

# Perspectives on short break destinations and their contribution to local-regional economic development: a literature review

## Perspectivas de los destinos turísticos de corta duración y su contribución al desarrollo económico local-regional: una revisión de la literatura

Antonieta Hamann<sup>1</sup>, Martin Hernani-Merino<sup>2</sup> and Enver Gerald Tarazona Vargas<sup>3\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> PhD, Professor, Faculty of Economic Sciences and Management, Universidad Esan, Lima, Perú

<sup>2</sup> PhD, Associate professor, Department of Marketing and International Business, Universidad del Pacífico, Lima, Perú

<sup>3</sup> MSc, Professor, Department of Science, Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, Lima, Perú

\* Antonieta Hamann: ahamann@qesan.edu.pe

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### ABSTRACT

*Globalization and changing lifestyles are generating new forms of tourism, including visits to short break destinations. The objective of this study is to propose a definition of short break destinations and to present the dimensions of the attractiveness of tourist destinations. The methodology consisted of reviewing the literature of 64 academic publications. The result shows the determinants that should be considered in the definition of short break destination and the following dimension are proposed: 1) natural resources, 2) cultural and historical resources, 3) social factors, 4) tourist services and 5) infrastructure.*

**Keywords:** short break, city break, tourist destinations, dimensions of a tourist destination.

### RESUMEN

La globalización y los cambios en los estilos de vida están generando nuevas formas de turismo, entre las que se encuentran las visitas a destinos de corta estadía. El objetivo de este estudio es proponer una definición de los destinos de corta estadía y presentar las dimensiones del atractivo de los destinos turísticos. La metodología consistió en la revisión de literatura de 64 publicaciones académicas. Los resultados muestran los determinantes que se deben considerar en la definición del destino de corta estadía y se proponen las siguientes dimensiones: 1) recursos naturales, 2) recursos culturales e históricos, 3) factores sociales, 4) servicios turísticos y 5) infraestructura.

**Palabras clave:** corta estadía, escapada urbana, destinos turísticos, dimensiones de un destino turístico.

**INTRODUCTION**

In the current tourism context, evidence suggests a progressive reduction in the length of stay at tourist destinations (Alegre & Pou, 2006; Moll-de-Alba, Pratts, & Coromina, 2017; Williams & Shaw, 2009), and, based on this, the concepts of “short break” and “city break” are used for short trips. Authors like Davis (1990); Murphy, Niininen & Sanders (2010); Sharma (2010); Dunne, Flanagan & Buckley (2007); and Moll-de-Alba et al. (2017) indicate that a consensus has not been reached regarding the definition of short breaks or of city breaks; current definitions place these two types of trips within a range of stays varying from 1 to 6 nights. This difference in definitions presents difficulties for strategically planning the development of these destinations.

Murphy et al. (2010) and Enne & Schofield (2011) mention that short breaks have become increasingly and significantly more common in recent years, and it is hoped that this trend will continue inasmuch as people select this type of vacation to closer destinations, in part because tourists will probably spend proportionally more on this market segment than on other tourism products (Schmidhauser, 1992). However, few studies have been carried out regarding the length of these trips (Tsiotsou & Vasioti, 2006; Yang & Zhang, 2015).

Trip length is one of the most important factors in order to anticipate levels of consumption and income generation for certain tourist destinations (Yang & Zhang, 2015).

Short breaks are displacing long breaks, and this provides opportunities for new tourism products, mainly for young and middle-aged people (18-45 years of age) who wish to get away for a few days (from 1 to 6 days) to a close regional or local destination, taking advantage of the flexibility of their vacation time or of public holidays. As Mazor-Tregerman, Mansfeld and Elyada (2015) point out, knowing the consumer of the tourism products allows the tourism industry to obtain deep knowledge of their tourism-related needs and desire

in order to create tourism products adapted to them, specifically.

Countries must adjust to the trends in what travelers are looking for, developing short break options that characterize each region or local place in order to attract visitors, with enough services to be able to prepare competitive

offerings, in addition to infrastructure that allows the visitors to arrive at the destination.

Short breaks can provide health benefits to travelers, emphasizing even more the relevance of the subject being addressed. As Packer (2020) highlights, short breaks and vacations help people recover from the stresses and strains of everyday life and work. Beiloley (1991) specifies that some of the reasons for taking short breaks are ‘to get away from it all’; ‘opportunity to relax’; and ‘needed a break’. There is no doubt that taking short breaks helps restore cognitive capacity, as well as improving emotional health and well-being, that is why it is vital that the topic is further explored.

