

THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS USED IN TOURISM ANALYSIS

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Abstract: The article illustrates a geographical approach to the tourism phenomenon. Nowadays, due to the content and extent of the phenomenon, to its forms of expression and its role, tourism is considered a distinct field of activity, a vitally important component of economic and social life. Geographers' interest in the manifestations related to the tourism phenomenon is justified by the important implications of tourism in land management at different levels (local, regional, national and international). When analysing the tourism phenomenon, the different approaches range from static models of observation to dynamic interpretations, as more and more variables are involved in this process.

Keywords: *tourism potential, tourism market, tourism infrastructure, tourism planning, tourism models, quantitative methods, qualitative methods.*

1. Introduction

Tourism is a permanent activity of modern man, with implications at many levels (natural, economic, social-cultural and political). The relationship between the activities related to tourism and to the environment, in time and space, implies changes of the environmental components by means of the tourism infrastructure and traffic. Responsive to the transformations of contemporary civilization, the tourism phenomenon evolves under their impact, its dynamics integrating the overall development process. Many researchers have addressed the issue of the conceptualization of the tourism phenomenon and of finding measures to assess the level of tourism development.

2. A few conceptual considerations on the analysis of the tourism phenomenon

The great diversity of interpretations given to the concept of *tourism* can be attributed to the fact that this term attempts to define a multitude of economic and psycho-social issues, as well as to the fact that tourism implies the study of several scientific disciplines (geography, economy, sociology, psychology, anthropology etc.). Many specialists consider tourism a phenomenon specific to the contemporary era, but the first attempts to define and characterize it date back to the nineteenth century.

Initially, the concept of *tourism* was used to describe a journey for leisure, recreation, for intercultural communication or even for healthcare purposes. In 1993, the World Tourism Organization defined tourists as people "*travelling or living outside their places of permanent*

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residence for a minimum of twenty-four (24) hours, but for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited” (J. M. Hoerner, 1997, p. 8).

“Tourism is an active component of contemporary social and economic life, which deeply marks the regions favoured by an exceptional natural and anthropic potential, by the attraction exerted on large masses within the context of improving the living standards and the need to mitigate the harmful influences of the modern urban-industrial environment” (I. Muntele, C. Iașu, 2006, p. 15).

When defining the concept of *tourism*, P. Duhamel insists on tourism as a result of urbanization: “Tourism is essentially an urban project. It is supported by urban societies, which project their representations and way of life on their living space. These determine urban transformations, such as a specific urban sociability, a space organization marked by urban symbols, spatial concentrations worthy of a city. On the other hand, tourism is a society project that takes ownership of spaces and transforms them according to its own norms and values and which transcends the allowed spatial categories” (P. Violier, P. Duhamel, 2009).

Likewise, S. Nahrath and M. Stock insist on the urban character of tourism and on the consequences of the intensification of urbanization due to tourism: “Tourism, invention of the urban environment, crystallizes urban values, practices and architectural forms and transfers this urbanity to all sites included by tourism, even to those that are considered *a priori* to be the farthest from the urban model, such as resorts or tourist villages, for example, in the mountains or at the seaside. Indeed, these areas become urbanized, due to such a transfer of urbanity and centrality, and come to know the problems related to urban planning, traffic and redistribution of economic capital, related to meeting heterogeneous populations, to urban management, pollution, violence etc. Moreover, urban facilities are a prerequisite for tourism to develop there” (S. Nahrath, M. Stock, 2012, pp. 7-14).

In Russian specialized literature, tourism is defined as “a travelling activity during the time off, a form of active recreation for different purposes” (Географический энциклопедический словарь, 1988, p. 314). It also emphasizes the fact that “tourists do not exercise any remunerated activity during their journey or stay”, “they exercise other activities than the professional ones and travel to other places than that of their residence” (М. А. Ананьев, 1975, p. 17).

Currently, in a complex and diversified social and economic context, the tourism concept also designates all business activities that tourists take part in during their stay at their destination place (transportation, hotels, restaurants, bars, places of entertainment etc.).

