Finding Happiness Through Globetrotting: Push Factors of Long-Term Travellers

By

© Valérie Bertrand

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study explored the perspectives of long-term travellers regarding their motivational factors (i.e. why long-term travel) and subjective wellbeing (i.e. how long-term travel enhances happiness). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 22 participants using a purposive sample. Interview transcripts were triangulated to external sources such as participants' websites and blogs. Data were coded and analyzed in the NVivo qualitative software program using a mixture of intuitive and methodological (constant comparison) processes. Findings revealed that old misconceptions (i.e. dated definitions, best suited for single men, journey as an escape and as a way to achieve fame and glory) still exist, as well as new insights about what long-term travel is, why people travel long-term and how long-term travel enhances happiness.

Keywords: Travel motivation, leisure travel, happiness/wellbeing, push factors, globetrotters/long-term travellers

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF APPENDICES

CHAPTER 1

- INTRODUCTION -

The concept of travel is far from recent. Ever since there have been people to populate the earth, there has been the desire to see further than the eye can see; but the reasons why the journey is anticipated in the first place have greatly evolved over time. In our era, travel has become an increasingly normal part of life. While the majority chooses the short-term holiday before returning to the 'standard' life, others prefer travel as a daily routine and the world as home. Long-term travel as a way of life has been a growing trend in recent decades. Even though scholars have paid more attention to this eccentric segment market of tourism in recent decades, little still is known about long-term travellers and what pushes them to dedicate their lives to wandering around the world. This study supplements the current knowledge in the field by examining the motivational factors of long-term travellers and how travelling makes them happy.

Chapter 1 provides a summary of the travelling lifestyle through a brief overview of the history of travel from the earlier ages to the current era. Trends in travel are exemplified and the concept of long-term travel is introduced. The second part of the chapter centres on the justification for this research study by presenting gaps in the current literature. Several examples of recent studies are given, along with the strengths and weaknesses of current knowledge. Finally, the study purpose and research questions are detailed.

1.1 Time Perspectives in Travel and Tourism

> If there is one thing which has defined human nature throughout history it is our fidgety, irrepressible impulse to move, to discover and cross new frontiers, to adapt to new environments, to appease that same unquenchable curiosity which prompted our earliest ancestors to swing down from the treetops and start exploring the jungle floor six million years ago (Jones, 2015, para.1).

Humans have always travelled. Historians believe that the first great human migrations started with Homo erectus leading the way from Africa to explore the landmasses known today as Europe and Asia (Jones & Scanlan, 2015). From there, Homo sapiens would have continued being nomadic and eventually set foot on every major inhabitable landmass on Earth (ibid). As a result, humans' motivation for moving sparked the population spread on our planet from a very early age. Then when the subsistence methods changed from the nomadic hunter-gatherer lifestyle to the domestication of plants and animals several thousands of years ago, the need for endless roaming decreased and a more sedentary lifestyle began.

This sedentary lifestyle led to new inventions, such as the wheel, approximately 5000 years ago. This practical invention for transportation initiated road transportation, even though sailboats remained predominant for long distance journeys. At sea, great voyages started to take place, but not all explorers returned. In the period briefly before Christ, knowledge of the world began to increase through travel. This was enough to enable the drawing of maps portraying contours and landscapes, as well as various signs of human activity. Slowly but surely, travel became more attractive and accessible to others.

The settling down of populations also led to the continued growth of communities into civilizations, and from civilizations to empires. For those in power, travel brought expanded knowledge, trade led to new acquisitions and tax profits brought unfathomable riches (Jones & Scanlan, 2015). Emperors of kingdoms such as the Roman Empire, the Muslim Empire and the Mongol Empire, sent their armies near and far to conquer land and goods. They were not known for being charitable and kind; but their quests for settlements left important transportation infrastructures, such as roads made of stones and bridges over rivers built by the Romans across Europe, several of which still exist today.

Soon civilizations the world over, from Incas to Minoans, recognized the value of trading and the importance of accessing natural resources previously unknown. The Silk Road, that linked the Eastern and the Western civilizations, and which served as an important trading route, is an appreciable example of such significant evolutions in travel. "Traders travelled far and wide, both disseminating and returning with new inventions, technologies, ideas, foods, goods, and every other conceivable thing that contributes to the makeup of human society" (Jones & Scanlan, 2015, The Islamic Golden Age, para.11).

Not only explorers and traders were using roads to travel, pilgrims were as well. As religion played an undeniable role in people's lives, pilgrimages to sites associated with religious icons grew extensively in popularity: Jerusalem for Christians, Mecca for Islamists, and Varanasi for Hindus, as examples. Pilgrims travelled far to experience deliverance and peace of soul; some would even make it into an annual rite in hopes of a safer and happier future.

Eventually, roads in much of the world suffered greatly from collapses of empires

and the religious wars, in particular the Crusades. During the so-called Dark Ages (approximately 1000 years), chaos dominated in civilizations near and far. Barriers grew stronger between people and territories. During that time, travel was dangerous and dreadful and, as a result, avoided by most.

At the close of the Dark Ages, Marco Polo's tales of his 24 years of worldwide roam through mythical lands inspired others to reach out and aspire for new horizons. In 1492, Columbus, who already knew the world was round — not flat — was the first to set sail west from Europe towards Asia, when he discovered America by coincidence. In 1498, Vasco da Gama completed the first full circumnavigation of Africa and reached India. Both explorers gave a colossal leap in both maritime knowledge and in understanding the shapes of the central continents (Jones & Scanlan, 2015). At last, Magellan's fleet reached the pinnacle of maritime expeditions when they completed the full loop of the Earth in 1522 (Biography, 2015). "The voyages and explorations that cumulated in the Age of Discovery changed the world forever" (Jones & Scanlan, 2015, The Age of Discovery, para.26).

Waterways opened up doors to the spice trade and gradually the colonized world turned into a mingling of cultures, foods, and technologies. The old and the new worlds connected. Trains made their appearance in Europe, offering a quick and affordable way to travel. The Wright Brothers invented the first passenger aircrafts in 1958 (Stratford Air & Space Museum). As Neil Armstrong set foot on the moon in 1969 and shouted the famous, "That's one small step for (a) man, one giant leap for mankind," (NASA, 2014, para.1) humans had found ways to travel on land, water, air, and even space.

During the last decades, people have continued to explore every corner of our globe,

from the highest mountain summit to the deepest abyss, through jungle and desert, because travelling has never been so accessible, affordable and convenient. Although Magellan required three years to complete his travel around the Earth, we can now do the same in less than three days. Very few places on Earth are left undiscovered. Many people have already paved the way — and written guidebooks — so that others can follow in their paths. They have given confidence to the rest that nearly every travelling mission is possible.

1.2 Tourism in the New Era

> "The desire to fly is an idea handed down to us by our ancestors who looked enviously on the birds soaring freely through space on the infinite highway of the air"
> -Wilbur Wright (Stafford Air & Space Museum, para.1)

It is generally understood among scholars that people leave on a holiday in order to take a break from a strenuous routine, in order to find a peaceful refuge away from their ordinary home and disconnect, if only for some time (Boo & Jones, 2009; Gilbert & Abdullah, 2004; Haukeland, 1990; Jang & Cai, 2002; Li, Law & Wang, 2010; Riley, 1988; Weaver, McCleary, Han & Blosser, 2009; White & White, 2004). During the past decades, tourism seems to have built a crucial social function, and to a certain extent has become a measuring factor in the realization of a good life. In Western civilization at the very least, many view travelling as a highly rewarding experience, one that the vast majority wishes to participate in at least once in their lifetime.