Notwithstanding the substantial role virtual reality had in coping with the Covid-19 pandemic - enabling individuals to engage and transition towards a “new normal”, it is hard to neglect how Coronavirus changed and reshaped the tourism sector. Reitano, et al. (2021) reveal that after the pandemic, tourists are choosing domestic tourism, characterized by “small and short-lived trips”. In line with what Reitano et al, Choi, et al. (2020) suggest, tourists have started to engage in “untact” travel activities, with short trips like spending time in nature, enjoying outdoor camping and road trips, or travelling alone have been particularly predominant.

This article addresses the literature on short breaks and the dimensions of attractiveness of a tourist destination and discusses the characteristics of this literature in order to propose a definition of a “short break.” For the literature review presented, the following criteria of analysis were established: first, the research had to be published in an academic article or book. Second, the terms used in the search were the following: “length of stay,” “short break,” “city break,” “short haul,” “short holidays,” “urban destination,” “destination,” “attractiveness,” and “tourism products;” these terms had to be present in the title, the abstract, or the key words of the document. Third, the selected sector those sources treated was the tourism sector.

In this context, the purpose of this research consists of reviewing the academic literature published between 1974 and 2021 on short breaks and the attractiveness of tourist destinations, with the intention of proposing a definition of “short break destinations” and, in terms of theory, proposing the dimensions of the attractiveness of the tourist destination so that the actors involved in the development

of a regional or local destination can provide competitive commercial offerings.

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

**Short break: definition and determinants**

The duration of a trip is generally defined as the amount of time that travelers spend at a given destination, and it is frequently measured as the number of days or nights that tourists stay overnight at a certain place (Uysal, McDonald, & O’Leary, 1988). It is important in tourism management as a measure of tourism demand (Barros & Machado, 2010; Herington, Merrilees, & Wilkins, 2013; Martinez-García & Raya, 2008; Moll-de-Alba et al., 2017; Neal, 2005; Yang, 2017; Yang & Zhang, 2015). It is important to consider when engaging in market segmentation (Gomes de Menezes, Moniz, & Cabral Vieira, 2008; Moll-de-Alba et al., 2017), when researching sustainable tourism (Molina Collado, 2007; Saarinen, 2006), and when analyzing the demand for a particular destination (Yang & Zhang, 2015). Moreover, it is a reliable indicator for the level of consumption and income generation of a tourist destination (Alegre & Pou, 2006; Yang & Zhang, 2015). Also, tourists take this factor into consideration when they choose their vacations (Alegre & Pou, 2006). Finally, it is specific to each tourist destination (Alegre, Mateo, & Pou, 2011; Barros & Machado, 2010; Lohmann, 1991).

Since 1970, short breaks have stood out as an important vacation activity in multiple global market segments, displacing long breaks (Sharma, 2019). Murphy et al. (2010) argue that short breaks are a phenomenon that is expanding on a global level due to a more complex and stressful lifestyle and also to the fact that these trips are taken in addition to the traditional annual vacation, motivated by consumers’ wish to get away for a few days to a domestic or regional destination in order to relax and have fun. According to Smith (1996), short breaks are taken year round.

Davies (1990) indicates that the shortest trips will probably be the market segment with the highest expenditures in proportional terms, which makes it all the more important to design short break packages.

The number of days is a key determinant in the description of the short break stay (Sharma, 2010). However, researchers do not agree on the number of days that define a “short break”. Table 1 displays what authors perceive as the number of days for a getaway to be considered a short break.

**Table 1. Days that define a short break**

Author(s)	Description
Tsiotsu and Vasioti (2006), Neal (2003), Gomes de Menezes et al. (2008)	1 to 6 nights.
Huybers (2003)	2 to 3 nights.
Murphy et al. (2010) Moll-de-Alba, Prats, and Coromina (2016)	1 to 4 nights.
Boerjan (1995)	Only mentions that it lasts a few days.
Edgar, Littlejohn, & Allardyce (1994)	3 nights
Davies (1990)	1 to 3 days.
Lohmann (1991)	Up to 4 days.
Pike (2002)	1 to 5 nights.
Sharma (2010)	3 to 5 nights.
Schmidhauser (1992)	1 to 4 nights.
Herington et al. (2013)	1 to 3 nights.
Valls, Sureda, and Valls-Tunon (2014)	3 to 4 days.

