gender, age, occupation, etc. whereas the second aspect revolves around the profile of the trip in which the motivation, loyalty, purpose of the trip are considered. Such measurement has for aim to capture the specific segments of tourists with similar profile characteristics (Bowen & Clarke, 2009).

From an economical and technical perspective, tourists are important to be defined. They are the people that are spending at a destination. Being able to weight tourism from volume, value and profile is essential to monitor the flow of tourism. However, the International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics has for main focuses visitors and travelers, even though the key component of the tourism industry revolves around the tourist: A tourist is simply considered an overnight visitor.

As mentioned previously, three main aspects are extracted from the official definition of a visitor and will be discussed in the coming parts in order to understand what a tourist is. These components revolve around: a Movement outside the usual environment, the Duration of the trip between one night and up to a year and the Purpose of the visit.

2.2.1 Movement outside the usual environment

As stated previously, the first key concept when defining a tourist revolves around a movement outside the usual environment. In order to study this component, it is essential to understand the categories of the movement in the tourism industry before analyzing the usual environment.

First of all, when analyzing the movement, tourism is divided into three forms: domestic, inbound and outbound (United Nations Statistical Division, 2010). Tourists are considered inbound tourists when individuals are visiting a country in which they do

not reside. Whereas, they are considered outbound tourists when they are residing in the country of reference and leaving it to visit another one. In other terms, if a relation is made between these two terms and economy, outbound tourists can be considered as exports whereas inbound tourists imports. The third form of tourists is the domestic tourists. This form of tourism covers the resident’s tourist activities within the country of reference.

These three forms of tourists are also combined by organizations in order to come up with three additional classifications: internal, national and international tourism (Lickorish & Jenkins, 1999). The first aspect known as internal tourists encloses inbound and domestic tourists since they are all moving within a destination thus contributing to the economy of a destination. The second aspect ponders national tourists and covers domestic and outbound tourists. This aspect reflects the resident’s movement within a destination, which is helpful for authorities to control movements. The last aspect revolves around international tourists which combines both inbound and outbound tourists.

When looking into such classifications from a tourist perspective, a tourist will be an inbound tourist for the country of destination while being considered an outbound tourist in their country of residence. Such differentiation is interesting from a statistical perspective. However, it is meaningless from the perspective of the tourist to be classified as such, since a tourist will be at the same time an inbound and outbound tourist: inbound from the destination perspective and outbound from the country of residence.

Another categorization divides tourists between international tourists and domestic tourists (Bowen & Clarke, 2009, p. 4). The major component differentiating these two classifications is the country of residence: An international tourist will be spending a night outside its usual environment in his/her country of residence. Unlike a domestic tourist that will be spending the night outside his/her usual environment but inside his/her country of residence.

On the other hand, the usual environment is considered “a key concept in tourism, [and] is defined as the geographical area (though not necessarily a contiguous one) within which an individual conducts his/her regular life routines” (UNWTO, 2014, p. 13). This concept was introduced in order to exclude travelers travelling regularly between their place of residence and the destination of the trip. Such entry includes people who repeatedly travel for work, study, visiting places, healthcare, etc.

Thus, the usual environment encloses the place of residence, the place of work, the place of study and any place visited regularly. It is recommended to delineate the usual environment considering four criteria: frequency of the trip, duration of the trip, the crossing of administrative or national borders and the distance from the place of residence (United Nations Statistical Division, 2010).

Tourists need to be displaced from their home and are not considered tourists in their usual environment (Briones-Juarez et al., 2009). On such note, UNWTO see the importance of setting a fixed distance to travel in order to define the limit of the usual environment. For international tourists, crossing of an administrative border is easier to frame than for a domestic tourist. In accordance with such limitation regarding domestic tourists, many authors approve the UNWTO recommendation of setting a fixed distance to be considered a tourist. In addition to the conformity of the tourist definition regarding the temporal aspect and the purpose, a traveler has to travel 160 km in order to be considered a tourist (Bowen & Clarke, 2009; Lickorish & Jenkins, 1999).

However, many countries and organizations do not take the distance set by UNWTO into consideration, and rather have different measurements within the same country. For example, in the United States, the National Tourism Resources Review Commission (1973) set a distance of a minimum of 80 km per trip in the United States, regardless the length of the trip. Whereas the US Census Bureau (1978) and the US Travel Data Center (from S. L. J. Smith, 1989) conform to a minimum distance of 160 km per trip. On the other hand, a vast number of states rely also on travelling at least 80 km. However they do not differentiate between tourists and visitors regarding domestic tourism. Regarding Canada, the distance set is 80 km. However, Ontario suggests a minimum

distance of 40 km per trip (Ontario Travel Survey, 1983) in contrast to British Columbia which does not set a geographical limitation.

