



Domestic Tourism in Braşov - The Effect of Manifesting the Interest of Being a Tourist in Your Own City

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The present research aims to identify the interest of the inhabitants of Braşov to be tourists in their own city. In this sense, an online research was conducted between 12 and 24 February 2021. Data were collected from 124 participants through an online questionnaire. The study focuses on the concept of staycation, a form of vacation near the area of residence. This type of holiday proves to be useful and popular in times of crisis for tourism. Research has shown that there are certain differences between the inhabitants born in Braşov and those from other places, as well as differences between women and men, regarding the tourist interest in the city of residence. However the limitation of this study is represented by the size of the sample, 124 participants not being enough, but the results are interesting and can be a starting point in making further research, for example, promoting domestic tourism.

Keywords: Staycation, city tourism, proximity tourism, distance, mobility

1. Introduction

The conducted research focuses on the „staycation” phenomenon, defined as a form of tourism in which the holiday intends to take place in the vicinity of the house.⁷³ In the last few years, more and more people are exploring their own cities as tourist destinations.

This phenomenon generates real academic challenges to define and redefine the tourist and what distinguishes him from a resident when they both adopt a tourist behavior. This is how new terms appear, meant to highlight the trends in tourism. The „staycation” term was mentioned for the first time in 2008 in the TV show called „Good morning, America” (GMA), designating a family holiday option, during a summer that might seem to be long and difficult.⁷⁴

At the time, "staycation" was more about taking photos and videos just like in a real vacation. In May 2008, GMA has defined four rules that characterize the concept of „staycation”: 1. scheduling holiday start and end dates; 2. taking pictures or videos similar to the time of leaving home on holiday – just as they do when leaving home on holiday; 3. ignoring household tasks (do not make the bed, do not vacuum, do not clean the closets, do

⁷³GermannMolz, J., Representing pace in tourism mobilities: Staycations, slow travel and the amazing race, *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change*, p. 270-286, 2009

⁷⁴Sharma, S., The Great American Staycation and the Risk of Stillness, *M/C Journal*, 2009

not do gardening, etc. 4. to take advantage of that time spent on domestic work with recreational activities.⁷⁵

In the meantime, "staycation" has become a complex cultural phenomenon and is essentially a holiday spent close to home but creating a traditional holiday environment. Achieving a traditional holiday environment is an important element. Being a tourist is the result of an informed decision, based essentially on the way individuals determine what they perceive as being unknown to them and how they decide to discover that context. In other words, tourists deliberately create distance from the tourist destination, which allows them to enjoy experience as tourists as something exceptional.⁷⁶

Another factor contributing to the development of the parking trend are changes in lifestyles and working styles, as a result of people giving up the habit of having a long holiday to have a few shorter and choose places that are not far from home.⁷⁷

„Staycation” can be defined as staying at home during the holiday and using the tourist attractions located near the home.⁷⁸ It is a form of rest, relaxation and escape from reality and everyday routine and to find new or still undiscovered places, just as during longer trips during regular holidays and holiday packages. The difference is that people remain in their own city and even in their own home.⁷⁹ „Staycation” can consist of visiting the city or the nearest neighborhood. It’s also an opportunity to make new contacts or renew contacts with family, friends and neighbors by spending time together.⁸⁰ „Staycation” can be connected to different types of nature, cultural and niche tourism. Today, it is common even to spend time actively even during holidays.