Table 1 displays authors’ suggestions in regards to the duration of short breaks, resulting in the conclusion that these trips last a maximum of 4 to 5 days.

Other determinants of short breaks include the following: a) distance (Bao & Mc Kercher, 2008; Yang & Zhang, 2015), which is often limited to a restricted geographical region, to domestic destinations (Boerjan, 1995; Herington et al., 2013; Huybers, 2003; Lohmann, 1991; Martinez-García et al., 2008; Murphy et al., 2010; Schmidhauser, 1992), to trips of between 3 and 6 hours by car (Murphy et al., 2010), or to close places (Bao & Mc Kercher, 2008); b) sociodemographic characteristics like age, educational level, type of education, gender, family income, and nationality (Alegre & Pou, 2006; Alegre et al., 2011; Davies, 1990; Dunne et al., 2007; Huybers, 2003; Lohmann, 1991; Martinez-García & Raya, 2008; Williams & Shaw, 2009; Yang & Zhang, 2015); and c) the attributes of the attractiveness of the destination (Barros & Machado, 2010; Gomes de Menezes et al., 2008; Herington et al., 2003; Murphy et al. 2010; Sharma, 2010; Smith, 1994).

Moreover, short breaks are carried out away from the place of residence (Murphy et al., 2010; Pike, 2002). They are not business trips (Murphy et al., 2010; Pike, 2002). They are not the travelers’ main annual vacation (Downward & Lumsdon, 2003; Dunne et al., 2007; Murphy et al., 2010; Pike, 2002; Sharma, 2010; Tsiotsou & Vasioti, 2006). Tra-

velers many times have previously visited the destination (Alegre et al., 2011; Barros & Machado 2010; Kozak & Rimmington, 1998; Yang & Zhang, 2015). These trips are carried out by young and middle-aged male and female travelers, mainly between the ages of 18 and 45 (Alegre & Pou, 2006; Tsiotsou & Vasioti, 2006). A short break trip is more an impulse decision than a highly-planned one (Boerjan, 1995; Schmidhauser, 1992).

Davies (1990) indicates that it is difficult for scholars to frame a definition of “short breaks” due to the tourism industry’s inability to come to a consensus regarding the definition. There is no common definition of “short breaks,” and this causes difficulties when describing and planning this type of vacation (Moll-de-Alba et al., 2017; Murphy et al., 2010; Sharma, 2010). However, as happens with the term “city break” (Dunne et al., 2010), for which there is no commonly recognized definition, there is one definition that is used rather more frequently: that proposed by Trew and Cockerell (2002), who refer to a trip for relaxation to a city or town, without taking into consideration the number of days, that is just to the city itself; that is to say, travelers do not spend the night at any other destination during the trip. Valls et al. (2014) mention that it is a short stay of one or two days either over the weekend or during the week.

Dunne et al. (2010) indicate that the most commonly associated characteristics of city breaks are that they last between one and three nights but that this can vary according to nationality, referring to the fact that Germans tend to take longer city breaks than other Europeans and that the British tend to make shorter trips. Another characteristic is that these trips are made strictly for leisure purposes and take place in an urban environment, regardless of the length of the travelers’ stay.

Downward and Lumsdon (2003), Tsiotsou and Vasioti (2006), and Edgar et al. (1994) indicate that there is confusion regarding the term “short break” as used to refer to day trips or excursions, that is to say, visits that do not involve an overnight stay. They consider it necessary to clarify that city breaks and short breaks are different segments. Additionally, Heeley (2015) and Pearce (2015) relate both terms to a specialization in urban tourism, indicating that they are visits to cities or towns. Other authors like Martínez-García and Raya (2008) and Enne and Schofield (2011) use the terms interchangeably, considering them both to refer to a stay at a destination for fewer than four nights.