Furthermore, from an academic perspective, there is no unanimous consensus as well regarding the fixed distance. Smith (1999) suggests a distance of 40 km whereas Yu, Kim, Chen and Schwartz (2012) recommend a distance of 120km. Rogers (2002) suggests to use the same criteria of international tourists thus taking into consideration the distance, frequency of visiting the place and finally the place in which people experience their day-to-day activities. Many studies believe that the distance traveled is important to define a tourist, but the complexity of setting a universal understanding is leading to not taking into consideration a large number of tourists when studying tourism (Canadian Tourism Commission, Instituto de estudios turisticos, & World Tourism Organization, 2003; Masberg, 1998).

According to Lee (1976), individuals are the ones that delimitate their usual environment, depending on their perception, their daily activities and social interactions. Also, many studies are studying the relation between geography and social factors (Pearce, 2012), which leads to define the usual environment as a place in which an individual relates to others and has a feeling of belonging (Nielsen, 1999; White & White, 2007). Besides, and from a theoretical and socio-geographical point of view, the “usual environment” is considered to be relative to each tourist and depend on the perception of the tourist vis-à-vis their own “usual environment”. Hence, a distance cannot be delimited (Govers et al., 2008), or even necessary to take into consideration when defining a tourist (Gunn, 1988).

Many authors go even further by stating that it is not essential to move away in order to feel and experience a place as a tourist. Urry and Larsen (2011) argues that a tourist can adopt a tourist gaze: an individual has the potential to be in a state of mind of a tourist while considering him/herself a tourist even in his/her usual environment. Moreover, Diaz-Soria (2017) found that traditional and proximity tourists have the same curiosity in guided tours. She states that residents can become tourists, also known as “proximity tourists”, by choice, when a person sets a psychological limit to the daily routines. She argues that the usual environment is a subjective phenomenon in which individuals are

the main actors in setting a geographical fictive distance. In this case, the tourist always searches and seeks a new experience. Proximity tourism is becoming more popular, even though the places are not necessarily far or unfamiliar, individuals are the ones delimitating their usual environment by a very personal, subjective, approach. This type of tourist has common ground with traditional tourists: they are all seeking for an “experience”.

Thus the usual environment can be defined as a subjective concept; this concept erases the necessity of setting a physical geographical distance.

The concept of usual environment is becoming even more complex with the development of mobility. With a psychological displacement known as tourist gaze individuals are feeling tourists in their usual environment (Urry, 2000). Nowadays, it is important to link tourism and mobility. Mobility being considered as a displacement in time and space, also known as “spatialization of time and temporalization of space” (Govers et al., 2008; Hannam, 2009, p. 102). With the opening of many borders, the mobility of tourists is becoming easier since between many countries the visitors are not being registered anymore. The Schengen Agreement in Europe, is one of the cases in which tourist data are failed to be recorded due to the opening of borders (Williams & Lew, 2014).

As a conclusion, classifying a tourist is useful only from a statistical approach. Indeed, tourists as individuals do not mind the form of tourism movement they belong to. Moreover, destinations see tourists as clients, classifying tourists as domestic or international, thus inbound or outbound tourists do not really matter.

On the other hand, even though UNWTO recommends setting a fix distance of 160 km when delineating the usual environment, there is no unanimous consensus regarding that matter. An important number of tourists are being left apart with such limitation. Nowadays, being transposed to a new environment is indeed important to be considered a tourist. However, the displacement from the daily routine is done individually and is relative to each person. With the rise of proximity tourism, the concept of a physical usual environment is at risk since more and more individuals are displacing themselves

without necessarily travelling 160 km. The tourist gaze is also leading individuals to consider themselves as tourists even in their own usual environment.

In a nutshell, the usual environment is a subjective concept that cannot be limited by a set distance. Instead, it can be considered as a psychological displacement of the usual environment, without necessarily including a geographical displacement.

2.2.2 Duration

After analyzing the first component of the criteria that makes a traveler a visitor (movement outside the usual environment); the second criterion will be developed: the Duration.

As stated previously, and according to UNWTO definition, a tourist (also known as overnight visitor) is a visitor who spends an overnight at the destination (UNWTO, 2014). On such note, the temporal aspect is fundamental when defining a tourist since it is the key element which identifies a tourist as such.