Tourism is quickly becoming an increasingly normal part of peoples' lives (Paris, 2010). With this perspective, it comes as no surprise that tourism is currently the fastest

growing industry in the world (Jones & Scanlan, 2015; World Travel and Tourism Council, 2015). As a result, travel and tourism is widely known as a central mechanism for continued growth and job creation globally. In the 2015 annual update of the economic impact of travel and tourism, the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) stated that the direct contribution of travel and tourism to global gross domestic product and employment amounts to US$2.4 trillion (2014 prices) and 105 million jobs respectively. The travel sector is currently out-performing traditionally leading sectors including automotive, public services and retail. In the next 10 years, the travel industry is expected to grow an average of 3.8% yearly (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2015), thanks to several emerging markets in Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East (Cohen & Cohen, 2015), and the rising share of people travelling abroad.

The massive expansion of the travel and tourism industry and the rise of emerging markets can mainly be attributed to the rapid development of transportation systems over the past decades. Trains, roads and especially airplanes have made trips more comfortable, secure and affordable. Travel has become more accessible to the middle class as costs have dropped. Additionally, the removal of borders in several parts of the world has allowed for a freer exchange of people and goods. In Europe, borders have become almost obsolete for Europeans. Furthermore, a greater number of Asian countries are now granted tourist visas into countries that have refused their entry since World War I. Several non-Western countries were previously ineligible for international travel. Paasi (2009, as cited in Simpson, 2010) refers to this tendency as the movement towards a ‘borderless world’, a world in which political delimitations do not cause interference in the natural flow of

people and goods.

The introduction of the Internet in the mid-1990s has also significantly contributed to the exceptional growth in the travel and tourism industry due to its revolutionary impact on the global communication landscape. The quantity of online information is nearly infinite and available in real time. Online guidebooks, travelling websites, discussion forums, travellers' blogs, social networks such as Facebook and Twitter, are just a few examples of the resources that the Internet has made accessible and that are commonly used to plan many kinds of trips.

The impact of the Internet also reaches beyond practical matters, for example by allowing people to stay in touch with life at home and communicate with anyone, anywhere, at any time. E-mailing, chatting and virtual calling via Skype or Gmail is now globally used and works with even minimal Internet connectivity. In other words, the Internet has transformed the world into a village where neighbours near and far are just a click away. From a travelling perspective, this means that one can be travelling the world, while easily keeping up with what is going on at home. Global communication has made compromising between the sometimes-individualistic act of travelling abroad and caring about the loved ones at home easier to manage. In the last centuries, boats, trains and airplanes may have given us a way to overcome physical barriers, but the Internet most definitely transcended these. As a result, travelling — and in particular long-term travel — has never been as manageable as it is today (Boo & Jones, 2009; Sørensen, 2003).

1.3 Travel as a Lifestyle

Of the millions of people who travel every year, only a few choose wandering as a way of life. Standard holiday takers are generally content with a short interruption from the routine, a sudden change of décor or getting a quick glimpse at another country's culture before returning to the 'normal life'. Ideally, while doing so, they appreciate feeling cushioned and taken care of, and so comfort, convenience and ease of travel are typically widely sought (Choibamroong, 2006; Maoz, 2007; Riley, 1988). On the other hand, there are people who favour less comfort and more simplicity, and treasure a deeper type of experience; the kind that a short holiday usually cannot provide. MacBeth (2000) described the lifestyle of this rare breed of travellers as "a whole way of life that they will pursue indefinitely, a life of hardship and insecurity counterbalanced by powerful intrinsic rewards" (p.20).

There are many terms used for those living a moving lifestyle: wanderers, nomads, roamers, drifters, vagabonds, itinerants, tramps, etc. As many of those terms are often linked to the nonconformist, rebel-type of person, and insinuate a negative connotation, this paper chooses to use the term *long-term travellers*. Long-term travellers are, in many ways, tourists pursuing a personal dream. The main difference between the utopian dream of a typical holiday taker and that of a long-term traveller, is that the latter carries on a dream beyond the confines of the time capsule called *holiday* and has no specific intentions on returning *home*. Long-term travellers do not consider themselves tourists on vacation either, but simply normal individuals living their own life as free citizens of the world (ibid).

The search and creation of an alternative lifestyle — the travelling one in this case

— can arguably be called the search for a utopia, thus attaining a certain level of personal accomplishment and satisfaction that in return has the potential to enhance one's quality of life (ibid). Inevitably, the utopian vision comes in many sizes and shapes; therefore it is irrelevant to pretend that it is attractive or suitable to the wide majority. Many of us would not turn our backs to the security of the standard way of living, and most would probably feel content by following the mainstream life path that society has paved before us, and enjoy the occasional holiday abroad. But the gap between taking a two-week holiday and living within no constrains of time and place, is nevertheless immense, thus worth exploring in further detail.

There is perhaps much to learn about alternative lifestyles and their benefits to human kind. Society itself is in constant evolution and so are visions of utopia. With this in mind, unorthodox lifestyles remind us that each of us has his/her own sense of how life can be lived. If it is true that the experience of travel has become a sought-after component of a good life, then it would be incorrect to believe that it is purely innate. Each individual has a distinct idea about life and the way it should be lived. But life philosophies are often influenced by family and friends, and invisibly controlled by culture and traditions, which in turn, affect our decisions on how we actually spend our life. It is generally harder to stand against the mainstream current, than to follow along. As a result, it is generally believed that most people prefer a compromise; saving travel for the holiday period, otherwise living the standard 'work - house - family' regime. However, for the long-term traveller, life is not a compromise; it is a constant pursuit of self-realization; one that is very connected to the *now* time.

> A master in the art of living draws no sharp distinction between his work and his play; his labour and leisure; his mind and his body; his education and his recreation. He hardly knows which is which. He simply pursues his vision of excellence through whatever he is doing, and leaves others to determine whether he is working or playing. To himself, he always appears to be doing both.
>
> -Lawrence P. Jacks (as cited in Anderson, 2002, p.62)

1.4 Research on Travel Motivation

Research on travel motivation has received considerable attention in recent decades, as a means to understand what attracts people towards foreign destinations and make the choices they do when it comes to leisure holidays. The study of *travel motivation* refers to the structuring of theoretical knowledge gained in the effort of better understanding tourist behaviour (Jang & Cai, 2002). Knowledge is then used in developing actionable service and destination-specific marketing strategies (Chen & Uysal, 2003). Understanding travel motivation is crucial to all stakeholders in the tourism industry and in the planning of sustainable growth in touristic areas. Knowledge about past and current trends helps stakeholders predict future tendencies in travel and tourism, and better understand how they can meet the needs and expectations of future travellers.

Foreign destinations offer novelty because they provide experiences that are not the everyday experience, such as breathtaking landscapes, tasteful dishes, attractive cultural events, uncommon leisure activities, different languages, and/or special shopping opportunities, etc. It is universally recognized by scholars that the search for novelty is one

of the leading motivational factors in tourism (Boo & Jones, 2009; Chen & Uysal, 2003; Jang & Cai, 2002; Riley, 1988; Weaver, et al., 2009). Given the financial impacts, many studies have focused on destination selection and attributes, with less focus on the impact of tourism on travellers themselves (Tse, 2014). In other words, many have been inquisitive about the sources of profit gained from tourism, as opposed to the intrinsic benefits for the individual who travels. Very few have, for example, explored how tourism might affect people's perceptions of themselves, home, neighbourhood, work, friends, relatives, and life in general (ibid). In addition, very few studies have explored attitudes towards healthy-living or how hunting for a happier life may fit into travel behaviour (Gilbert & Abdullah, 2004; MacBeth, 2000). Hallab, Yoon and Uysal (2003) stated that, "guidelines to healthy-living have not been introduced in the travel and tourism literature" (p.188). Inasmuch as tourism is perceived as a social phenomenon, the number of studies focusing on the inner motivations of travellers and the personal outcomes of longer journeys abroad are still rare. Very few of the ones already conducted (such as MacBeth, 2000; Riley, 1988; White & White, 2004) have focused on long-term travellers as a unique segment of the market.