**Dimensions and attributes of tourist destination attractiveness**

Bigné, Sánchez, and Andreu (2000) mention that destinations are combinations of tourism products that offer an integrated experience to tourists and that a destination can be interpreted subjectively by consumers as a function of their travel itinerary, reason for visiting, educational level, and previous experience; that the destination can encompass different tourism and infrastructure resources, forming a system; and that the tourism product is a complex consumer experience that results from the process of the tourist using multiple travel services throughout the visit, like information, lodgings, and other services. Hu and Ritchie (1993) conceptualize it as a package of installations and tourist services that, the same as for any other consumer product, is composed of a series of multidimensional attributes and define it as a reflection of “feelings, beliefs, and opinions than an individual has about a destination’s perceived ability to provide satisfaction in relation to his or her special vacation needs” (p. 25). Herington et al. (2013) mention that the attractiveness of a destination is an important concept for understanding consumers’ travel motivations and their decisions for choosing a given destination. Gomes de Menezes et al. (2008) state that the dimensions and attributes of the image of a destination influence the length of stay differently for each tourist.

Gearing, Swart, and Turgut (1974) explain the dimensions that compose the attractiveness of a destination: 1) natural factors (nature and weather), 2) social factors (artistic and architectural characteristics, festivals, customs, fairs, exhibitions, tourist support services), 3) historical factors (ruins, religious sites, historical sites), 4) recreational factors and shopping facilities (sporting facilities, museums, zoos, botanical gardens, nightclubs, theaters, casinos, shops), and 5) infrastructure and lodging factors (highways, water, electricity, communication, public transport, hotels, restaurants). Lew (1990), Hu and Ritchie (1993), and Fluviá, Rigall-I-Torrent, Espinet, Carriga, and Saló (2011) agree with the factors identified by Gearing et al., including the economic factor (price), which is the consideration of the total cost of all the experiences related to the travel destination. Kozak & Rimmington (1998) and Enne and Schofield (2011) also include this factor, specifically identifying the quality-price relation as a criterion used by tourists.

Smith (1996) indicates that tourists who visit a destination are participating in a complex consumer experience and

that the attractiveness of a destination that tourists visit for a short or long stay includes whether or not it has children's facilities, activities that can be carried out when the weather is bad, good beaches, charming countryside, peace and quiet, a "vacation" atmosphere, places to eat and drink, good shops, history, culture, and opportunities to engage in sports and hobbies. Huybers (2003a) found that a destination's level of attractiveness can be enhanced by including the following: moderate prices, moderate levels of nightlife, and a mix of cultural and natural attractions.

Mo, Howard, and Havitz (1993), in line with Gearing et al. (1974), mention that the atmosphere of the destination (social and cultural characteristics) is the most fundamental factor of importance and that services and infrastructure (transportation, food, and lodging) are secondary factors of importance.

Dunn and Iso-Ahola (1991), following Gearing et al., indicate that the destination includes the site's facilities; natural resources, like the flora and fauna; the scenery; and the weather. Also, they state that the social factors include local people's friendliness, the language spoken, and the work that they do. Another factor to consider is the surrounding political situation, which includes the political stability, foreign policy, and the required documents to enter, like visas.

Murphy, Pritchard, and Smith (2000) present a conceptual model of the destination: 1) the Destination Environment, which includes the natural surroundings (weather), political-legal factors, technological factors (communication), economic factors (prices), cultural factors (historical patrimony), and social factors (hospitality of the residents); 2) the Service Infrastructure: shopping, recreation, food, lodging, transport, travel; and 3) the Tourist Destination Experience.

Fluviá et al. (2011) mention that tourists' choice regarding where to spend their vacations does not depend wholly and exclusively on the differences in private provision of the different alternatives in their package of choice (hotels of different categories); they must also consider the characteristics and attributes of the city or region that the tourist offering is located in. They add that "setting" can be understood to mean the offering of infrastructure and public services, the degree of preservation of the environment and the landscape, and the brand image of a certain region or touristic place. They indicate that con-

sumers choose the type of product they wish to consume based on their preferences, their income, and the current market prices; the differences in the prices of the private provisions of different cities could be interpreted as differences in the provision of goods, services, infrastructure, natural capital, brand image, and other public characteristics. They explain that there are multiple attributes linked to the location that could affect the final price.