Other similar concepts of leisure are: *nearcation*, *daycation* sau *agrocare*. These activities are also part of other current and increasingly popular trends in short-touristic travel or off-road tourism.⁸¹ Noticing current trends in leisure time by city residents, local governments are taking action to create the offer of tourism and leisure.⁸²

Recent years have highlighted the emergence of various initiatives (often online), via social media (in particular Instagram), to bring the inhabitants of the suburbs of large urban areas as resident tourists.⁸³ This trend is supported by the fact that the focus on sustainable tourism has increased particularly among new generations. This group is said to be the most “layering” practice, but not only for the sustainability of the approach, but also because it has shorter holiday periods and smaller budgets. Other groups that have been identified as taking this type of holiday are individuals and families with children.⁸⁴ This paper aims to analyze how attractive the city of Brasov is, in terms of tourism, for its inhabitants. The following parts of

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⁷⁶Diaz-Soria, I., Being a tourist as a chosen experience in a proximity destination, *Tourism Geographies*, p. 96-117, 2017

⁷⁷Smeral, E., The impact of the financial and economic crisis on European tourism, *Journal of Travel Research*, p. 3-13, 2009

⁷⁸Molz, J. G., Representing pace in tourism mobilities: Staycations, slow travel and the amazing race, *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change*, p. 270-286, 2009

⁷⁹ idem

⁸⁰Lehto, X.Y., S. Choi, Y.C. Lin, S.M., MacDermid, Vacation and family functioning, *Annals of Tourism Research*, p. 459-479, 2009

⁸¹Dodds, R., Questioning Slow as sustainable, *Tourism Recreation Research*, p. 81-83, 2012

⁸²Guzal-Dec, D., Supporting development of tourism by local municipal self-governments within the naturally valuable areas of the Lubelskie Voivodship, *Regional Barometer*, p. 111-120, 2014

⁸³Hoogendoorn, G. și Hammett, D., Resident tourists and the local 'other', *Tourism Geographies*, 2020

⁸⁴James, A., Ravichandran, S., Chuang, N., Using Lifestyle Analysis to Develop Lodging Packages for Staycation Travelers: An Exploratory Study, *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, p. 387-415, 2017

this paper are: literature review section, research methodology section, findings and discussions followed by conclusions and suggestions.

2. Staycation: literature review

„Staycation” can be defined as a local travel practice, also called tourism near the home⁸⁵, but it seems to be different from other types of domestic travel, such as travel to secondary residencies, mainly due to the frequency of visits. However, „staycation” is similar to a trip because the traveler can choose to return and spend the night at home during the holidays.

„Staycation” proposes a new mobility paradigm because travel becomes more than just movement between different places. Cresswell provides a simple interpretation of mobility⁸⁶: a move that makes sense. In the context of the new paradigm, different types of mobility can be identified: body, imaginative, virtual.⁸⁷ Travel for tourist purposes has the ability to get the person out of the daily routine and surround them with new things and experiences that can “reset” the body and the mind. Many studies validate the idea that in tourism, travel is the essential element and usually involves long-distance travel. From another perspective, the role of distance changes in a local tourist context. In tourism, distance is a concept closely linked to mobility and can have multiple connotations, such as physical distance, but also familiarity with places.⁸⁸ In the research on local tourism, Juring and Diaz-Soria⁸⁹ focus on the “unknown” element of tourist experiences in domestic destinations. This adds to the importance of what Larsen and Guiver⁹⁰ called “relative distance dimensions.”

Most people probably dream of traveling around the world, but forget to explore their own surroundings. Domestic tourism appears to be less interesting compared to international tourism.⁹¹ However, the global economic crisis of 2008 has produced some changes that have had significant implications for tourism, generating some growth in domestic tourism and new tourism initiatives.⁹² This trend appears to have been further amplified in 2020 in the context of the global health crisis and movement restrictions.