Pearce (1990) believed that the limited theory development within tourist motivation could be explained by the complexity of its psychological constructs, which according to him, also lacks widely accepted research methodology and validated measurement. Research methods employed in the vast majority of the studies done on travel motivation have been quantitative. Missing from the literature are studies that allow participants to express themselves in their own words and that portray real experiences from a life of travel. "In the last two decades, scholars have carried out a significant amount

of leisure market segmentation studies" (Chen & Uysal, 2003, p.53), most of which have used relatively small samples and most-visited locations such as tourist attractions and international airports (Boo & Jones, 2009; Chen & Uysal, 2003; Jang & Cai, 2002; Li, et al., 2010). Very few research projects have brought their investigation off the beaten path (such as MacBeth, 2000; White & White, 2004) to examine unusual ways of travelling and living life. In sum, there is a definite gap in the current knowledge about long-term travellers; a gap both within theory and method.

1.5 Rationale for This Particular Research Project

"It is generally agreed that knowledge is the most valuable asset to an organization" (Li, et al., 2010, p.113). In the light of the current gap within the field of knowledge, it seems justified to further investigate the travel motivations of new and eccentric segments of the travel market, those of long-term travellers. In our era, travel patterns are becoming more and more difficult to predict, as our world sees an ever-growing rate in the flow of people and goods. Since trends in travel and tourism currently follow this hasty expansion, new challenges steadily emerge, calling for a newer awareness of the more than ever broad range of tourists.

The number of people wanting to wander around our globe has never been as high as it now is (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2015), and for touristic destinations to be able to thrive, knowledge about the different market segments has never been as crucial. There will soon no longer be such thing as a 'typical tourist', and unless the research field expands views outside of the so-called common, the current generalizations will soon

become insufficient to enclose and predict patterns for everyone that travels. Consequently, local economy at destinations will be at risk for missing out on opportunities and further expansion.

Interestingly though, little is known about the motives behind globetrotting, although the phenomenon has existed for ages. What we do know is that it has evolved from being a way of subsistence to a way to strive for self-realization and a better way of life. But exactly why certain travellers prefer this life path over a mainstream one (the one the Western world normally conforms to) is still relatively new and unfamiliar. As a consequence, long-term travellers or globetrotters are often victims of criticism, tagging and clichés, most of which are caused by ignorance and lack of understanding of their motivations (MacBeth, 2000).

Motivation for travel is subjective in nature and is in inevitably and perpetual evolution, which makes this area of research arguably one of the most important, albeit complicated, areas of tourism behaviour. Therefore, it is of high significance to continue the search for extended and up-to-date knowledge on the matter. "Whether travel and tourism bring about positive changes in our perception and lives in general just has not been tested rigorously and systematically enough" (Tse, 2014, p.991). This present study intended to do just that.

Lastly, research on long-term travel can help better understand the 'tourist role': motivations, the tracing of concepts of experiences, the narratives of untraditional ways of travelling and the culture of globetrotters. Although this study aimed at a smaller share of the travel market, it can contribute to gaining rich insights into the eccentricity of the

segment. Outcomes are therefore not only of great interest for the tourism industry in predicting future travel patterns, but also for social sciences in complementing the current knowledge on motivational factors and for the field of recreation through a better understanding of leisure behaviour.

1.6 Research Purpose and Questions

This research project uncovered the perspectives of long-term travellers in regards to their motivational factors and subjective wellbeing. More precisely, it reached out for a better description of the push factors leading to extended travel and a deeper understanding of the *why* behind this way of life. Secondly, this project aspired to find out more about the search for a happier life through the means of travel and precisely *how* travel enhances a traveller's own state of comfort and freedom.

Not everyone is meant for long-term travel. While most enjoy the comfort of their home, the stability of their work and the predictability of their life, long-term travellers live on a day-to-day basis in a constantly instable and unpredictable setting. So what exactly motivates a person to leave home for such an extended period of time? What is this person looking for or seeking through long-term travel? How does this contribute to his/her happiness in life since it is a personal choice to live this way? And, at last, how does a long-term traveller differ from the mainstream holiday-taker when it comes to travel motivation? Thus, the purpose of this study was to answer the following questions: 1) Why do people travel long-term?; and 2) How does long-term travel contribute to happiness?

CHAPTER 2

- LITERATURE REVIEW -

Most current theories on travel motivation are blended from psychology and tourism literature, and are rooted in one of two theories: Maslow's (1943) Pyramid of Needs and Dann's (1977) Push and Pull Theory. Scholars have explored and extended the use of these theories to explain why people make the choices they make, including concerning leisure holidays. In the past decades, there has also been an increasing number of studies on the benefits of tourism to specific locations, but very few focus on the personal benefits of travel to the traveller. Most research has focused on the attributes of destinations and the economic impact on touristic regions. Thus, much less is known about the flip side of tourism, the impact on travellers. Also lacking from the literature is a common definition of what a 'long-term traveller' is, thereby making comparisons between studies difficult. Greater knowledge about the motivational factors of long-term travellers can help creating a base for future operational criteria, as well as clarifying current theories and applications.

Chapter 2 provides an overview of pertinent literature and research related to motivation, happiness and the terminology used to describe the traveller. In the first section, concepts related to motivation are described and the two main theories of travel motivation are explored. The second section focuses on the concept of happiness and on terminology, as well as on a justification for why happiness and travel are closely related. The third

section gives a short history of backpacker travellers from the 1960's until now, along with a brief explanation of the relationship between the backpackers and the long-term travellers. At last, a definition of the long-term traveller is proposed.

2.1 Travel Motivation

For a long time, motivation has been recognized as one of the major psychological factors influencing travel behaviour (Fodness, 1994). This explains in great part the association between the fields of social sciences and tourism in several major studies on travel motivation. In social sciences, motivation encompasses several elements of one's personality traits and aptitude, such as attitude, perception, personality and self-concept, and learning (ibid). In psychology in particular, motivation is often explained in terms of cause and effect, also known as *motives* and *behaviours*. From this perspective, motivation influences the direction, persistence and vigour of goal directed behaviour (Iso-Ahola, 1982).

In the field of travel and tourism, Pearce, Morrison and Rutledge (1998) defined tourist motivation as "the global integrating network of biological and cultural forces, which gives value and direction to travel choices, behaviour and experience" (p.215). In other words, a motive for travel is a *need* that is sufficiently stimulated to push an individual to seek satisfaction, "since an unsatisfied need might cause disappointment, dissatisfaction, and feelings of disequilibrium" (Russ & Kirkpatrick, 1982, p.151). In other words, the study of travel motivation is closely related to the concept of 'purpose of travel' or the 'necessity of a trip' (Kozak, 2002) and primarily answers the question: 'Why do

people travel?'

The vast inventory of motives for travel includes recreation, relaxation, pleasure, discovery, experiences, cultural interest, shopping, and meeting people. Although the categorization of tourists based on motivations to travel differs in terms and number from author to author, recurrent themes often emerge, for example novelty seeking (Weaver, McCleary, Han & Blosser, 2009). According to Krippendorf (1987), motives are largely created by society and shaped by everyday life. They are therefore in constant change. Page and Connell (2003) noted that tourist motivation is an ever-changing process and that we evolve as tourists over time (as cited in Banerjea, 2007). Personal values also seem to influence an individual's actions, attitude, and beliefs, as they are variables used to pinpoint traits connected to social behaviour (Hallab, Yoon & Uysal, 2003). Kozak (2002) agreed, noting that travel motivation may vary from one person to another, from one market segment to another, from one destination to another, as well as from one decision-making process to the next.

There is an underlying assumption that holiday-takers seek leisure in order to satisfy psychological needs (Maslow, 1943; Steyn, 2004). Boo and Jones (2009) also suggested that tourists may have different push motivations when destinations change, which implies that any static understanding about travel motivation is impossible. Cultural factors may also explain variations in travel behaviour, depending on the bond the traveller has with his/her own country of origin and its underlying societal values (Pizam & Sussmann, 1995). For example, tourists from a reserved culture may not enjoy uncertainty and as result, be hesitant to expose themselves to unknown or different experiences (Maoz, 2007). Such

people would not necessarily embrace new intercultural relationships as easily as others would.