On the other hand, Yuan and McDonald (1990) and Baloglu and Uysal (1996) state that there are two types of reasons that tourists travel: 1) external (pull) factors: nightlife, outdoor activities, culture, nature, scenery, high-quality restaurants, historical places, museums and art galleries, nice weather, and a variety of excursions, and 2) internal (push) factors: tourists' desire to get away, to rest, to relax, to care for their health, to have experiences with their families, to have cultural experiences, to indulge, and to experience new and different ways of life. These reasons are related to the dimensions proposed by Gearing et al. (1974), Murphy et al. (2000), Mo et al. (1993) and Dunn & Iso-Ahola (1991), which are very important in the development of the strategy of a competitive destination, with the goal of providing a current or potential regional or local short break destination that differentiates itself from the rest and is more attractive to tourists (Murphy et al., 2010).

## METHODOLOGY

After conducting a holistic review of sixty-four academic publications, as detailed in Table 2, the following criteria for analysis have been established: 1) the research had to be published in an academic journal or book; 2) the search terms were "length of stay," "short break," "city break," "short haul," "short holidays," "urban destination," "attractiveness," and "tourism products," and these terms had to be present in the title, the abstract, or the key words of the document; and 3) the selected discipline or academic area was those sources related to the tourism sector.

After the search identified the sources, their abstracts were reviewed, and the sources not fully related to the search criteria were discarded, leaving 64 studies published between the years of 1974 and 2022. The academic journals with the greatest number of sources related to the search criteria were *Annals of Tourism Research* with twelve articles, *Journal of Travel Research* with six articles, *Tourism Management* with five articles, *International Journal of Tourism Research* and *Journal of Travel & Tourism*

Marketing with four articles each, Tourism Economic, the Tourist Review and International Journal of Tourism Cities the with three articles each (table 2). Regarding the geographical scope of the studies analyzed, the results show a predominance of studies centered on tourist destinations in Europe, Asia, and Australia, only two studies from Latin America were found. The majority of the articles reviewed

were empirical studies in which the data collection method used was mainly that of questionnaires, along with some interviews and focus groups. The population studied was male and female tourists with an average age of 18 to 45 years, and the data analysis methods used were mainly cluster analysis, the nested logic model, the micro-economic model, and structural equation modeling.

**Table 2. Sixty-three academic publications**

Authors	Theoretical/ Empirical	Methodology Qualitative/ Quantitative/ Both	Sample Size/ Country or City	Data Collection Technique	Name del Journal
Alegre, J., & Pou, Ll. (2006)	Empirical	Quantitative	56915 tourists of Balearic Islands during the high seasons from 1993 to 2003	Tourist Expenditure Survey (TES)	Tourism Management
Alegre, J., Mateo, S., & Pou, Ll. (2011)	Empirical	Quantitative	12849 German tourists and 16313 British tourists.	Tourist Expenditure Survey (TES)	Tourism Management
Baloglu, S., & Uysal, M. (1996)	Empirical	Quantitative	1212 people.	Home Interviews that lasted 50 minutes, in western Germany.	Annals of Tourism Research
Bao, Y., & Mc Kercher, B. (2008)	Empirical	Quantitative	Primary research: 10 (5 short haul + 5 long haul)/ Hong Kong Secondary research: 95,000 people	Secondary: Data obtained from the Visitor Profile Report 2005, that derives from face-to-face interviews	Asia Pacific journal of tourism research
Barros, C., & Machado, L. (2010)	Empirical	Quantitative	346 people / Madeira, Portugal	Questionnaires	Annals of Tourism Research
Bigné, E., Sánchez, I., & Andreu, L. (2009).	Empirical	Quantitative	400 tourists that have stayed within the last 2 years.	Personal Interviews	International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research
Boerjan (1995).	Empirical	Qualitative	400 Flemish holiday-makers/ Bruges, Belgium	Questionnaires	The Tourist Review
Boto-García, D., Baños-Pino, J. F., & Álvarez, A. (2019).	Empirical	Quantitative	19,111 / Asturias - Spain	Questionnaire	Journal of Travel Research
Cheung, C., Takashima, M., Choi, H., Yang, H., & Tung, V. (2021).	Empirical	Qualitative	21 / Japan	Interviews	Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing
Choi, B., An, J., & Lee, S. (2020).	Empirical	Quantitative	-	Not used	Korea Economic Daily