From an economic perspective, the main components of tourism are: tourism potential, workforce involved, tourism infrastructure, manufacturing facilities and equipment, tourism services, goods for tourist consumption and tourism organizational structures.

“The raw material of tourism is space, and without underestimating other factors, geographical conditions have a leading role, often essential for the attraction of a particular tourist site. The natural environment, the cultural and historical heritage, the technical and economic potential, all these are geographical criteria important for tourist localization, their revision being mandatory for any geographical approach. (...) The term of tourism raw material is most often mistaken for tourism potential, tourism resources or tourism offer” (I. Muntele, C. Iașu, 2006, p. 42).

The raw material of tourism refers to all natural and cultural resources of tourism nature that represent the base of the potential tourism offer of a territory. It consists of the *tourism resources* (the main element of the tourism potential) and *tourist attraction* (the emotional side of the various elements of tourism potential, the subject of attention, the aesthetic and cognitive side). These issues underlie the development of tourism, determining the size, intensity and diversity of tourist flows (V. Sochircă, I. Bejan, 2011, p. 5).

The *tourism potential* of a territory implies all natural and anthropogenic elements, which may make the subject of tourist attractions. “*The tourism potential is the sum of certain objective conditions, whether natural or social, as well as of subjective ones, related to motivations and needs in a permanent dynamics*” (I. Muntele, C. Iașu, 2006, p. 44).

The tourism potential has a dynamic character: it can acquire new meanings, it may extend, it may enrich with new sources of attraction (generated either by the evolution of technology and civilization, or by changes that may occur in the natural environment) or, oppositely, it may be altered, modified or even destroyed, often as a result of the intervention of anthropic factors (V. Sochircă, I. Bejan, 2011, p. 6).

From a geographical point of view, the notion of *tourism offer* refers to the planned tourism potential transformed into *tourism product*. This concept distinguishes between tourism issues related to those managing the site and those related to their customers (I. Muntele, C. Iașu, 2006, p. 43).

From an economic perspective, the tourism offer includes all products and services made available to tourists. From the perspective of travel agencies, the tourism offer is a package of services that is suggested to a specific customer, generally at a competitive price.

In conclusion, the tourism offer includes all the elements determining someone to travel for the purpose of visiting, namely natural and anthropic tourism resources, tourism equipment, goods and services for tourist consumption, tourism infrastructure, workforce required, marketing conditions (prices, facilities etc.).

In order to travel for the purpose of visiting, people often use the services of agencies (carriers, tour operators, hotel chains, travel agencies, catering and animation companies). So, in order to meet tourists' demands, a complex and diversified infrastructure is necessary, consisting of public institutions and private companies, to effectively organize the *tourism market*. “The tourism market refers to all transactions (purchase agreements) the object of which is represented by the tourism products, taken in conjunction with the relationships they generate and the geographic area in which they manifest themselves. (...) The tourism market is the economic sphere of interference between the tourism offer, materialized in the tourism production, and the tourism demand, reflected by tourist consumption” (D. Morariu, J. Weisz, 2006, p. 21).

Tourism infrastructure refers to the facilities, leisure activity-specific amenities and equipment (ski slopes, skating rinks, swimming pools, beaches, tourist harbours etc.); tourist means of transportation (cable cars, mountain trains, cruise ships etc.); accommodation and food service units for tourists; leisure units network (amusement parks, sports fields etc.) and treatment ones (termalism, thalassotherapy etc.).

Tourism planning is a dynamic and complex process of scientific organization of the touristic site (design of new tourist facilities, refurbishment of the existing ones, their increasing or reducing according to the tourism demand) and the economic viability of the tourism activity, by taking into account the relationships between the environment and human communities, as well as the factors influencing these relationships. “The relief is the *essential part of tourism planning*, being at the same time a key element in creating the specific scenery for each tourist site. (...) The relief has the advantage that the attractions it generates do not require expensive planning and are not endangered by the excessive tourist flow, since they are simply admired, contemplated and not actually used” (I. Muntele, C. Iașu, 2006, p. 55). Improvement and diversification of tourist transportation means influence the planning of auxiliary touristic sites: campsites, parks, train stations, airports and ports (they must adapt their structures and services to the tourism demands).