Countries are currently classified, with regard to the risk of coronavirus infection, in green, yellow or red depending on their epidemiological situation. This setting changes daily, with many tourists encountering a lot of problems, making the journey unattractive and quite stressful. Moreover, fear and uncertainty substantially limit demand for tourism. In a moment, tourism has gone from over-tourism to no tourism. This is an unprecedented situation, which has led to serious economic losses for economic operators and local communities that depend on tourism. Based on the three UNWTO scenarios published on May 2020, showing a drop from 58% to 78% on international tourist arrivals in 2020, current trends suggest a fall in

⁸⁵Jeuring, J.H.G. și Haartsen, T., The challenge of proximity: the (un) attractiveness of near-home tourism destinations, *Tourism Geographies*, p. 118-141, 2017

⁸⁶Cresswell, T., *On the move: Mobility in the modern western world*, New York, NY: Routledge, 2006

⁸⁷Urry, J., *Mobilities*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007

⁸⁸Bloom, J., Navijn, J., Geurts, S., Kinnunen, U. și Korpela, K., 2017

⁸⁹Jeuring, J. and Diaz-Soria, I., Introduction: proximity and intraregional aspects of tourism, *Tourism Geographies*, p. 4-8, 2017

⁹⁰Larsen, G. R. și Guiver, J. W., Understanding tourists’ perceptions of distance: A key to reducing the environmental impacts of tourism mobility, *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, p. 968-981, 2013

⁹¹Mazimhaka, J., Diversifying Rwanda’s tourism industry: a role for domestic tourism. *Development Southern Africa*, p. 491-504, 2007

⁹²Andriotis, K., *Degrowth in tourism: Conceptual, theoretical and philosophical issues*, Wallingford, Oxfordshire, UK: CABI, 2018

international arrivals closer to 70% in 2020.⁹³ This crisis could be an opportunity to rethink the development of tourism and to look for new, sustainable methods for the natural and social environment. In this context, authorities in some countries have introduced holiday tickets for proximity tourism.⁹⁴ The effects of the pandemic on mobility and the imminent economic downturn have prompted an increasing interest in the development of tourism. The dramatic decline in international tourism has led to predictions centered on short-haul journeys, which could be made for a large part of 2021.⁹⁵

The concept of "staycation" as a way of spending holidays in times of economic crisis can become a way of helping the tourism industry in difficult contexts. People need tourism, and rethinking the idea of mobility could be a favor of holiday-making in residential areas, as a real strategy that can benefit all parties: tour operators, local communities, local budgets and, above all, tourists themselves.

3. Research methodology

This paper is based on an exploratory research aimed to identify the interest of Brasov residents in spending holidays in their own city. Respondents are adults living or working, at the time of filling in the questionnaire, in Brasov. The data was collected between 12 and 24 February 2021 and Likert scale was used on the basis. The data was collected between 12 and 24 February 2021 and Likert scale was used on the basis. The total number of respondents was 124 and the sample structure is shown in **Table 1**. The main objectives of the research were: a) the role of health issues in choosing tourist destinations in the future; b) identifying the interest of Brasov inhabitants in this type of holiday; c) identifying the main activities that residents would carry out as tourists in their town.

An online questionnaire was used to achieve these objectives.

Table 1: Sample structure, source: processing from authors

Age (Year of birth)				
Before 1965	Between 1966-1979	Between 1980-1995	After 1995	
4.88%	49.59%	33.33%	12.20%	
Sex				
Male		Female		
26.83%		73.17%		
Education level				
Secondary school	Post-secondary (non-university)	Bachelor's	Master's	PhD
11.38%	2.44%	29.27%	44.72%	12.20%
Place of birth				
Braşov		Outside Brasov		
51.22%		48.78%		
Average monthly net income (lei)				
Less than 2000	Between 2000-3000	Between 3001-4500	Between 3001-4500	Over 4000
16.26%	17.89%	17.89%	21.14%	26.83%

⁹³UNWTO, World Tourism Barometer. 18(5), August/September, Madrid, Spain, 2020

⁹⁴Knežević Cvelbar, L. și Ogorevc, M., Saving the tourism industry with staycation vouchers, Emerald Open Research, 2020

⁹⁵Rajmil, D., Turismo de proximidad, cuando lo local estendancia, La Vanguardia, 2020

As can be seen in Table 1, respondents include people from all age groups, mainly female. Respondents' educational attainment is high, with more than 80% having a higher education. As for the place of birth there is a balanced distribution of people, almost 50% were born outside Brasov, the rest being born in Brasov. The income of respondents is high, over 45% having an average net monthly income of over 3000 lei. A sample limit is unrepresentative in terms of the population in Brasov, which is explained by the relatively small number of respondents.