Finally, although it would be naive to think that a simple classification could possibly encompass the multitude of factors determining personal motivation, several segmentation studies have been done in order to find typical patterns and to categorize travellers through typology (classification of tourists into relatively homogeneous groups). Shaw and Williams (2004) concluded by saying that typologies are relatively static models based on fairly limited information, and that individuals change their approach to tourism over time. In other words, tourist typologies offer mere generalities.

2.1.1 Two Main Theories:

Today's theories on motivation are generally rooted in one of the two following perspectives: Maslow's (1943) Pyramid of Needs and Dann's (1977) Push and Pull theory. Although several other researchers have added their share of knowledge to the field, those two theories are widely respected amongst scholars and are still very often used to support or further justify research on travel motivation.

2.1.1.1 Maslow's Pyramid of Needs

The oldest one of the two main theories is Maslow's well-known Pyramid of Needs. Maslow (1943, 1954) believed that personal needs were organized in a hierarchy of increasing importance. At the bottom of the pyramid (see Figure 1) are the physiological needs, followed by safety, belonging, self-esteem, and finally self-actualization at the top.

Maslow (1943) argued that only when lower needs are fulfilled — at least in most part —, is an individual then motivated by needs of the next level. According to the model, if a person is missing food, shelter and love, hunger is felt as a stronger need than the others, as it is lower in the pyramid, and thus conceived as more fundamental. As a person attempts to fulfil the needs of the physiological level, all other needs from levels above simply become non-existent or pushed into the background (ibid).

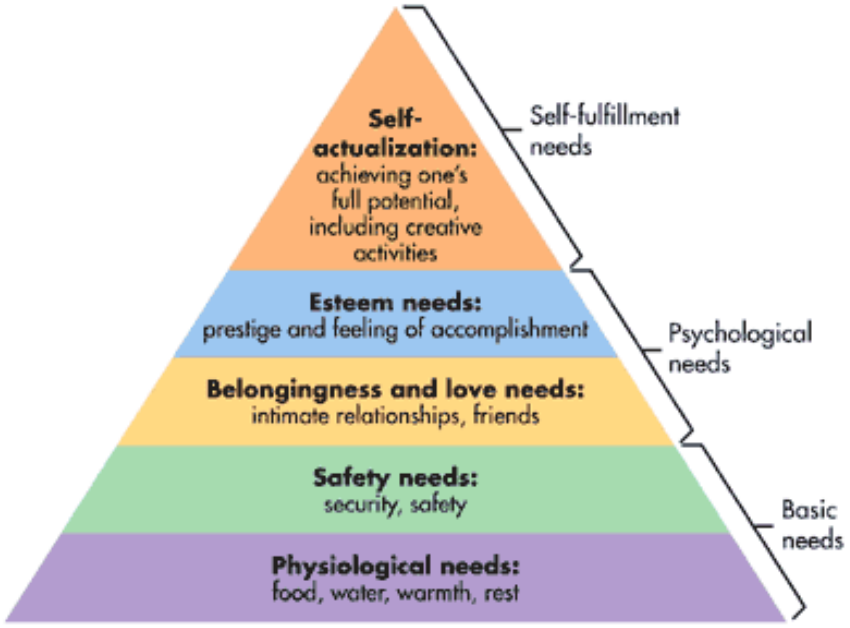

Figure 1: Maslow's Pyramid of Needs (1943)

Source: Understanding Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. (2015, August 10).

In the dynamics of the individual, "the organism is dominated and its behaviour organized only by unsatisfied needs" (Maslow, 1943, p.375). In other words, a want that is satisfied is no longer a want. For most people from the Western world, needs of the physiological, safety and arguably also the belonging levels are no longer active motivators,

thus leaving the needs from the two upper levels: self-esteem and self-actualization. At those upper levels is also where motivation to travel starts.

Maslow (1943) believed that most human beings have a desire for a stable feeling of self-respect, self-esteem, and for the esteem of others. Esteem may be classified into two subdivisions: "First, the desire for strength, for achievement, for adequacy, for confidence in the face of the world, and for independence and freedom" (ibid, p.381), and second, "the desire for reputation or prestige, recognition, attention, importance or appreciation" (ibid, p.382). But even with these needs satisfied, Maslow believed that discontent and restlessness would soon or later appear unless the individual was doing what s/he was meant to be. At the top level of the pyramid, needs of self-actualization are defined as "the desire for self-fulfilment, namely, to the tendency for [a person] to become actualized in what he is potentially" (ibid, p.383).

Although the model suggests an inflexible hierarchy, Maslow himself argued that its structure is actually not nearly as rigid as implied, and that 100% fulfilment of all needs of the same level is not required to move to the next level. Instead, the theory recommends considering fulfilment of needs in terms of increasing versus decreasing percentage of attention towards the needs of particular levels (Maslow, 1954). The popularity of the model lies in its simplicity and it has been widely used in psychology, counselling, marketing, as well as in tourism. Some authors suggest that Maslow's theory is missing other important needs, such as dominance, abasement, play, aggression (Witt & Wright, 1992, as cited in Hsu & Huang, 2008), as well as the needs for the aesthetic, to know and to understand (Maslow, 1954).

Several travel theories have been based upon Maslow's Pyramid of Needs. Crompton (1979) addressed the relationship between travel motivations and people's needs using the concept of equilibrium. According to him, any disturbance in one's own equilibrium, urges the person to take actions towards finding satisfaction (in this case, taking a trip or vacation) and thus restoring the equilibrium. Pearce and Caltabiano (1983) were confident about the concept of a motivational career in travel in which the more experienced the traveller is, the higher is the need to travel. Pearce (1988) conceptualised the Travel Career Ladder (TCL). The model claims that travellers differ according to their travel career level due to their motives for travel, and are expected to ascend the ladder over time. But not all scholars agree with the model or the fact that it is a valuable predictor of travel behaviour (Ryan, 1998), as not all motives are necessarily increasing in importance over time, nor are motives consistently permanent to the traveller.

2.1.1.2 Dann's Push and Pull Theory

The second theory, one that specifically targets travel motivation, involves *push* and *pull* factors and was developed by Dann in 1977. People travel because they are pushed by internal forces such as the repulsion for a daily routine, and pulled by external forces such as destination attributes (ibid). Push factors are internal to the individual and instil a desire to travel, such as the need for relaxation, exploration, social interaction and enhancement of kinship relationships. Pull factors, on the other hand, are external to the individual and explain the actual destination choice in answering the where, when and how people travel. Seaton (1996) further explained that push factors can include the avoidance of work and

cultural/social pressures at home, while pull factors can include seeking leisure/play, freedom and escape, novelty, relationships, relaxation, escape, culture, and education (as cited in Boo & Jones, 2009). It is also generally accepted that individuals perceive push factors before the pull factors are strong (Mill & Morrison, 1998).

Dann (1977) believed that push factors could be confined into two sets of travel motives: anomie and ego-enhancement. Anomie represents the desire to transcend the feeling of isolation generated by the everyday life. This motive symbolizes the 'getting away from it all' feeling and the lust for leaving current struggles in everyday life. Ego-enhancement on the other hand originates from the desire of recognition and explains the aspiration for status that travel confers. Dann (ibid) used his theory in the conceptualization of travel motivation, inter alia, as a way to explain the decisions that justify the travel, mainly those that take place before the trip starts.