Even though the concept of duration was already introduced by the League of Nations definition from 1937, it is not up until 1963 that the difference between a visitor and a tourist was made (Candela & Figini, 2012; Shaw & Williams, 1994). This concept has been introduced in 1963 by the International Union of Official Travel Organizations through the UN Conference on International Travel and Tourism, mainly to differentiate between a visitor and a tourist, again for statistical purpose. A visitor will only be considered a tourist upon fulfilling the minimum length of stay, in other words, the 24 hours clause also known as overnight stay (Bowen & Clarke, 2009). On the other hand, UNWTO states that individuals defined as tourists are restricted regarding the length of stay: the stay cannot exceed 12 consecutive months (United Nations Statistical Division, 2010). Many authors work on such limitation by considering a tourist a visitor that travels between 24 hours to less than a year (Bowen & Clarke, 2009; Cohen, 1974; Lickorish & Jenkins, 1999).

Lickorish and Jenkins (1999) introduces the duration of the trip as the “duration of not

being” in the usual environment. In this context, by changing the place of reference (the destination) to the country of residence is interesting. Even though they agree on the time frame put by UNWTO, using such concept can actually be developed: A tourist will thus be absent from his/her usual environment regardless if they spend a day or a year at the destination. On such note, a person travelling to several destinations (e.g. tour or cruise) will still be considered a tourist regardless the time spent at a destination.

Moreover, some authors analyzed the limitations of the temporal dimension from the perspective of a tourist self-categorization and the perspective of destinations. Yu, Kim, Chen and Schwartz wrote a very relevant paper titled “Are you a tourist” (2012), in which they concluded that tourists do not generally associate the length of stay to their states as a tourist. On the other hand, Masberg’s analysis from a Convention and Visitors Bureau point of view, negatively correlates time as a major aspect when defining a tourist (Masberg, 1998). Indeed, destinations consider individuals as tourists regardless of the length of stay (Pearce, 2011).

In addition, other studies do not relate to such limitations and do not consider the length of stay as a key element when defining a tourist (Gunn, 1988; Shaw & Williams, 1994; Yu et al., 2012). For instance, the temporal aspect is studied as a concept by studying the use of the time instead of framing it. Shaw and William (1994) consider the time factor as the time during which an individual uses it for self-improvement and enjoyment. Nowadays, many individuals are being able to merge several purposes together and join business with leisure. Such fusion is leading to the creation of life-time or long-term tourists that stay at a destination until they get bored, need a change, or run out of money.

The changes in consumer behaviors, with the rise of mobility and internet, are allowing people to work where they want and not necessarily in their country of residence. This entry might question the maximum time frame of being a tourist, of up to a year, as individuals can stay for a limitless time and still feel as tourists. Moreover, whenever a tourist adopts a tourist gaze, the time frame is not important anymore to delineate a tourist. To add on this thought, residents can have the same curiosity as proximity

tourists (Diaz-Soria, 2017), thus they can put themselves in a psychological mindset of a tourist even if they are residing in the place for more than a year.

In summary, according to UNWTO the temporal aspect is crucial in order to differentiate between a tourist and a visitor. However, this concept is critical since framing the length of stay is not directly correlated with the psychology of being a tourist. Such framework, between 24 hours and a year, is only useful for technical and statistical purposes. In fact, it can be more interesting to study the use of time in the tourism industry instead of generalizing such concept.

Tourists and destinations do not see the importance of categorizing the length of stay. For statistical purposes it is useful to set a margin in order to be able to quantitatively define a tourist. However, from a more psychological approach, residents are being able to transpose their mindset in their usual environment and feel like tourists. As said previously, nowadays with the rise of mobility and the internet connections, individuals can become life-time tourists while still being able to work.

To close on this matter, the temporal framework set by UNWTO might not be as essential and necessary when studying and defining a tourist, beyond the statistical approach. Time is a blurred concept that tourists use in a very subjective way and is relative to each individual.

2.2.3 Purpose

After discussing the first two criteria to define a tourist from the movement and the temporal basis, it is important to look at the third main key component of this definition: the purpose.

According to UNWTO, the purpose of the trip of a tourist should fall into one of the two main purposes which are taking a trip for personal purpose or business (United Nations Statistical Division, 2010).

Regarding the personal purpose, it includes a wide range of sub-categories stated below.

1. Holidays, leisure and recreation: This purpose is broad and includes activities such as sport, sightseeing, cultural holidays, wellness treatment...
2. Visiting friends and relatives: It includes attending family or friendly events in addition to simple visits.
3. Education and training: This category includes students and individuals that are travelling to study. These individuals are considered tourists as long as they do not stay for more than a year.
4. Health and medical care: It includes treatments in general such as plastic surgery or other.
5. Religion/and pilgrimage.
6. Shopping: This category include buying goods for personal or souvenir use.
7. Transit: Include people that have no purpose to visit the place apart from being on the move.
8. Other: Includes other activities such as volunteering.

On the other hand, the second main purpose, the business purpose, is defined as any trip done for business or professional purpose as long as they are not remunerated from the host country. It also includes diplomats, and military participating in non-governmental missions. Such purpose excludes travelers that are travelling to be employed for less than a year since any type of remuneration originated from the trip exclude the traveler from being a tourist.