The increasing volume and the complexity of the offer of tourism services have determined the development of a true *tourism industry*, thereby justifying the analysis of tourism as a distinct branch of the national economy. By its nature, the tourism phenomenon

is a very complex one, with important economic, social, political and cultural implications: tourism development stimulates the development of other sectors of the national economy (trade, agriculture, transportation, construction etc.); the demand for tourism goods and services causes indirect effects in the sectors providing investments in the material basis of tourism (building materials industry), as well as their financing, but also in sectors dealing with infrastructure planning.

Tourism industry includes the following sectors: *housing and food* (hotels, motels, farms, restaurants, bars etc.), *transportation* (railways, airlines, own cars and airships, boat journeys, car rental companies); *travel organizers* (travel agencies and tour operators); *leisure attractions* (natural and anthropic tourism resources, arts festivals and cultural events) and the *organizers/ managers* of tourism destinations (national, regional and local tourism offices).

3. Assessment of the tourism potential

a. Objectives of the assessment of tourism potential

The objectives of the assessment of a territory's tourism potential are the following: to know the spatial distribution of the tourism resources in a given area; to build a working tool for analysts or any local action group; to identify the territory/ village where a potential project of tourism development (public or private) could be developed in the future; to identify strategies to achieve cooperation and dialogue between the public, local stakeholders and experts; to facilitate a general positive attitude towards tourism and awareness of the role of tourism as a driver of medium and long-term local development.

b. Assessment and diagnosis

The stage of assessment and diagnosis of the existing tourism situation includes: the examination of the regional offer, of the tourism demand, of territorial competition and market trends and the identification of economic indicators (the tourism's sector turnover, administration fees derived from tourism activities, the number of jobs in the tourism sector etc.). The achievement of all these implies the collection of information and data in the field and their processing, as well as the use of internal and external information related to the given territory.

From the confrontation of the results provided by the analysis of the tourism sector in the area, one can identify the strengths and weaknesses of the territory and determine its advantages and risks/ threats. Defining the elements of uniqueness or differentiation of the given territory provides the possibility to build a successful tourism strategy.

c. Analysis of the tourism offer

The factors affecting the tourism offer are the following: natural factors; anthropic factors; socioeconomic factors; cultural factors; social-political factors; general infrastructure (transportation and telecommunications, technical-municipal infrastructure; health-related infrastructure etc.); the services available in the given territory; tourism-specific infrastructure (various establishments for accommodation, with different dining options, possibilities to practice sports activities and various leisure opportunities, possibilities to organize seminars and conferences, as well as spas and health resorts).

The main elements of the tourism offer are: the local people, the local tourism organizations, tourism trade, the level of tourism qualification and cooperation between the different actors involved in the management of tourism activities.

In the analysis of the tourism offer, the issues related to the local population refer to its level of information, its requirements, the way in which it can contribute to the development of the tourism sector, its contribution to landscape planning, the transmission of ethno-cultural values, the presence of opinion leaders, the demographic dynamics etc.

The local tourism organizations are represented by: the tourism information offices, mountain rescue service, employees of public administration dealing with tourism issues, non-profit organizations, associations, retailer travel agencies or tour operators. The analysis of these elements focuses on: the analysis of the tourism activities made available, of the skills of the people involved, of the allocated budget, of the willingness to cooperate, as well as the analysis of the existence of tourism promotion activities (on-going or envisaged).

The notion of tourism trade refers to the bid-price policy, channels of distribution of tourism products, the level of tourism promotion, tourism promotion tools, marketing strategies etc.

When analysing the tourism offer, the issues related to tourism training cover the following: specializations, trainings, the level of qualification of the employees working in the tourism sector, tourism training programs etc.