Several interesting studies have been done on push and pull factors. Using Dann's theory in an attempt to conceptualize the motives of pleasure travellers, Crompton (1979) identified seven recurrent push motives: escape from a mundane environment, exploring and evaluation of self, relaxation, prestige, regression, enhancement of kinship relationships, facilitation of social interaction, as well as two pull motives: novelty and education. Crompton (ibid) was convinced that both the push and pull factors influenced tourist motivation, vacation destination choice, and vacation behaviour. Jamrozy and Uysal (1994) used surveyed German travellers with an exhaustive list of 30 pushes and 53 pulls motivational factors only to find that people repeatedly chose the same factors. In doing so, they identified that the most common push factors were: escape, novelty, family/friend

togetherness, sports, adventure and excitement, familiar environment, luxury/doing nothing, and prestige. The most common pull factors on the other hand were: active sports environment, unique natural environment, safety, sunshine, inexpensiveness, cultural activities, entertainment, sightseeing, local culture, different culture and cuisine, and uniqueness of small towns/villages/mountains (ibid). In examining the cross-cultural motivations for outbound travel, Yuan and McDonald (1990) indicated that people from each of four countries they studied (Japan, France, West Germany, and the U.K.) travel to satisfy the same unmet needs, or push factors. However, motives for choosing a particular destination — pull factors — appeared to differ, showing that the level of importance that individuals attach to the various factors differ according to ethnicity and country of origin (also shown in Boo & Jones, 2009). At last, Klenosky (2002), one of the first to perform a qualitative study on travel motivation, interviewed 53 university students about their upcoming spring break. Not only did he identify various push and pull factors, but he most importantly found that one single pull factor, the destination, could possibility serve different and multiple ends for travellers, meaning that one unique destination could be associated with several push factors.

Although the Push and Pull theory is still vastly utilized, it is also criticized as being 'just common sense explanations' (Pizam, et al., 1979, as cited in Hsu & Huang, 2008). Even though a recurrence of certain motives can be identified in most studies including novelty, relationships, relaxation, escape, culture, or education, no situation is exactly alike and neither are the conclusions drawn from identifying those factors. This demonstrates once more the dynamic nature and the complexity of travel motivation as a research topic

and motivational research in general. Jamrozy and Uysal (1994) as well as Yoon and Uysal (2005) also argued that pushes and pulls are dependent on whether a person is travelling solo, with friends, family, colleagues or as a couple. The solo traveller would typically feel more compelled to fulfil the adventurous type of needs, whereas a family would more typically seek comfort and relaxation. But once again, these are mere generalities.

Closely related to the Push and Pull theory is Iso-Ahola's (1982) theory of tourists seeking satisfaction and avoiding routine. According to Iso-Ahola (ibid), a motive is an internal factor that arouses, directs, and integrates behaviour. Later, Mannell and Iso-Ahola (1987) specified that people seek leisure travels as a means to escape from the routine, stress, and problems of the everyday life, and to obtain personal/interpersonal rewards such as relaxation, exploration, learning, challenge or social interactions. In this perspective, there are two major dimensions of leisure and travel motivational forces: approach (seeking) and avoidance (escape). Iso-Ahola's motives resemble Dann's anomie and ego-enhancement in the statement that people travel so they can leave behind the personal and/or interpersonal problems of the everyday life, and to achieve personal and/or interpersonal reward. Krippendorf (1987) also believed in the concept of escape through the importance of 'getting away' as the foundation of travel behaviour. "Travel is motivated by 'going away' rather than 'going towards' something or somebody. To shake off the everyday situation is much more important than the interest in visiting new places and people" (ibid, p. 29).

2.2 Pursuit of Happiness

"It is generally agreeable that motivation means a state of need or a condition that drives an individual toward certain types of action that are seen as likely to bring satisfaction" (Moutinho, 2000, p.113). The development of human society can historically be seen as the process of the pursuit of a happier life (TianWen & MingYuan, 2014). With this perspective in mind, it is plausible to assume that seeking happiness (or pleasure) is part of human nature; we base our life choices upon what satisfies us. And in the field of social sciences (psychology and tourism studies in particular), happiness and motivation are believed to be closely linked (Hsu & Huang, 2008; Jang & Cai, 2002). Many believe that travel increases quality of life due to the many benefits that it induces (Hsu & Huang, 2008; Jang & Cai, 2002; Ribeiro, Durrenberger, Yarnal & Chick, 2009). Whether it is a temporary stress release, a meeting with new friends, a new learning experience, a memorable encounter, a breathtaking view, or simply a moment of exploration for the sake of nourishing curiosity, the benefits of travel are nevertheless abundant.

2.2.1 The Concept of Happiness and Terminology

Happiness is considered to be a state of mind: a feeling of contentment or fortune (New Oxford American Dictionary, version 2.2.1). When referring to happiness, several other terms emerge, such as pleasure, satisfaction, cheerfulness, merriment, wellbeing and enjoyment. Happiness, when related to life or personal wellbeing, is generally described through a hedonic perspective, referring to the sensation of the pleasant versus the unpleasant. Viewed as such, it recounts subjective experiences of someone's physical,

positive, momentary pleasures (Tse, 2014). This implies that pleasant experiences are perceived as desirable and valuable, and explains why unpleasant experiences are perceived as undesirable and worthless.

For as long as can be recalled, people have strived to find ways of attaining pleasant experiences and find the strength to achieve what they want — at times succeeding, at times not. Logically for most people, the more pleasant experiences there are, the happier life is. Many different fields of study have given attention to this relationship: ethics, theology, politics, economics, psychology and recreation, amongst others (Lewinsohn, Redner & Seeley 1991). It is indeed in everyone's greatest interest to understand how positive (or pleasant) experiences are generated and how they can be replicated in order to make one happy or to maintain happiness.

Whether the lust to experience things in a positive way influences the momentary interactions of a person with the world (top-down approach), or whether happiness is the cumulative of small pleasures (bottom-up approach) is still unclear in the literature (Gilbert & Abdullah, 2004). What we do know is that happiness is clearly subjective in nature, and therefore difficult to describe in a precise matter. Tian Wen and Ming Yuan (2014) interestingly conclude that improvement in people's happiness is not significant during rapid economic development, which implies that possessions or wealth do not necessarily equate with happiness. The authors also argued that for most people, work or money alone are insufficient factors to happiness.

In the field of psychology, happiness is often measured with the use of the Oxford Happiness Inventory (Argyle, Martin & Crossland, 1989) and Oxford Happiness

Questionnaire (Argyle & Hills, 2002), both comprised of 29 questions, where the latter is a more recent and sophisticated version of the former using a six-point scale ranging from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'. Kozma and Stones's (1980) Memorial University of Newfoundland Scale of Happiness (MUNSH) is another example of a widely used questionnaire on happiness. It was originally developed to measure the mental health or psychological wellbeing among the elderly, but was recently introduced to the field of tourism to investigate the impact of travel on senior travellers. Both the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire and the MUNSH parallel the negative versus the positive with statement-questions like, "This is the dreariest time of my life" versus "I am just as happy as when I was younger" (Kozma & Stones, 1980).

In social sciences, and tourism research in particular, happiness is often measured within the expression of subjective wellbeing. The latter concept resides within the experience of the individual and relates not simply to the absence of negative factors, but mostly to the inclusion of positive measures (Gilbert & Abdullah, 2004). It is a personal and global assessment that can be measured in terms of happiness or life appreciation. *Happiness* is a positive state of mind (Bowling, 1995) that involves the emotional, intellectual, spiritual and physical aspects of the individual, and incorporates both static and dynamic — or changing components (Gilbert & Abdullah, 2004). On the other hand, *life satisfaction* is viewed as the "degree to which an individual judges the overall quality of his/her life-as-a-whole favourably" (ibid, p.105). Life-as-a-whole can relate to: family, friends, home, interpersonal relationships, economical situation, career, leisure, oneself and health. Therefore two aspects of life appraisal are interconnected: an affective aspect (how

well one usually feels) and a cognitive aspect (how well life achievements are perceived, i.e. contentment).