4. Results and discussions

In this section, the main results will be presented and analyzed according to the research objectives. The first thing to note is that respondents are generally confident that tourism will return to its level before the health crisis. More than 50% of respondents think that this will happen largely and to a very large extent (Table 2).

Table 2: The importance of health issues in choosing the following tourist destinations (%), source: processing from authors

Opinion	To an extremely small extent	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a large extent	To a very large extent	Average
To what extent do you think that tourism will return to the level before the health crisis?	2.4	16.3	30.1	37.4	13.8	3.45
After the end of the health crisis, to what extent do you personally prefer holiday destinations closer to your area of residence?	13.8	26.0	35.8	13.0	11.4	2.81
After the end of health crisis, how much you personally will choose holiday destinations based on security related health they offer?	4.9	13.8	27.6	22.0	31.7	3.64

Although travel to regions close to the home area is not the first choice for travel intentions after the health crisis, 35,8% of respondents expressed their moderate intention to choose such a holiday and almost a quarter of them plan to practice local tourism. This can be said of an interesting niche in terms of tourism behavior, which is worth investigating. Also, nearly 54% of respondents said they would choose the next tourist destination based on the health-related safety it offers. This can be of major importance in future actions to strengthen competitive advantages.

As for the tourist interest that the inhabitants of Brasov have shown in their city, it is noted that people born before 1965 saw the city as a place with a tourist potential to be discovered (Table 3), but did not carry out such activities (Table 4).

Table 3: The extent to which the inhabitants of Brasov regarded the city as a tourist destination., source: processing from authors

To what extent did you think, before the health crisis , to look at Brasov as a tourist destination worth discovering?	Year of birth :				
	Before 1965	Between 1966-1979	Between 1980-1995	After 1995	Total
1 To an extremely small extent	0.00%	11.48%	2.44%	13.33%	8.13%
2 To a small extent	0.00%	8.20%	4.88%	20.00%	8.13%
3 To a moderate extent	33.33%	18.03%	36.59%	40.00%	27.64%
4 To a large extent	50.00%	32.79%	24.39%	13.33%	28.46%
5 To a very large extent	16.67%	29.51%	31.71%	13.33%	27.64%
Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

But the millennials have thought less about it, but they have acted more. Both tourist segments are interesting in terms of their potential as tourists. In general, it can be said that the brave people thought more than they acted as tourists in their town.

Table 4: The extent to which the inhabitants of Brasov carried out tourist activities in their city, source: processing from authors

To what extent did you carry out tourist activities (discovering new places, visits to museums, etc.) in Braşov , before the health crisis ?	Year of birth:				
	Q Before 1965	Between 1966-1979	Between 1980-1995	After 1995	Total
1 To an extremely small extent	16.67%	3.28%	2.44%	0.00%	3.25%
2 To a small extent	33.33%	19.67%	9.76%	13.33%	16.26%
3 To a moderate extent	50.00%	36.07%	48.78%	53.33%	43.09%
4 To a large extent	0.00%	26.23%	21.95%	0.00%	20.33%
5 To a very large extent	0.00%	14.75%	17.07%	33.33%	17.07%
Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Research has shown that the place of birth, in Brasov or elsewhere, influences the city's perception as destination, as shown in **Table 5**. Thus, those born outside Brasov saw the city as a possible tourist destination, more than those born in Brasov did.