Cooperation in the sector of tourism implies: support from public and private authorities, joint projects being initiated or in progress, potential partnership for the development of projects, cooperation between local tour operators, developing common strategies and their representation before the public decision-makers etc.

d. Tourism demand

Tourism demand is an economic concept that refers to the amount of tourism products (transportation, accommodation, food, treatments, entertainment, visiting tourism attractions, souvenirs, products of travel agencies, use of leisure facilities etc.) that tourists, existing or potential ones, are willing to consume at a given price, at a given time and under certain circumstances.

The notion of tourism demand also refers to the number of tourists, with their characteristics (number, age, sex, occupation, income, budget, preferences, tourism experience, means of travelling chosen etc.). In this regard, one can distinguish between the notion of *effective demand* (the number of people who actually participate in tourism activities) and the notion of *potential demand* (the number of people who wish to travel, but are unable, for various reasons). When the limiting factor disappears, the potential demand can become effective demand.

Regarding the tourism demand, the methods of information and statistics collection are the following: the direct questioning of tourists (oral or written); telephone interviewing; processing the tourist registration forms from hotels; identifying tourists' place of origin by the vehicle registration plate; organizing meetings, conferences and roundtables; conducting interviews with political actors, public or private; collecting data from the statistical bodies.

4. Models of spatial analysis of the tourism phenomenon

Geography was concerned with the study of the tourism phenomenon relatively late, especially in what regards the spatial transformations generated by this phenomenon. This low interest is probably due to the reduced influence that the tourist activity has had on the social-economic issues, as well as on the territorial organization of the space for a long time. In this context, the geographical research has not benefitted from an adequate methodology so that geographical publications have mainly comprised descriptive monographs, through more in-depth researches and detailed studies of certain regions, but not analysing the territorial and social-cultural impact of the tourism phenomenon.

One of the first attempts of tourism geographical configuration was done by U. Toschi (1948), who distinguishes between *active regions* "(...) densely populated, with a highly developed civilian life, with an intense urban, industrial and commercial life, with a uniform natural landscape, with extreme climate conditions or predominantly harsh, rainy or foggy, with a poor history" and *receptive regions* "... with a varied landscape, rugged and jagged,

with a mild or dry climate, with a diverse population by race, customs, traditions and rich in history (...)."

In 1955, W. Christaller perfected the research methods in geography, individualizing several factors that condition tourism-related localization: the landscape and climate, the possibility to practice sports, the presence of some therapeutic sites, the existence of art and antiquities galleries, historical or cultural spaces and economic singularities. Moreover, W. Christaller individualized five stages in the development of tourism: the first stage, between 1790 and 1840, is characterized by the facilitation of travelling by train; the second stage, between 1840 and 1870, took place simultaneously with the onset of the industrialization stage; during the third stage, between 1870 and 1900, the first signs of the tourism industry begin to appear; during the last phase, between 1930 and the early 60s, the travel agencies organize the first group travels (*acc.* E. Zabbini, 2010, p. 3). Later on, W. Christaller addressed issues related to the peripheral nature of tourist sites, focusing on the centre-periphery dynamics (W. Christaller, 1963).

At the end of the 60s, the models for the interpretation of the spatial structure of the tourism phenomenon began to be always more numerous, despite the fact that they are developed in a dispersed manner and without any obvious relation to the previous efforts to conceptualize the tourism phenomenon. However, common issues and spatial interactions inherent in the different types of tourism can be noticed.

Tourism models offer a theoretical and conceptual base for the study of the spatial dynamics of the tourism phenomenon. Most models for the analysis of the tourism phenomenon are based on the *origin - route - destination* structure: tourist flows models (focusing on the journey or itinerary), origin-destination type models (focusing on the relationship between the transmitting space and the reception space), structural models and evolutionary models (D. Pearce, 1993).

a) Tourist flows models

According to *Mariot Model* (quoted by I. M. Matley, 1976), three routes can be outlined from the transmitting space to the tourist destination: a one-way route connecting the origin to the destination, a one-way route back and, finally, a recreational one, which implies the use of a specific tourism infrastructure.