The total appraisal of one's subjective wellbeing covers the extent to which positive feelings outweigh the negative ones (Bradburn, 1969). Headey and Wearing's (1991) believed that for most people, subjective wellbeing is initially fairly stable within a certain dynamic equilibrium. Judgment is not affected unless the equilibrium is broken. Tatakiewicz (1976), on the other hand, argued that there is a close relationship between pleasure and pain, and that the greater deprivation (hence the unhappiness), the greater the achievement of a goal feels. According to Gilbert and Abdullah (2004), in tourism research there is still no single approach to subjective wellbeing that can reliably explain all the variances in effect, although most "endpoint theories maintain that happiness is gained when some state, such as a goal or need, is reached" (p.106).

2.2.2 Travel and Happiness

The literature review suggests that there is a definite link between leisure activities such as travel, and improved subjective wellbeing (Chen & Uysal, 2003; Gilbert & Abdullah, 2004; Hsu & Huang, 2008; Jang & Cai, 2002; Steyn, 2004). Therefore, the tourism industry mainly operates on the premise that holidays are mentally and physically good for humans and are a natural way of increasing quality of life (Hobson & Dietrich, 1994). Holiday, also known as short travel or getaway, can be described as "an alternative experience of time, free from the constraints of the daily tempo" (Wang, 2000, p.216). It is said that individuals most likely enhance their sense of happiness while breaking from the

daily routine and experiencing something new. Travelling provides a sense of escape and freedom, and opportunities for relaxation and entertainment. It also plays an important role as buffer against stress (Gilbert & Abdullah, 2004). In sum, if it is true that travel brings about psychological benefits, it then justifies the interest toward taking the journey versus staying at home.

A study done on UK residents comparing a holiday-taking group and a non-holiday-taking control group provided evidence that travellers experienced higher wellbeing both before and after their travels than the latter group (Gilbert & Abdullah, 2004). This also suggests that the creation of positive moods does not only provide greater wellbeing during the travel, but also during the preparation phase and after travellers have returned home (also shown in Haukeland, 1990). TianWen and MingYuan (2014) explained that subjective wellbeing of travellers is a cognitive, emotional and at times spiritual experience. Tourists initially come from a secular state of daily life, which transforms into a memorable — or sacred — state of life during travel, before returning to the previous secular state. Tse (2013) on the contrary, found evidence that people that have travelled do not necessarily return to hedonic neutrality (meaning returning to the same baseline as previous to travel); indeed most travellers show a slightly happier baseline after they have returned. This suggests that memory of a trip holds a critical dimension: an intrinsic reward making the mental re-living pleasant, even long after the travel occurrence.

It is also natural to believe that personal values and personality, including healthy-living components of a lifestyle, such as diet, exercise and self-image, help shaping the journey abroad and thus the happiness it brings as they often influence the social behaviour,

activities, attitudes and motivations of travellers (Rokeach, 1973, as cited in Paris, 2010). Furthermore, Hallab et al. (2003) noted that, "Holidays provide a free space and a fertile ground for establishing, cultivating, and nurturing one's human identity" (p.194). If this is true, it is easy to presume that with extended holiday time and freedom, as in the case of long-term travellers, travel can offer infinite opportunities for personal growth. A traveller abroad quickly faces a multitude of new inputs, for example through cultural expressions and inter-personal interactions, which in return have the potential to influence the traveller's perspective on life. Long-term travellers may have greater chances of intensifying both the quantity and quality of the deeper or memorable kind of experiences, simply on the basis of the extended length of travel.

2.3 Tourist Typology and the Long-Term Traveller

With the growing interest for travel as a form for leisure activity, new definitions that attempt to describe patterns and associations within travel have emerged. The World Tourism Organization defines *tourism* as "a social, cultural and economic phenomenon, which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes" (para.2), a definition agreed by international consensus in 2008. Leiper (1979) portrayed the tourism system as tourists leaving a certain region to travel and stay in new destinations before returning home. Depending upon the purpose and objectivity, tourism has been developed into various specialized streams such as: cultural tourism, heritage tourism, medical tourism, natural tourism, religious tourism, wildlife tourism and recreational tourism (Mishra, 2014). Within

the field of recreation, tourism generally refers to the tourists and the choices they make regarding their stay, and the promoters of destinations in trying to accommodate them.

Although there are several terms to describe 'the person who travels' (traveller, visitor, vacationer, sightseer, passenger…), *tourist* seems to be the most recurrent. The World Tourism Organization simply defines a tourist as someone that moves between different geographic locations for any purpose and any duration, and includes at least one overnight stay. Since this definition is extremely vague, several scholars have tried to narrow down the field into relatively heterogenic groups via the so-called tourist typology, where tourists are classified according to their characteristics of travel, or 'consumer behaviour'.

Cohen (1972) is known for having led research on *tourist typology*. In 1972, he presented his first findings, a typology of four tourist roles: two institutionalized (mass tourists) and two non-institutionalized (other tourists). The institutionalized roles typified the mass tourist, whether as a group or as individual. Whereas tourists travelling as an organized group have a preference for being confined to an 'environmental bubble' (guided visits, planned itinerary and comforts associated with home), the individual mass tourist seeks help in making arrangements related to accommodation and transportation, but is not permanently tied to a group as in the previous case. Nevertheless, they both share low-risk involvement and familiar situations (ibid). The second group, the non-institutionalized one, is comprised of two different roles: the explorer and the drifter. The first type refers to the tourist who handles his/her own arrangements while maintaining a certain degree of comfort when it comes to accommodation and food, and preserves some of the routines

from home while away. The drifter on the other hand, tends to be a risk-taker, one that blends with the local culture, has a more limited budget and no fixed itinerary or schedule. Both non-institutionalized tourist types value novelty, spontaneity, risk, independence, and a multitude of options (Vogt, 1976).

Another finding related to the non-institutionalized type of tourists is that they usually do not want to be called tourists, as if the term possessed a negative, even destructive connotation. This has also been shown to be true for backpackers and mainstream tourists in Norway (Larsen, Øgaard & Brun, 2011) and sea cruisers across oceans (MacBeth, 2010). "It turns out that tourists want to see themselves as individualists and not as members of the category of tourists that they actually belong to" (Larsen, et al., 2011, p.704). More recently, Maoz (2007) underlined that tourists do not form as homogenous groups as previously thought as they vary significantly, including in nationality, purpose of travel, motivations, organization of their trips, age and gender, life cycle status, and naturally in any psychological variable conceivable (ibid). This proves once more the complexity of the concept of tourist identity and role.

Cohen's first tourist typology model offered a framework for future research and is still being utilized in a number of other tourism-related studies. Despite the fact that it claimed to be a useful tool in developing products of tourism and in planning more effectively, is has also been criticized for offering mere generalizations of the tourist types of nearly four decades ago. Modern theories suggest that tourist typologies generally exclude travellers that do not visit popular sites or use large-scale transportation methods such as airplanes and trains (Larsen, et al., 2011). In addition, views of tourism still often

centre the Westerner as the tourist, and the non-Westerner as the local (Cohen & Cohen, 2015), giving at times a false universal declaration of the tourist identity and role, and excluding emerging markets, as exemplified in Chapter 1. In fact, recent studies agree that trends change over time and that the same types of tourists can be found in different sub-cultures, indicating that tourist roles should not be locked into static models (Maoz, 2007; Paris, 2010; Sørensen, 2003).

2.3.1 Backpackers: From Hippies to Heroes

One year after the release of Cohen's tourist typology model of 1972, the author himself argued that the drifters he had observed in 1968 — to whom he referred in his article of 1972 — had changed (Cohen, 1973). To him, drifters were "voluntary tramps from middle or upper class families, unpatriotic and disdainful of ideologies" (Riley, 1988, p.315). He accused them of begging, scavenging, sharing food and lodgings, and often of being caught using drugs. The drifters, as so defined, became the dark sheep of travel, a sort of a distasteful breed of egoistic people that had little to share with the world and that were otherwise known for their raucous social activities. This negative view of the drifters carried on until the late 1990s, when scholars such as Larsen et al. (2011), Maoz (2007), Paris (2010), Riley (1988) and Sørensen (2003) started redefining the people who lived a similar life centred in travel.