Many authors based their studies on the purposes set by UNWTO, and consider such aspect an essential principle when defining a tourist. They believe that the purpose is crucial to dissociate between tourists and non-tourists (Bowen & Clarke, 2009; Pearce, 2011). Some authors give importance to an additional component to define a tourist: a tourists should be practicing a voluntary activity (Beirman, 2003; Bowen & Clarke, 2009; Cohen, 2004). Cohen (1974) states that by stressing on stating a tourist engender a voluntary activity will help in removing refugees and other type of travelers.

On the other hand, other researches question the purposes set by UNWTO. For example, the frequency of visit to a destination has an effect on the self-categorization of

a tourist from their own perspective (Yu et al., 2012). Tourists do not self-categorize themselves as tourists when frequently visiting a place: the more a person travel to a place the less they consider themselves tourists which are in accordance with UNWTO recommendations. Yet, Pearce (2012) do not agree with such findings, he argues that repeated travelers are coming to the destination due to their amazement of the destination and to experience it all over again. In addition, in the article “Are you a tourist”, the authors found out that tourists visiting friends and relatives, or on business trips do not consider themselves tourists (Yu et al., 2012).

The explanatory notes also include any student travelling for a short-term education program. Students studying abroad for less than a year are considered tourists even with obtaining a student visa. It is true that regarding the tourist definition they are having a movement outside their usual environment for less than a year. However, in the case of students, the purpose of the visit does not fit completely UNWTO motive of visits and these students are actually acquiring a new usual environment. As soon as they move out of their country of residence they are indeed visitors, but also they are paying tuition, apartments, residency fees, insurance and many other fees at the destination. Can they still be considered tourists? To ground on that matter, within 3 month this individual will have to get a residential permit that will allow the student to stay in the country and become a resident for a specific period. In this case, a short-term student cannot be considered a tourist as he/she is considered by the authority a resident. The country of study will become their place of work, their place of living, and surrounded with their new social environment. The tourist definition states clearly that the traveler should be outside its usual environment which for a student this “outside the usual environment” will become his/her temporary environment.

Boztug, Babakhani, Laesser and Dolnicar (2015) argue that tourists should not be generalized and segmented. On the contrary, more tourists are becoming hybrid tourists and might experience a change in their motivations during their trip. Purposes can be joined together with the deregulation of the market. Tourism is a very complex industry specially with the changes in the contemporary tourist behaviors, resulting from the use

of the internet, the change of the tourism structure, the change in taking shorter vacations and finally the opening of borders (McCabe, 2009).

For example some individual are merging two purposes such as leisure and business in order to become tourists and be able to visit places they could not afford otherwise.

The notion of a hybrid tourist is very important as it might put at risk some main elements used by some scholars. For instance, the absence of remuneration is considered crucial by some authors to define a tourist (Bowen & Clarke, 2009; Burkart & Medlik; Cooper, Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert, & Wanhill, 2008; Lickorish & Jenkins, 1999). However, remuneration might be only a motive of the trip and not the only purpose. With the rise of mobility, more individuals are having the option to choose where to live and work thus joining work and recreational activities together (Ascher, 2000; Diaz-Soria, 2017). Such concepts can introduce a life-time tourist of which the visitor might have to continue on working even though his/her purpose is tourism. Also, some individuals are seeking part-time or seasonal jobs in order to afford a trip. The case of London is a great example in which some individuals seek a job in order to afford to visit London and merge vacations with work (McCabe, 2009). Such changes illustrate how the tourism industry is being transformed by contemporary consumer behaviors.

In addition, the explanatory notes of UNWTO states that “if the payment received is only incidental to the trip, the traveler would still be a visitor” (United Nations Statistical Division, 2010) which is in utmost contradiction with categorizing students as tourists: Students on a scholarship are sometimes being remunerated by the host country itself. On the other hand, more and more academic programs, such as master’s degree, run for less than a year. The student’s main purpose is the completion of the study while integrating the community, this implies that a student is not actually doing tourism thus cannot be considered as a tourist.

In a nutshell, having a wide range of subcategories in purposes is leading to a misinterpretation of a tourist. Such critical term cannot be simply classified into categories without taking into account the ongoing changes in the tourism industry (use of the internet, changes of the tourism structure, changes in taking shorter vacations,

opening of borders). With the rise of mobility and hybrid tourism, tourists are seeking more than one purpose at the time even if the remuneration is an important part. The case of London is a very good example of such entry. In addition, students are still considered as tourists even though they are changing their environment.