<b>Authors</b>	<b>Theoretical/ Empirical</b>	<b>Methodology Qualitative/ Quantitative/ Both</b>	<b>Sample Size/ Country or City</b>	<b>Data Collection Technique</b>	<b>Name del Journal</b>
Croes, R. R. (2006).	Empirical	Quantitative	32 countries / The Caribbean	Data	Tourism Management
Davies, B. (1990).	Theoretical	Qualitative	-	Not used	International Journal of Hospitality Management
Downward, P. y Lumsdon, L. (2003)	Empirical	Quantitative	England	Self-completion questionnaire by way of accommodation providers	Tourism Economics: The Business and Finance of tourism and recreation
Dunn, S., & Iso-Ahola, S. (1991)	Empirical	Quantitative	255 / Washington DC, USA	2 page questionnaire	Annals of Tourism Research
Dunne, G., Flanagan, S., & Buckley, J. (2007)	Empirical	Quantitative	40 city break visitors/ Dublin, Ireland	In-depth interviews	Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing
Edgar, D, Littlejohn. D and Allardyce. L (1994).	Empirical	Quantitative	20 largest short break providers / Scotland	Telephone Interviews	International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management
Enne D. & Schofield P. (2011)	Empirical	Mixto	10000 university students and personnel, providing 150 useful answers.	Questionnaires and inferential statistics methods.	International journal of tourism research.
Fluviá, M., Rigall-I- Torrent, R., Espinet, J., Carriga, A., & Saló, A. (2011).	Theoretical	Quantitative	-	Not used	Estudios de Economía Aplicada
Gearing CE, Swart V and Var T (1974).	Empirical	Quantitative	26 tourism experts	Survey to tourism experts where they weigh on factors that they consider important. They do not ask tourists directly.	Journal of Travel Research
Gomes de Menezes, A., Moniz, A., & Cabral Vieira, J. (2008)	Empirical	Quantitative	400 people/ Azores, Portugal	Questionnaires	Tourism Economics: The business and finance of tourism and recreation
Heeley, J. (2015).	Theoretical	Qualitative		Not used	International Journal of Tourism Cities

Authors	Theoretical/ Empirical	Methodology Qualitative/ Quantitative/ Both	Sample Size/ Country or City	Data Collection Technique	Name del Journal
Herington, C., Merrilees, B., & Wilkins, H. (2013).	Empirical	Both	200 typical tourists	Focus group and questionnaires.	Journal of Vacation Marketing
Hu, Y. & Ritchie, J. R. B. (1993)	Empirical	Quantitative	400 telephone interviews in Canada.	A telephone survey questionnaire	Journal of Travel Research
Huybers T (2003)	Empirical	Quantitative	384 / Australia	Questionnaires	International Journal of Tourism Research
Huybers T. (2003a)	Empirical	Both	575 surveyed/ 4 geographical zones near Sydney	Interviews	Tourism Economics: The business and finance of tourism and recreation
Jacobsen, J. K. S., Iversen, N. M., & Hem, L. E. (2019).	Theoretical	Quantitative	1324 / Noruega	Survey	Annals of Tourism Research
Kozak, M., & Rimington, M (1998)	Theoretical	Qualitative	-	Not used	International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management.
Lew AA (1987)	Theoretical	Qualitative	-	Not used	Annals of Tourism Research
Lohmann, M. (1991).	Theoretical	Both	Approximately 3,500 survey respondents per year.	Data obtained from representative surveys.	The Tourist Review
Martinez-García, E., & Raya, J. (2008)	Empirical	Quantitative	990 foreign tourists staying in Catalonia /Catalonia, Spain	Interviews	Tourism Management
Martins, M. R., da Costa, R. A., & Moreira, A. C. (2022)	Empirical	Quantitative	334 backpackers visiting Porto, Portugal	Questionnaire survey	International Journal of Tourism Research
Mazor-Tregerman, M., Mansfeld, Y., & Elyada, O. (2015)	Theoretical	Qualitative	-	Not used	Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change
Mc Kercher, B. (2017)	Theoretical	Qualitative	Hong Kong	Not used	International Journal of Tourism Research,
Mo, C., Howard, D. R., & Havitz, M. E. (1993)	Empirical	Quantitative	102-member scale verification sample.	The tourist role scale	Annals of Tourism Research
Molina Collado, A. (2007)	Theoretical	Quantitative	560 tourists / Toledo, Spain	Interviews	Revista de Análisis Turístico