Campbell's model (C. K. Campbell, 1966, *acc.* D. Pearce, 1993) addresses the idea of complementary tours (visiting several places during the journey). According to this model, one can identify recreational trips (with a radial dispersion around urban centres), holiday trips (linear ones, along the highways) and holiday and *leisure* trips (which combine elements from the previous categories at different levels).

The principle of the *volume of tourist flows* states that the volume of tourist traffic decreases in direct proportion to the distance from the transmitting regions due to the increased consumption of time, money and energy.

Miossec's model (J. M. Miossec, 1976) proposes the concept of a "core transmitter" surrounded by concentric regular zones (four successive belts). This theoretical model did not materialize itself because of the positive distortions or negative deformations caused by various natural, social, economic or political factors. This model also includes the factor called *place perception*, according to which the image of a tourist place is essential for the creation of a massive tourist flow. *Miossec's model* was later perfected by introducing factors related to the socio-political-linguistic environment, both for the destination areas and for those of the tourists' place of origin (Miossec, 1977, pp. 41-48).

Yokeno's model (N. Yokeno, 1974) is an application of the theoretical models of classical economics (stated by J. von Thünen, A. Weber and W. Christaller) in the field of tourism. This model explains the deformations of the concentric zones formulated by

Miossec's model by specific tourism in the centre of origin, communications network layout and the price differential of interest.

b) The **models of origin-destination tourist flows** take into consideration the fact that a place can have a double function of transmitting and receiving.

Thurot's model (J. M. Thurot, 1980, acc. D. Pearce, 1993) focuses both on the domestic tourism and on the international one. According to this model, the tourist areas are interrelated depending on the demand, tourism offer and geographical proximity. Originally, *Thurot's model* was used in order to analyse the transportation capacity and to conceptualize tourist flows and tourist spatial structures.

Lundgren's model (J. Lundgren, 1982, acc. D. Pearce, 1993) uses the notion of relative geographical centrality of places and their capacity to provide tourism services. According to these categories, the model distinguishes four categories of tourist destinations: metropolitan, urban outlying, remote areas and natural sites. Starting from this model, one can identify the functions of a place as well as the associated flows.

Pearce's model (D. Pearce, 1993) brings to the fore the causal relationships between the transmitting, transiting and receiving areas. Besides its role of tourist emitter, the city also has other functions generating specific flows (polarization). According to this model, the transportation, accommodation and leisure infrastructure of an area (also amplified by the internal attraction potential or immediate proximity) favours the polarization of important tourist flows.

c) The **structural models** emphasize the structural relationships established between the places of origin and the tourist destinations, and introduce the concepts of *tourist nodes* and *peripheries*.

Britton's model (S.G. Britton, 1982) is based on the observation that the tourism market is concentrated in the ascending hierarchy (from the local to the regional, national and international). Thus, tourist transfers take place between capitals and regional centres, the main beneficiaries being the tourist nodes (where most companies in the field and incomes are concentrated).

Cazes's model (G. Cazes, 1980) is based on the origin - itinerary - destination structure, where the multinational trading system plays a very important role.

d) The **evolutionary models** of tourist flows are based on the study of mutations induced by the phenomenon of tourism.

The *Ash and Turner model* (L. Turner, J. Ash, 1975) introduced the term *peripheral's leisure*, which is an inherent result of the development of the urban industrial society. This periphery is a dynamic and multidimensional one according to the dimension of the urban agglomeration.

J. M. Thurot (1973) individualized three chrono-spatial stages in forming a tourist periphery space: the discovery of the site by wealthy tourists and building a few high standard hotels; the expansion of tourist flows and development of medium-high standard hotels; the loss of the originality of the given tourist site and the development of mass tourism.