The negative image that Cohen gave of the drifters most likely originated from the hippie and beatnik subcultures of the 1960s and 1970s in the United States (Maoz, 2007), which sparked a new trend in travel; one that emerged from the socio-political situation of

the time and challenged freedom in several aspects of the term. At that time, 'Peace and Love' was a popular slogan, one that was famously showcased at the Woodstock music festival in New York, USA. The music festival was widely recognized as the nexus for the larger counterculture generation. Soon after, people with backpacks on their backs spread around the country to live a minimalistic lifestyle. Living the dream in the present moment was the main motivator, but many also used this form of travel to rebel against the conformism that society imposed. Backpacking to and across wide regions quickly gained popularity in that area of the world and beyond.

However, Cohen's 1970s' description of drifters as deviants and escapees was far too pejorative and accusative to portray the backpackers of the later years. On the contrary, the first breed of modern backpackers was viewed as "self-organized pleasure tourists on a prolonged multiple-destination journey with a flexible itinerary" (Maoz, 2007, p.123). They were interested in nature, culture or adventure, were generally keen on experiencing the local lifestyle and were often found off the beaten path. They travelled typically on a strict budget because of the long duration of their trip and lived in cheaper accommodations than the regular tourists (ibid). In 1990, Pearce described the backpacker using similar criteria: "a preference for budget accommodation, an emphasis on meeting other travellers, an independently organized and flexible travel schedule, longer rather than very brief holidays, and an emphasis on informal and participatory holiday activities" (p.239). Paris (2010) agreed in great part with the latter definition, but specified that the total duration of the stay and the schedule during travel were limited within the constraints of time, money and destination, as well as those of the life they lived prior to departure.

This new breed of travellers — the backpackers — recently raised attention in the field of tourism and recreation, and scholars became especially interested in the motives behind such longer-term holidays. From the 1990s onwards, studies were conducted in greater number leading to several new hypotheses. Sørensen (2003) advanced that modern backpackers are generally taking a temporary leave from affluence, but keep the clear intention of returning to the 'normal' life when the trip comes to an end. Riley (1988) found that the majority of backpackers left for their travels at a transition point in life, for example during a 'life crisis', as if the journey was a sort of self-imposed rite of passage. Ateljevic and Doorne (2000) noted that the backpackers they studied often expressed feelings of discontent with their home societies and the pressures of everyday life and thus, chose to travel as a form of escape. Pearce and Foster (2007) believed that the trip sometimes represents a search for identity or a learning opportunity.

Paris (2010) and Sørensen (2003) believed that the essence of the movement has not changed much over the years; if anything, it has continued evolving into a "larger, more diverse, more mainstream, and more mobile" tourist market (Paris, 2010, p.243). Maoz (2007) specified that there is indeed little homogeneity among the backpackers, "They seem more diverse and multifaceted than ever, engaging in a variety of social and recreational activities and not being similar in motivations, national and cultural background, age, gender, and class" (p.122). With respect to these assumptions, it seems justified to further explore the eccentricity of the segment rather than trying to narrow it down into sub-categories, such as newer tourist typologies.

2.3.2 Defining the Long-Term Traveller

In the past three decades, researchers have used various inclusion criteria to select and describe the subjects they referred to as 'budget-travellers', 'backpackers', 'drifters' or 'wanderers' (Maoz, 2007). Simple definitions such as ''backpackers ranging in age from 18–71'' (Elsrud, 2001, p.599), have led to confusion and disagreement between scholars. Despite the efforts for institutionalizing the field, many of the cited works have not been prospective, comparative or quantitative in nature, and as a consequence, findings are not always easily comparable (Larsen et al., 2011). The lack of common operational criteria for a 'backpacker' or a 'budget-traveller' has hampered knowledge generation in the field (ibid).

To add to the confusion, or else to further enrich the current vocabulary within the field, this study suggested the use of the term *long-term traveller* to identify the type of travellers studied. The closest known definition to that of the long-term traveller as used in this study, is perhaps Maoz's definition of the modern backpacker as "self-organized pleasure tourist on a prolonged multiple-destination journey with a flexible itinerary" (Maoz, 2007, p.123). As the expression implies, the long-term traveller refers to a person (male/female) who travels widely (several countries and continents) and spends more time consecutively travelling (most often a few years or longer) than a traditional holiday period would allow.

More over, the present study examined those who choose travel as a way of life, not those on a temporary holiday and not necessarily those at a transitory stage of life. The definition opens up to travellers of all genders, nationality, purpose and interests, but does

imply a minimum in age in order to best meet the ‘lifestyle’ factor and avoid the ‘one year study abroad’ or the ‘temporary gap between jobs’. Finally, the terms ‘traveller’ and ‘travel’ were used in this study instead of ‘tourist’ and ‘touring’, as the latter often refer to the short-term visit or temporary stay. As White and White (2004) put it, these terms more accurately capture the meaning of long-term journeys for those undertaking them, than the latter.

CHAPTER 3

- METHODOLOGY -

Research on tourism has been dominated by quantitative studies in the past, although qualitative studies are slowly gaining popularity. There is still no agreement on how travel motivation should be studied, but one generally accepted approach is the systematic examination of the push and pull motives (Dann, 1977). Several researchers have demonstrated that this theory is useful for pursuing knowledge in the field (Boo & Jones, 2009; Crompton, 1979; Jamrozy & Uysal, 1994; Klenosky, 2002; Yuan & McDonald, 1990). The literature review presented in Chapter 2 indicated that most studies on travel motivation performed in the past decades relied on deductive logic and empirical data analysis. Contrary to this trend, the present study used a qualitative approach to seek a deeper understanding of push factors, and relied on inductive logic and in-depth analysis. Qualitative research is often considered more appropriate for the exploration and interpretation of social processes, as it more easily gains access to the participants' inner lives, emotions and perceptions.

Chapter 3 provides a summary of the study design and protocol. First, the choice of a qualitative framework is briefly explained and justified. Recruitment and selection of participants is described and an overview of the participants is given. Study procedures and communication with participants are presented, and ethical measures are clarified. At last, the methods used for data collection and analysis are detailed and exemplified.

3.1 Study Design and Rationale

This thesis is inspired by the works of Larsen, Øgaard and Brun (2011), who conducted one of the few studies on budget travellers, and Klenosky (2002), who was one of the first to choose a qualitative approach in studying the push and pull factors of tourists. These two researchers added new insights to the field of tourism in regards to the choice of travel segmentation and in method. Two other scholars helped shape the present work, namely MacBeth (2000), who wrote about the subculture of cruising (long-term sailors) and the pursuit of utopian dreams, and Tse (2014), who researched the intrinsic benefits of travel.

The general idea behind this study was to pursue the exploration of travel motivation within a smaller segment of the travel market, that of the long-term travellers, to help clarify how the nomadic lifestyle enhances the subjective wellbeing of the practitioners. In this case, a qualitative methodological framework seemed more appropriate as the project aimed at uncovering knowledge about how people think and feel, as opposed to making judgments as to whether those thoughts and feelings are valid (Thorne, 2000). "Qualitative research seeks to access the inner world of perception and meaning-making in order to understand, describe, and explain social process from the perspective of study participants" (QDA Training, 2012, para.4). The approach is holistic in design and takes account of contexts within which human experiences occur (ibid). In qualitative research, the world is not viewed as one objective reality; instead it is seen to contain multiple realities that are highly subjective and in need of interpretation, not

measurement (Merriam, 1998). Since the approach is exploratory in nature, the richness in responses is considered more important than the representativeness of the sample group (Biklen & Bogdan, 2007). Research outcomes are real within a chosen context, therefore possibly transferable to other contexts, but not necessarily generalizable to all similar settings.