Authors	Theoretical/ Empirical	Methodology Qualitative/ Quantitative/ Both	Sample Size/ Country or City	Data Collection Technique	Name del Journal
Moll de Alba J., Prats L. And Coromina L.(2016)	Theoretical	Quantitative	6,539 tourists who visit Barcelona / Barceñona, Spain	Surveys made by Turisme de Barcelona	European Journal of Tourism Research
Moll-de-Alba, J., Prats, Ll., & Coromina, Ll. (2017)	Empirical	Quantitative	10,953 surveyed tourists.	Surveys to tourists	Analysis of the profiles of tourists, both short and long duration
Murphy, P., Pritchard, M., & Smith, B. (2000)	Empirical	Quantitative	3,088 surveys.	Data from the summer and fall 1994 visitor surveys conducted by Tourism Victoria, which is the local destination association.	Tourism Management
Murphy, P., Niininen, O., & Sanders, D. (2010)	Empirical	Both	134 focus group participants and 74 interview participants / Australia	Focus Groups and Industry Interviews	CRC for Sustainable Tourism Pty-
Mussalam, G. Q., & Tajeddini, K. (2016).	Both	Both	158 / Switzerland	Questionnaires	Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management
Neal, J.D. (2003)	Empirical	Quantitative	826 / USA	Survey	Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality and Tourism
Nientied, P. (2020).	Theoretical	Qualitative	Rotterdam	Not used	International Journal of Tourism Cities
Packer. (2020)	Theoretical	Qualitative	156 staff members of Australian university	Focus groups	Annals of Tourism Research Empirical Insights
Packer. (2021)	Empirical	Both	110 participants / Australia	Questionnaires	Annals of Tourism Research Empirical Insights
Park, J. Y., & Jang, S. (2018)	Empirical	Quantitative	481 / USA	Online survey	Journal of Travel Research
Pearce, D. (2015).	Theoretical	Qualitative	25 participants / New Zealand-	Interviews with practitioners	International Journal of Tourism Cities

Authors	Theoretical/ Empirical	Methodology Qualitative/ Quantitative/ Both	Sample Size/ Country or City	Data Collection Technique	Name del Journal
Pike, S. (2002).	Empirical	Qualitative	142 papers in the destination image literatura from the period 1973-2000.	Factor analysis. T-tests (21), perceptual mapping (21), analysis of means (20), cluster analysis (14), importance-performance analysis (9), repertory grid (8), mapping techniques (3), constant sum (2) and conjoint analysis (1).	Journal of Tourism Studies
Pratt, S. (2015)	Empirical	Quantitative	7 small island developing states	Data	Annals of Tourism Research
Reitano, A., Fazio, M., Schrippa Spagno, F. & Karanasios, N. (2021)	Empirical	Both	1253 individuals. Via Snowball sampling.	Questionnaires	Symphonya Emerging Issues in Management
Saarinen, J. (2006)	Theoretical	Qualitative	-	Not used	Annals of Tourism Research
Šagovnović, I., & Kovačić, S. (2020).	Empirical	Quantitative	203 domestic and international tourists of Novi Sad	Online Questionnaire	International Journal of Tourism Cities
Schmidhauser H. And Gallen St. (1992)	Theoretical	Both	-	Not used	The Tourist Review
Sharma, R. D. (2010)	Theoretical	Qualitative	11 people / Darwin, Australia	Foucus groups and Interviews	WIT Transactions on Ecology and the Environment.
Smith L (1994)	Theoretical	Qualitative	-	Not used	Annals of Tourism Research
Tsiotsu, R., & Vasioti, E. (2006)	Both	Quantitative	170 individuals who participated in a three-day trip in Greece / Hepeiros, Greece	Questionnaires	Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing
Uysal, M. y Jurowski, C. (1994)	Empirical	Quantitative	Respondents (9,367 out of a total of 11,500 completed interviews) who were 18 years of age or older, had taken a trip (pleasure, visiting friends and relatives) in the last three years.	Satisfaction survey to tourists that visited the island in the Caribbean, in the 50s.	Annals of Tourism Research