Plog's model focuses (S. C. Plog, 1979, pp. 13-16) on the personality of tourists. Thus, the model identifies three categories of tourists: psychocentrics (these tourists are often shy, not adventurous, concerned with everyday problems, choose popular tourist destinations, prefer a family atmosphere, practice relaxing activities typically related to sports or spa tourism and generally prefer standard tourist accommodation spaces to meet their comfort and safety needs; in this context, psychocentric tourists choose *all-inclusive* travel packages, usually with a precise program of activities). To the other extreme, we find *alocentric* tourists (curious, adventurous, entrepreneurs, open to the outside; for them, the trip is a way to express their desire for knowledge and curiosity in meeting different peoples and cultures; these tourists usually prefer air travelling, non-standard tourism structures, where they ask for a

minimum of comfort and very flexible travel arrangements, often coming down to the provision of accommodation and transportation). The intermediate category of tourists is the most numerous and includes mediocentric tourists (who present a varied image of a mixture of the characteristics of alocentric and psychocentric tourists).

This model makes it possible to notice the phases of development of a tourist destination depending on the tourist population involved: the presence of alocentric tourists indicates the onset phase, the discovery of a tourist destination; the growing presence of mediocentric tourists indicates the phase of maximum development of the tourism phenomenon in the given area; the increased presence of psychocentric tourists characterizes the phase of the image obsolescence of the tourist destination and reduction in the quality of tourism services, resulting in a decline of the tourist destination.

Gormsen's model (1981) tries to analyse the degree of local participation in tourism development. According to this model, external operators, together with a gradually growing local participation, support tourism onset. By using a systemic vision, this model addresses the chrono-spatial dynamics of the formation process of tourism regions, the structure of tourist flows and diversification of tourist accommodation infrastructure, also explaining the evolution of the tourism phenomenon in concentric waves, especially coastal tourism.

Miossec's model (1977) is the most complex evolutionary model. This model includes an analysis of the impact of tourism on the territory and explains the structural evolution of a tourism region using a chrono-spatial vision. The importance of this model lies in the attention paid to tourism infrastructure and accommodation structures (the spatial organization of tourism sites and tourist transportation network), as well as to the behaviour and perceptions of tourists, local administration and population.

This model implies the existence of four phases, applicable at different territorial levels, during which the mechanisms of the occupation of the land by the tourism sector are configured (progressive hierarchizing, structuring and perception of a relative development). In the first phase, the region is isolated, highly polarized, with little or no tourism development; at this stage, there is an awareness of the benefits that tourism-related services can bring at the local level. The success of pioneer tourist structures leads to the second phase, during which a hierarchical system of tourist sites and a more complex transportation network are formed. During the third and fourth phases, the given tourist site develops to its full potential, tourist attraction becoming stronger than the accommodation capacity. From the point of view of mentality, the attitude of the local population can vary from a complete acceptance of tourism to the adoption of control measures and, finally, to a refusal of the tourism phenomenon. These last two phases are of great interest for geographical analyses, as they illustrate a structuring of the spontaneous development of the tourist site: thus, one can distinguish the *functional specialization* processes (each village in the region tends to functionally individualize itself, in order to become integrated into the regional system with a higher efficiency); there is a *spontaneous hierarchizing* of tourist centres and the need for inter-relationing; during the last stage, the congestioning of the communication means and infrastructure facilitates the appearance of an imbalance and of an incompatibility with the local community and certain categories of tourists who finally decide to focus on other tourist sites. At the same time, one can observe the disintegration and fragmentation of the original environment image, which has been the tourist attraction.

Miossec launched the hypothesis of a possible fifth phase, when the local population decides to step in for the restructuring of the space through various interventions (ranging from demarches aimed at protecting and restructuring the environment to the creation of new forms of tourism).