Table 5: The influence of the place of birth on the perception of the city as a tourist destination, source: processing from authors

To what extent did you think, before the health crisis, to look at Brasov as a tourist destination worth discovering?	Place of birth:		
	Brasov (1)	Outside Brasov (2)	Total
1 To an extremely small extent	14.29%	1.67%	8.13%
2 To a small extent	9.52%	6.67%	8.13%
3 To a moderate extent	25.40%	30.00%	27.64%
4 To a large extent	28.57%	28.33%	28.46%
5 To a very large extent	22.22%	33.33%	27.64%
Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Report			
Birth place	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
1.	3.3492	63	1.32176
2.	3.8500	60	1.02221
Total	3.5935	123	1.20679

ANOVA Table						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	(Combined)	7.707	1	7.707	5.487	.021
Within Groups		169.967	121	1.405		
Total		177.675	122			

The average obtained by people born in Brasov, $M = 3,35$ is lower than that obtained by people born in another place, $M = 3,85$, the difference being significant, as shown by the Fisher test = 5,487, $p < 0,05$.

It is also noted that there is a difference between men and women in terms of lacapital reporting as a possible tourist destination (**Table 6**). Thus, women see Brasov as a possible tourist destination, more than men do.

Table 6: The influence of gender on the perception of the city as a tourist destination, source: processing from authors

To what extent did you think, before the health crisis, to look at Brasov as a tourist destination worth discovering?	Sex :		
	Men (1)	Women (2)	Total
1 To an extremely small extent	15.15%	5.56%	8.13%
2 To a small extent	12.12%	6.67%	8.13%
3 To a moderate extent	27.27%	27.78%	27.64%
4 To a large extent	30.30%	27.78%	28.46%
5 To a very large extent	15.15%	32.22%	27.64%
Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Report			
Sex	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
1.	3.1818	33	1.28585
2.	3.7444	90	1.14716
Total	3.5935	123	1.20679

ANOVA Table						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	(Combined)	7.643	1	7.643	5.439	.021
Within Groups		170.031	121	1.405		
Total		177.675	122			

The female average $M = 3,7444$ is higher than that obtained by men, $M = 3,1818$, the difference being significant as shown in the Fisher test = 5,449, $p < 0,05$.

At the same time, there is a difference between men and women in travel preferences after the health crisis. Thus, more than 25% of women would prefer to go on holiday somewhere closer to their area of residence, compared to only 15% of men. More than 40% of men seem to prefer holidays away from their area of residence.

Table 7: The influence of the genre on holiday preferences after the sanitary crisis source: Processing authors

After the end of the health crisis, to what extent will you personally prefer holiday destinations closer to your area of residence?	Sex		
	Barbie	Ladies	Total
1 Not at all	18.18%	12.22%	13.82%
2 To a small extent	24.24%	26.67%	26.02%
3 On average	42.42%	33.33%	35.77%
4 To a large extent	6.06%	15.56%	13.01%
5 Very much	9.09%	12.22%	11.38%
Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

On the basis of the results from **Table 6** and **Table 7**, the phenomenon of *staycation* seems to be more of a female dimension. This result can be an important one for campaigns to promote this type of tourism. The activities that the inhabitants of Brasov would carry out as tourists in the capital are detailed in **Table 8**.

Table 8: Tourist activities in the city of residence (%), source: processing from authors