Furthermore, the perspective of the tourist is left apart in the UNWTO definition. Tourists do not consider themselves as such when visiting friend and family and travelling on business. In summary, with the mutations in the contemporary tourism behavior and the introduction of many concepts from hybrid tourism, mobility and so on, the purpose is not anymore the principal concept when defining a tourist, but it is more about how a person feel as a tourist, thus, the motivation for being (or not) a tourist.

2.3 Leisure, Experience, Satisfaction

After studying the three main components that make a visitor be considered a tourist from the movement outside the usual environment, duration and purpose; it is clear that this universal definition is not unanimous and complete.

The official definition of UNWTO covers three main dimensions from temporal, spatial and situational, which are considered to be all behavioral and situational elements useful for statistical and technical perspective (Wang, 2000). According to Leiper (1979), since the 30s, industries wanted to delimitate a tourist in order to differentiate between them and other travelers for statistical and technical reasons. The three key components have been put in accordance to be able to weight the flow of tourism. However, literature has already shown that many perspectives have been left apart.

As said previously, the displacement from the daily routine is relative to each individual and can be done without setting a fix distance. Also, with the rise of mobility and the changes in consumer behaviors, tourists can now experience a gaze which allow them to feel tourists even in proximity or own environment.

Moreover, mobility is leading tourists to settle at a destination and join purposes to become life-time tourists. In addition, tourists are joining several purposes in order to be able to visit expensive places. Framing the time and the usual environment of a tourist is also unappealing neither for destinations nor for tourists. Nowadays, even the purpose of the trip does not necessarily define a tourist. It is more about how a person uses the time for satisfaction and enjoyment.

Delineating a fix distance, framing a trip from the duration of the stay and classifying the purpose are not enough to conceptualize the term tourist. Indeed, these aspects are not taking the psychological and anthropological issues into consideration.

The lack of a psychological and sociological aspect in UNWTO definition is visible in UNWTO definition. The concepts found when describing a tourist from a more psychological point of view revolve around creating an experience, enjoying leisure and being satisfied. These three aspects are key components when trying to define a tourist from a non technical and statistical approach. Looking deeper into a more psychological,

sociological and anthropological approach helps to create a holistic concept of the term “tourist”.

Some authors believe that defining a tourist varies depending on the field of study. It is suggested to specify the type of tourist definition to be used, depending on the type of analysis to be conducted (Galani-Moutafi, 2000; Nash, 2001). For example, Wang (2000) in “Tourism and Modernity” adopt two different definitions in his book depending on two perspectives: When talking about the demand, a motivational or academic definition is used excluding the business tourist or any person travelling for instrumental purpose. Thus a tourist is considered “a person who voluntarily travels away from home for non-instrumental purposes such as recreation or pleasure” (Wang, 2000, p. 6); on the other hand, when discussing from a production point of view, a tourist is defined as “travelers who are on the move for instrumental purposes such as business and so on, as well as those who are exclusively on trips for leisure, recreation, and pleasure” (Wang, 2000, p. 6). Research should be focusing on the act of being a tourist rather than the characteristics that make one a tourist (Wang, 1999).

Tourism is sometimes linked directly to recreation and leisure activities. Thus, a tourist is seen as “a person at leisure who also travel” (Nash, 1981) or as a “temporarily leisured person who voluntarily visits a place away from home for the purpose of experiencing a change” (V. L. Smith, 1989, p. 1). Cohen (1974) introduced the motivational factor into the definition of a tourist. A tourist will be “voluntary, temporary traveler, travelling in the expectation of pleasure from the novelty and change experienced on a relatively long and non-recurrent round trip” (Cohen, 1974, p. 533). All the definitions based on leisure, include major elements such as recreation, trip, movement, time and leisure (Kelly, 1985).

In addition to leisure and recreation, other key elements appear in many researches such as a sense of satisfaction, freedom, meaning and experience.

Many authors relate tourism to a sense of satisfaction. Tourists are seen as individuals that are in quest of satisfaction and fulfillment (Kelly, 1985). Tourist are in pursue of experiencing a tourist moment. A tourist moment being defined as “a spontaneous

experience of self-discovery and communal belonging” (HomCary, 2004, p. 64). In other words tourists are seeking for a “temporary fulfillment to the search for authenticity” (HomCary, 2004, p. 66). McCabe (2009) finds different types of tourists: recreational tourists are trying to escape from the stress created by the center; diversionary tourists search for creating meanings; experiential tourists search for a meaning outside their usual environments; and finally existential tourists are searching for an alternative by embracing the world. The common grounds between these types of tourists are the search for meaning and creating an experience.