5. Methods of analysis of the tourism phenomenon

Scientific work implies a systematic and methodologically correct research through which different aspects are identified and studied starting from a database. This research involves a process of data *collection of selection*, which implies a *systematic type of analysis*; it is necessary to use *logical criteria*, in order to avoid fragmentation, lack of consistency or appearance of gaps in the given study. Moreover, in order to draw plausible conclusions from a critical point of view, the scientific research requires *methodological rigour and fairness* (the revealing, consideration and observance of centralized data, as well as their questioning following further analysis and confrontation).

The analysis of the tourism phenomenon can be achieved according to the *historical principle* (chronological study), the *principle of integration* (in the natural and socio-economic systems to which the given area belongs), the *principle of causality* (identifying the factors influencing the tourism activities and their consequences) and the *principle of spatial distribution* (the spatial distribution analysis of the tourism phenomenon).

Different scientific research methods and techniques can be used in the analysis of the tourism phenomenon: *analytical* ones (organized analysis, separation and examination of the parts of a whole to know its fundamental principles and elements, by means of actions leading from what is complex to what is simple), *synthetic* ones (composition in units of parts previously analysed, by means of actions leading from what is simple to what is complex), *deductive* ones (starting from one or more general premises, drawing particular conclusions, representing the logical consequences of approaches leading from what is universal to what is particular) and *inductive* ones (from particular experiences and observations, extracting the general principles involved, by means of approaches leading from the particular to the general).

The main methods and tools that can be used in the analysis of the tourism phenomenon can be grouped into the following categories: methods and techniques of *data collection* (statistical survey, field observation, consultation of statistical materials and documentation, mapping); *data processing* methods and techniques - qualitative and quantitative (statistical methods, indices and indicators, models, descriptions) and methods and techniques of *presentation and interpretation of the final results* - comparative and interpretative (graphic materials, cartographic materials, prognostics).

The *quantitative analysis* (statistical study) provides information related to: how many tourists visit the given territory; how many/ which tourism products they consumed; how many/ what services they bought; how long/ where they spent the night; how much they spent, as an average, maximum and minimum etc.

The quantitative indicators used for tourism analyses are: tourists' number of arrivals and overnight stays (nights) in the given place; distribution of nights spent by tourists in the various accommodation structures (motels, guesthouses, camping sites, hosts, hotels, camps etc.); average length of stay (ratio between the number of nights and the number of arrivals); occupancy rate of tourist structures; the budget allocated by tourists; analysis of the evolution of the indicators over several months/ years; distribution of indicators over a year in order to identify the seasonal intensity of tourism activities.

The *qualitative analysis* (field studies) provide data regarding the type of clients visiting the given tourist place/ site/ structure; their place of origin; their motivations and expectations; what they liked/ disliked most.

The quality indicators used for tourism analyses are: length, purpose and type of trip; means of transport used; type of chosen accommodation; activities undertaken by tourists; tourists' motivations, expectations and level of satisfaction; reputation and attractiveness of the area; motivation for choosing the given area; frequency of tourists' visits to the given area

(in the past or the existence of future projects); general qualitative statistical data regarding tourists (age, sex, education, occupation, geographical origin, income) etc.

6. Conclusions

Tourism, as a permanently developing human activity, formed and developed in interaction with the natural environment has constantly exerted a direct influence on the development of the society as a whole. As a result of the shaping action of the natural factors, on the one hand, and of the anthropogenic ones on the environment, on the other hand, the tourism potential of a territory is a spatial-functional manifestation of the capacities of the given habitat to support activities which are specific to tourism.

An extremely complex social-economic phenomenon, involving many variables, tourism develops a variety of forms. Being the result of the temporary movement of people from their place of residence to their destination, located at a given distance from the first one, tourism translates into a mass movement with a continuous or repeated character within a geographical area. At the same time, tourism determines the gradual transformation of the landscape of the destination area, due to the tourism planning of the territory.

The clear delineation of the content of each type of tourism form is important in order to identify, on the one hand, the tourists' behaviour from the point of view of consumption and costs and the responsibilities and obligations of tourist agencies (tour operators and travel agencies) and/ or service providers (transportation companies, hotels, restaurants etc.), on the other hand.

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