Possible tourist activities	To an extremely small extent	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a large extent	To a very large extent	Mean (on the Likert scale)
I will plan a program to visit Brasov for tourism.	19.5	27.6	35.0	11.4	6.5	2.6
I will stay at a hotel in Brasov to feel on vacation.	74.8	14.6	8.1	0.8	1.6	1.4
I will spend my free days going to amusement parks, cinemas, etc.	16.3	21.1	28.5	22.0	12.2	2.9
I will visit museums and memorial houses, I will be interested in the history of the city and the buildings.	9.8	17.1	34.1	20.3	18.7	3.2
I will take walks through areas of Braşov that I have not yet explored.	4.9	17.1	33.3	26.0	18.7	3.4
I will take photos and videos, as in any other holiday destination.	16.3	23.6	27.6	19.5	13.0	2.9
I will discover the most beautiful streets, parks, forested areas, etc. from Braşov .	5.7	20.3	30.9	19.5	23.6	3.4
I will eat at restaurants frequented by tourists.	19.5	28.5	30.1	17.1	4.9	2.6
I will post on social networks images and recordings from my vacation in Braşov .	36.6	22.8	17.9	14.6	8.1	2.4
I will travel by public transport and use taxi services.	34.1	22.8	24.4	13.0	5.7	2.3
I will rent a car with which to travel between the targeted tourist objectives.	82.9	8.1	4.9	2.4	1.6	1.3
I will contact a travel agency where I will request a tourist package to visit Brasov .	84.6	10.6	2.4	0.8	1.6	1.2
I will turn to a guide to help me feel like a tourist in Brasov .	63.4	14.6	14.6	4.9	2.4	1.7
I will look for special offers to visit or participate in shows and other special events	16.3	19.5	30.1	22.8	11.4	2.9
I will go shopping in both malls and	16.3	24.4	30.9	17.1	11.4	2.8

Possible tourist activities	To an extremely small extent	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a large extent	To a very large extent	Mean (on the Likert scale)
street shopping areas.						
I will visit churches and historical monuments, as well as other cultural sites.	7.3	17.9	32.5	22.0	20.3	3.3
I buy small souvenirs to remind me of holidays spent complicated in Brasov .	33.3	30.1	20.3	10.6	5.7	2.3
I will wake up early to have time to visit.	39.0	24.4	16.3	13.0	7.3	2.3
I will look for the highest observation points, which will give me an overview of the city.	17.1	25.2	29.3	16.3	12.2	2.8
I will visit the surroundings of Braşov .	6.5	21.1	32.5	22.0	17.9	3.2
I will try to identify famous places that appear in movies or on Instagram, etc.	31.7	23.6	23.6	12.2	8.9	2.4
I will write a guide for discovering and visiting Brasov .	67.5	15.4	10.6	4.1	2.4	1.6

The most attractive activities are related to visiting unexplored areas, museums, memorial houses, churches, historical monuments and the city's surroundings. Activities related to walking in amusement parks or cinema, mountain trails, going to shows or other special events, going to shopping are not to be neglected either. The least likely actions are those which on a distance holiday are the key elements of the tourist offer: Accommodation and transport.

5. Conclusions

„Staycation” is a relatively new word about adopting tourist behavior so that residents can have holiday by staying at home. Although initially it concerned middle class families in the summer of 2008, in recent years, „staycation” has become a complex cultural phenomenon that calls into question the definition of tourist and the role of distance in tourism. In the context of mobility restrictions, following the health crisis that began in 2020, „staycation” can be a viable alternative to meet the tourist needs of people and the economic needs of tour operators and local communities.

Tourists will take health safety into account in choosing future holiday destinations.⁹⁶In this context, a proximity destination might seem safer for tourists. This could be used to promote tourism in areas close to major cities, contributing to the development of domestic tourism. The inhabitants of Brasov are interested in knowing the city, but the expenses for the tourist services they are willing to make are rather small. The main attraction seems to be to explore the city and its surroundings, as well as to visit historical monuments, churches and other attractions. A sustainable fiscal policy could bring additional revenues to local budgets. Attractive places for residents could also be used to promote other products and services, generating stimulating purchases. The „staycation” phenomenon deserves greater attention from local authorities, with significant potential for development.

The main limitation of this study is the small sample and the study is rather a pilot survey. The survey must be carried out on a representative sample at Brasov level. Other tourist

⁹⁶Tucea, C.E., Vrânceanu, D.M., Năstase, C.E., The Role of Social Media in Health Safety Evaluation of a Tourism Destination throughout the Travel Planning Process, Sustainability,2020

activities that are interesting for residents could be identified and a tourist package could be defined that would also be interesting for local tour operators. At the same time, if there is potential for development in this direction, the development of businesses that could bring services that are in line with the concept could be encouraged.

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