Moreover, tourism can be seen as a set of psychological and motivational aspects taking place in a spatial phenomenon. These aspects circle around the “otherness” of “elsewhereness” from the familiar places (Minca, 2000). Some research states that in order for a tourist to feel content and fulfilled, they should feel a sense of familiarity in their “environmental bubble” also known as tourist space (Cohen, 1972; Suvantola, 2002). The contact a tourist has in a destination is an important characteristic to affect the touristic experience. Even though tourists become a part of a space for a temporary time, they still need to some extent to feel familiar in order to be able to enjoy their experience. Once again the term experience is recurrent. Leisure is sometimes seen as a state in which an individual is free from obligations. Fundamental obligations being defined as responsibilities that one cannot escape such as employment, study, family and community responsibilities. In other terms, a tourist is a person partially free of obligations as it is impossible to achieve a fullness of freedom in such sense (Dumazedier, 1968; Nash, 1981). A tourist can thus be seen as a person of leisure who is free of primary obligations for a temporary time.

Shaw and Williams (1994) define a tourist depending on how individuals use their time for self-improvement and enjoyment. These definitions relate the term “tourist” to enjoyment and experience. Tourists can thus be seen as persons that use a time off to enjoy themselves outside their daily routine seeking for self-satisfaction, enjoyment and creating experience.

Cohen (1974) considered a tourist as a “voluntary, temporary traveler, travelling in the expectation of pleasure from the novelty and change experienced on a relatively long

and non-recurrent round trip” (Cohen, 1974, p. 533). In order to be considered a tourist, the individual has to seize the “tourist moment”. Tourists are seeking for experiences, even though the experience cannot be generalized as each individual build his/her own experience (McCabe, 2009).

According to Suvantola (2002) in the book “Tourist’s experience of place”, there are two main elements to define a travel experience which revolves around the experience of the new place along with a new perspective of home. One of the main motivations when travelling is the search of the “Other” which gives a new perspective to the day-to-day experience. The experience of the “Other” from a psychological point of view is mainly based on the socio-cultural experience of the tourist, the tourist destination or space along with a cultural confusion. The tourist does not really experience the “Other” objectively but depending more on their background and expectations (Suvantola, 2002).

Other authors suggest defining tourist according to their behaviors and not delimitating by a definition. The set of behavior an individual exhibits will label a tourist. Pearce (2011, p. 6) suggests that the prototype of domestic tourist is a person “being somewhere different, not being paid for the experience, seeking to fulfill a pattern of predominantly leisure-related motives and participating in the experience for shorter time periods”. Pearce included twice the term “experience” in his definition which shows the importance of such term when defining a tourist.

In conclusion, it is essential to take a more psychological approach when trying to define a tourist. UNWTO definition lacks from this aspect which is the main reason why the definition of the term “tourist” cannot be applied in all disciplines.

When looking closer at the act of being a tourist, it is usually related to leisure and recreation. Indeed, a person doing tourism is in a state of mind of seeking an experience, far from obligations. Such entry shows that tourists are searching for a satisfaction in their experience. They are searching for a temporary fulfillment when searching for a new experience. The satisfaction can be seen as creating a meaning. Tourists are seeking to find a different experience from their daily routine: they are

creating their own experience. Tourists cannot be seen as consumer of tourism but as the actual creators of their own experiences (Diaz-Soria, 2017). One of the main principles of tourism is seeking for a new experience (Netto, 2009), thus it can be suggested that without experiences there is no need for tourism. On such note, if a tourist is not having an experience then he/she is still in his/her own usual environment.

A tourist can be seen as a person who is using his/her time away from obligations, to create an experience and a meaning far from his/her daily routine. These components from experience, meaning, satisfaction and fulfillment are essential to be taken into consideration when conceptualizing the “new” tourist. These complementary elements need to be taking into consideration in order to suggest a holistic new definition of the term “tourist”. Following the findings of this research developed in chapter 3, a first draft definition will be suggested, enclosing the traditional key concepts along with the updated complementary concepts found in this research.

Chapter 3:

Findings and Discussion

This paper had for aim to conceptualize the term “tourist” due to the absence of a unanimous and universal definition. Indeed, defining a tourist is very complex and problematic because of the interdisciplinary and multiple approaches within this field. The official definition of UNWTO, used in more than 170 countries, gives international standards (Pearce, 2005; Shaw & Williams, 1994). This definition is put in place to give an answer to the need of statistics and technical purposes (Bowen & Clarke, 2009), and do not take other disciplines and other aspects into consideration when defining a tourist. It has been used sometimes far from statistics, due to the fact that it is the only universal definition, which led to questioning to what extend does the definition of the tourist answers and provides a universal definition. To answer this question, the main objective of this research was to critically review UNWTO definition of a tourist by analyzing the three main components that classify a visitor to become a tourist: movement outside the usual environment, duration and purpose of the stay. Based on this review, key components related to a more psychological approach were identified and developed from leisure, satisfaction and experience. These complementary key concepts are taking into consideration in order to suggest a potential new definition.