Authors	Theoretical/ Empirical	Methodology Qualitative/ Quantitative/ Both	Sample Size/ Country or City	Data Collection Technique	Name del Journal
Uysal, M., McDonald, C. D., & O’Leary, J. T. (1988).	Empirical	Quantitative	6720 people of ages 12 years or older	Personal interviews to population from the United States.	Journal of Travel Research
Williams, A. M., & Shaw, G. (2009)	Theoretical	Qualitative	-	Not used	Land Use Policy
Valls, J. F., Sureda, J., & Valls-Tunon, G. (2014)	Empirical	Quantitative	5,942 European citizens from 7 European countries / Europe	Questionnaires	Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing
Vu, H. Q., Luo, J. M., Li, G., & Law, R. (2020).	Both	Both	Hong Kong	Density Clustering Technique	Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research
Yang, J. (2017)	Empirical	Quantitative	400 people/ China	Questionnaires	Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research
Yang, Y., & Zhang, H. (2015)	Empirical	Quantitative	27,709 observations / Jiangsu, China	Questionnaires Data from province-wide domestic tourist survey	Tourism Analysis
Yuan, S. y Macdonald, C (1990)	Empirical	Quantitative	1500 people in Japan, France, Germany and United Kingdom	Interviews	Journal of Travel Research

**CONCLUSIONS**

Based on the fact that there is no consensus regarding the number of days or nights that a short break or city break entails, in many cases these concepts are used interchangeably (Enne & Schofield, 2011; Martínez-García & Raya, 2008), and there is even confusion regarding the term “short break,” as it has sometimes been used to indicate day trips (Downward & Lumsdon, 2003; Tsiotsou & Vasioti, 2006). Moreover, it is important to consider the key determinants in the description of a “short break”: the number of days the trip lasts, the distance, sociodemographic characteristics, the attributes of the attractiveness of the destination, etc.

Based on the literature review, the following determinants

of the “short break” concept are proposed: 1) duration of stay: 3 to 4 nights; 2) destination: mainly domestic or close places, away from the place of residence; 3) age: young and middle-aged people; 4) the fact that this is not the main annual trip; 5) the fact that it is not a business trip; and 6) the fact that it is more of an impulse decision than a planned one.

Regarding city breaks, it is proposed that they should be differentiated from the concept of short breaks and that the main destination of a city break should be a city. However, a deeper literature review regarding this type of vacation is needed to propose the determinants of this concept.

Additionally, one of the determinants of short breaks is the attributes of the destination's attractiveness (Barros & Machado, 2010; Gomes de Menezes et al., 2008; Herington et al., 2003; Murphy et al., 2010; Sharma, 2010; Smith, 1994), referring to what a traveler should find when visiting the destination. Based on the literature review, the following dimensions of a tourist destination are proposed: 1) natural resources, 2) cultural and historical resources, 3) social factors, 4) tourist services, and 5) infrastructure. The dimension "natural resources" includes the surrounding nature, like the flora and fauna, scenery, and weather (Dunn & Iso-Ahola, 1991; Fluviá et al., 2011; Gearing et al., 1974; Hu & Richie, 1993; Lew, 1990; Murphy et al., 2000). The dimension "cultural and historical resources" includes ruins, religious sites, and historical sites (Dunn & Iso-Ahola, 1991; Fluviá et al., 2011; Hu & Richie, 1993; Gearing et al., 1974; Lew, 1990; Murphy et al., 2000). The dimension "social factors" refers to the hospitality of the local people, their friendliness, the language spoken, and their jobs (Dunn & Iso-Ahola, 1991; Mo et al., 1993; Murphy et al., 2000). The "tourist services" dimension includes sporting facilities, nightclubs, theaters, places to eat, and lodging (Gearing et al., 1974; Fluviá et al., 2011, Hu & Richie, 1993; Lew, 1990; Murphy et al., 2000). The "infrastructure" dimension refers to the highways and to the water, electricity, communication, and transportation situation (Dunn & Iso-Ahola, 1991; Fluviá et al., 2011; Gearing et al., 1974; Hu & Richie, 1993; Lew, 1990; Mo et al., 1993; Murphy et al., 2000).

This paper contributes to the tourism sector literature because it identifies the dimensions of tourist destinations. These findings can help tourism managers to design short break packages that best suit their customers.

As for the contribution to professionals who work in the tourism sector, this study will allow for the development of a strategy for competitive destinations with the goal of providing current and potential regional or local short break destinations that are differentiated and more attractive on the market (Murphy et al., 2010). To this end, collaborative effort in the tourism industry is needed; that is to say, the public and private sectors must work together to develop short break destinations so they contribute to the regional and local economies of the country.

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