The findings are presented following the same structure of this research starting from the movement outside the usual environment, duration, and purpose to end with the psychological approach.

First, the movement outside the usual environment is a key concept when defining tourism, it is the center of the experience (Cohen, 1979a). However, classifying tourists based on the type of movement they undertake from national, international, inbound, domestic, outbound or internal traveler is inexistent in the eyes of tourists and destinations, apart from a technical and statistical approach. The only matter, regarding these classifications, is the movement also known as a movement outside the usual environment.

This movement outside the usual environment is set at 160 km by UNWTO which is not agreed on universally. Tourists are recommended to travel more than 160 km in order to be considered outside their usual environment. With a fixed distance, a large number of tourists are being left apart. Indeed, some tourists travelling less than 160 km are still

considering themselves as tourists and the distance travelled is not seen as an essential criterion to be defined as tourists. Indeed, tourists consider themselves as such due to experiencing a psychological displacement outside the usual environment, and not because of a physical trip undertaken for specific purposes. Based on this research, this displacement from the day-to-day activities is considered to be relative to each individual since the usual environment is a subjective concept for each and every person. Having a subjective concept is leading to the presence of many interpretations of the usual environment and one categorical definition cannot be agreed on unanimously. For instance, having a displacement of the daily routine does not necessarily need to take place far from the usual environment, in order to feel it; it is not necessarily a geographical and physical distance set to delineate the usual environment. On the contrary, such concept is relative to each individual thus leading to becoming a more psychological limit that cannot be delineated by a fixed distance. It is all about individual perception far from obligations and in search for an experience. Such findings correspond to the tourist gaze notion in which a geographical limitation is not essential in order to feel and act as a tourist, individuals can put themselves in the shoes of a tourist and experience a day or more as tourists even in their own environment.

The notion of a movement outside the usual environment can thus be seen as a psychological displacement, instead of being set upon a geographical limitation. This key concept as set by UNWTO is not essential for other field in tourism. The usual environment can be seen as relative to each individual as long as they are in a state of mind far from obligations.

Secondly, the temporal aspect limitation between 24 hours and up to a year of the tourist definition is critical since by framing the length of stay for statistical reasons, a tourist is becoming a very categorical term. The difference between a visitor and a tourist using the temporal limitation, overnight stay and up to a year, is practically inexistent regarding many perceptions in the tourism industry (Shaw & Williams, 1994; Yu et al., 2012) such as the self-categorization of a tourist.

Furthermore, when the temporal dimension is defined as the use of the time to escape from the daily routine (Shaw & Williams, 1994), the UNWTO concept of time is at risk

since individuals do not need a set of criteria to limit their enjoyment and experience. From a psychological approach, the length of stay is not essential when defining a tourist. Life-time tourists are emerging with the rise of mobility. Individuals are being able to work from wherever they want thus being able to stay at a destination for more than a year while still feeling as tourists.

Following UNWTO meaning of the duration, is not allowing this key concept to become universal since from a sociological, psychological approach framing the temporal dimension is not as important as being able to use the time off for the creation of experience away from obligations.

Regarding the third key component which is the purpose, UNWTO interpretation of this entry is set in order to help define a tourist. However, the numerous purposes put in action are not taking into account the ongoing changes in the tourism industry.

With the rise of mobility, individuals are being able to choose the place they want to work from, thus they are being able to merge purposes in order to be able to stay at a destination. Individuals are sometimes searching for remuneration in order to be able to visit some places, they are seeking for novelty and experience as tourists, regardless the fact of being paid. Moreover, with the discovery of hybrid tourists, merging purposes in order to be able to afford a new experience and feel as tourist is at hand. Indeed, tourists are sometimes searching for remuneration in order to stay at a destination. Moreover, students are changing their usual environment when going abroad; they are experiencing the life very similar to residents and acquiring a new environment. Of course students as well might have joined two purposes study and tourism. However, as each individual is unique, an overgeneralization of students is not relevant when defining tourists.

Focusing on such findings, the purpose of a trip, unlike the official definition of UNWTO, cannot be generalized as each individual is unique. For instance, merging work with leisure would not unclassified a tourist to a traveler. Dividing a tourist based on the purpose of the trip such as recreation, visiting friends and families, business, etc. can be transposed into how an individual use their time off for seeking a new experience

and enjoyment (Shaw & Williams, 1994).

In order to create a holistic definition of a tourist, the movement outside the usual environment, duration and the set of purpose put by UNWTO are not enough to conceptualize a tourist. The definition of a tourist lacks of specification as the subcategories are very vague, the three main criteria have multiple interpretations. For instance, having a wide range of adaptations regarding purposes and spatial-temporal factors, are bringing confusion to define objectively a tourist. Defining and grouping tourists into categories is actually limiting the bigger image of being a tourist. Taking into consideration a more psychological dimension helps building a better understanding of a tourist.

Complementary key components were found when conceptualizing the term “tourist”, revolving around seeking a new experience in the search of freedom and satisfaction from the daily routine. Tourists are searching for novelty and temporary fulfillment away from their obligations. They are creating a meaning away from home and from obligations, seeking leisure and fulfillment.

One of the main findings in order to feel fulfilled is the presence of a new experience which comes from a displacement of the daily routine. They are looking to use their time doing tourism for joy and satisfaction. The experience undertaken is relative to each individual thus cannot be generalized; each individual is searching for his/her own meaning of a temporary new home. Tourists can thus be considered to be individuals displacing themselves from their day-to-day life in search for satisfaction, pleasure and experience. As stated previously, considering each of the main three components of the official definition of UNWTO from movement outside the usual environment, duration and purpose leaving aside the experience of a tourist is leading to having an incomplete meaning. In fact, the movement outside the usual environment witnesses a psychological displacement of an individual away from their daily routine. Moreover, regarding the limitations of the temporal aspect and the purpose of the official definition, a tourist can be seen as an individual using the time off to create new experiences and be away from obligations. Such displacement is a subjective concept in which each individual will see it in a relative way.

Many researchers believe that having one unanimous definition is impossible since the main components of the definition are subjective, thus will not allow having a single definition of a tourist (Briones-Juarez et al., 2009; Candela & Figini, 2012; Lickorish & Jenkins, 1999; Wang, 2000). A single definition will not be able to embrace the multiple different aspects of a tourist. Distinguishing between the uses of the definitions depending on the purpose of the research is essential. McCabe (2009) suggests that the term “tourist” should be studied as a concept, and that researchers need to be very cautious when using the term tourist as it might affect the results of investigations. He even suggested that the term tourist is inexistent outside the conceptual definition (McCabe, 2005).

Pearce (2005, p. 2) describes the lack of definitions for different field as a “sin of Homogenization”. Generalizing all tourists is simply incorrect as each field look at a tourist from a different perspective (Cohen, 1979b). Even though defining a tourist is complex and certainly not an easy task, an attempt to create a new definition will be suggested. It will take into account, to try and propose a new holistic definition, the traditional concepts from WTO definition (movement outside the usual environment, duration and purpose) along with the new findings from the present research (experience, satisfaction, leisure).

In this new definition, the movement will be considered as a geographical or psychological displacement, whereas the notion of outside the usual environment will be seen as the primary obligations and daily routine an individual has. Regarding the duration, it will be considered as the use of time whether to escape the daily routine or to create new experiences, satisfaction and fulfillment. The purpose of the journey will be transposed into creating an experience while seeking for enjoyment, leisure and satisfaction.

Thus, being a tourist can be presented as “a subjective perception (state of mind) of a person escaping from primary obligations and daily routine for a period of time (relative to each individual), through a specific displacement (geographical and/or psychological), in quest of unique experiences while seeking satisfaction and leisure”.

3.1 Future research

This Master Thesis was based on a literature review in order to get a complete overview around the term “tourist”. As said previously, due to the lack of time and resources, it is possible that some other relevant articles were omitted. Thus, comparing an even larger number of articles might lead to different or additional findings.

Also, it can be interesting to develop such research as part of a series of critical reviews around every concept related to the tourism industry such as destinations and the main stakeholders... Such research will be able to review the entire tourism industry. Critically reviewing each concept of the tourism sector may lead to other new and updated definitions. In parallel to reviewing the other actors in the tourism industry, the suggested definition of a tourist can generate a debate and discussion and might be a pillar when starting reviewing the other concepts.

Moreover, another approach related to this subject can be undertaken. Indeed, gathering the main definitions of a tourist that are used in the different disciplines in the tourism industry and classifying these key components in each discipline can be helpful when defining a tourist depending on the context. It can be very helpful to compare the different definitions set by the different disciplines in order to compare and come up with the sum of phenomena that define a tourist in a multidisciplinary context. Such research will be taking into account several fields such as marketing, consumer behavior, cost control, geography, psychology, etc.

On the other hand, and far from the different disciplines of the tourism sector, studying different perceptions can also contribute in conceptualizing the term “tourist”. Taking into account different point of views such as self-categorization or studying the view of stakeholders when defining a tourist might show whether it is necessary to divide visitors between tourists, excursionists and travelers. For example, researching on when a destination considers a person a tourist may actually contribute to the creation of a more universal definition.

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