The literature review revealed that the push and pull theory unexpectedly led to a new paradigm within quantitative studies: that tourist typologies do not hold up for the immense variety of travellers and do not explain why trends are evolving the way they are. As a matter of fact, seeking a continuum construct to explain tourist motivation is virtually impossible, as motivational factors evolve over time (Kozak, 2002; Krippendorf, 1987). Given this perspective, segmentation studies from a single time and place fail to provide transferable data from time to time and enough insightful information necessary to understand what pushes a person to live the nomadic lifestyle on a daily basis. This can be explained by the fact that most quantitative studies previously completed on tourist motivation involved the use of questionnaires with pre-set items that participants were asked to rate. This method restricts the freedom of thoughts; answers come as suggested, not as self-claimed (Biklen & Bogdan, 2007). The method is more researcher-oriented than participants-oriented; it ignores the dynamic nature of leisure motivation, and is then more likely to reflect a single travel experience rather than a way of life.

In designing this study, the researcher purposefully did not intend to use a premade list of motivational factors and did not hope for a certain result, but rather use interviews as the main source of data. Interviews allow for more flexibility, spontaneity and freedom of

speech, as interactions are more natural between interviewer and interviewee. The approach also frees the researcher from falling into pre-made models that restrict the answers to numbers and types, as commonly used in quantitative studies. As Baumgartner and Hensley (2006) indicate, "Some of the advantages of the personal interview are completeness of response, ability to clear up misconceptions, opportunity to follow up responses, and increased likelihood that the respondent will be more conscientious with the interviewer present" (p.182). Interview studies provide a good basis for making comparisons and determining trends. They are also more likely to provide a richer and more nuanced-filled understanding than in other methods as they encompass the direct narratives of the participants.

The researcher did not want to be judgmental towards the lifestyle choices of the long-term travellers nor claim that all long-term travellers are alike. Rather, the researcher sought to pursue an investigation of the travel motivations of long-term travellers in a respectful and open-minded manner. Therefore, a less rigid approach to data gathering was preferred. E-mail and Skype communication with the research participants was casual from the beginning in order to create a relaxed atmosphere of discussion and reduce the 'researcher's effect'. A marked interest in the participant from the researcher was used as a strategy to facilitate deeper insights and clarity. Honesty and openness were also key elements in all conversations, regardless of the topic. The researcher wanted the end point of the research to be a truthfulness and informed representation of the interviewed long-term travellers and of what motivates them to live on the road.

3.2 Participants and Recruitment

Sample size in qualitative research does not need to be substantial, as a smaller number is often more suitable for in-depth exploration. A good sample size presents enough rich and textured insights into a phenomenon (Biklen & Bogdan, 2007). Sandelowski (1995) added that the spectrum of data should be wide enough to cover all variables likely to be important for the understanding of a phenomenon as a whole. Data saturation is normally used as a sign that the sample size is large enough. Charmaz (2006) noted that, "Theoretical saturation occurs when gathering fresh data no longer sparks new theoretical insights, nor reveals new properties of your core theoretical categories" (p.113). The sample size chosen for this study was determined by theoretical saturation, which occurred in and around participant number 20.

The following definition was used in selecting participants: *long-term traveller refers to a person (male/female) who travels widely (several countries and continents) and spends more time consecutively travelling (most often a few years or longer) than a traditional holiday period would allow.* A purposive sample was used in order to best capture this particular segment of the travel market, meaning that participants needed to meet certain criteria. This procedure was used to ensure a clear distinction between the standard holiday-taker and the long-term traveller. For the purpose of this study, a *long-term traveller* needed to be: 1) male or female having travelled for at least one year consecutively and counting (longer travel period than the standard holiday taker); 2) repeatedly on the go (rather than the one-time experience or the occasional longer holiday);

and 3) over 30 years of age (to better focus on a lifestyle as opposed to a stage between studies and job market)

All of the criteria above were met with the exception of the criterion on age: three participants were under 30 years. Because of the extended knowledge they all had in the field, their high number of years of consecutive travel (4 to 7 years), their accomplishments within long-term travel (two renown book writers and travel bloggers, and one travel videographer) and their particular ways of living the lifestyle, they were kept as participants. The researcher judged that these participants added a distinct variety to the data, yet also conformed to the description of the long-term traveller.

Techniques to find adequate participants included keyword search on Google using the terms globetrotter, long-term traveller, wanderer, wanderlust, etc. Individual and collective websites were found, along with blog spots and travellers' forums such as the Expedition Portal. A total of 47 participants were approached, of which 22 completed the full interview process. Several others responded to a few of the questions in writing, or referred the researcher to web resources.

Table 1 gives an overview of the 22 long-term travellers who completed interviews. Twelve were males and 10 were females. Their age ranged between 26 and 61; half were between age 33 and 40, and a third between age 44 and 48. The following nine nationalities of five different continents were represented: Turkey, Germany, USA, Canada, Thailand, South Africa, Austria, Australia and United Kingdom. Nine out of 22 were Americans. The number of years of continuous travel ranged between three and 25, whereas the majority

had between four to seven years of continuous travel. Twelve of them travelled solo, seven with a partner and three as family.

In January 2014, an email containing an informal invitation to participate in the study was sent to potential research participants with a very short overview of the research topic and aims (see Appendix A). When a positive response was received, a follow-up email was sent which included a recruitment letter (see Appendix B) and an informed consent form including details about the study and of participants' involvement (see Appendix C). If the participant agreed, further contact via e-mail was made in order to schedule a Skype appointment for the interview. All interviews were finished by April 2014, and the transcription process started soon after. On October 31st 2014, a follow-up e-mail (see Appendix D) was sent to all participants along with a copy of their own interview transcript. In response to this email, some participants added additional details to their original answers, some clarified ambiguities, or simply agreed without further modification. A last contact e-mail will be sent to all participants as soon as the final report is complete (see Appendix E).

Table 1: Participant Information

CODE NAME	GENDER	AGE	COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	CURRENT LOCATION	YEARS OF CONTINUOUS TRAVEL	MOSTLY TRAVELING WITH…
AL	M	33	Turkey	Berlin, Germany	6	Solo
AX	M	47	Germany	East Germany	25	Same friend
BA	F	61	USA	Chicago, USA	7	Solo
CI	F	35	Thailand	Taipei, Thailand	5	Solo
CN	F	35	USA	Philadelphia, USA	3	Solo
DV	M	34	Australia	Eastern Australia	4	Solo
EC	M	48	USA	Quito, Ecuador	25	Spouse
GM	M	39	South Africa	Caracas, Venezuela	4	Spouse + 2 children
GR	M	37	Austria	Upper Austria	10	Solo
HN	F	54	England	Namibia, Africa	4	Spouse
JS	M	33	USA	Alabama, USA	10	Solo
JAM	M	26	England	South Korea	4	Girlfriend
JME	F	28	USA	Medellin, Columbia	5	Solo
JI	F	34	Canada	Saigon, Vietnam	6	Solo
JN	M	44	Canada	Bangkok, Thailand	4	Spouse
KN	F	48	USA	Quito, Ecuador	11	Spouse
MN	M	46	Germany	Cartagena, Columbia	4	Solo
MY	F	38	USA	Penang, Malaysia	7	Spouse + 3 children
ML	M	46	USA	Arkansas, USA	5	Solo
MK	M	28	Canada	Eastern Canada	7	Solo
SA	F	40	Austria	Frankfurt, Germany	7	Partner
SI	F	38	USA	PiedraParada, Argentina	4	Spouse + 1 child

3.3 Ethical Considerations

This research project received ethical clearance by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics and Human Research (ICEHR) at Memorial University of Newfoundland on July 29, 2013 (see Appendix F). Ethical clearance by an institutional review board is necessary to ensure that careful ethical measures are taken and that the study causes no harm to the participants. On October 21, 2013, a letter was sent to ICEHR for approval of two minor changes to the original documents. The first addendum requested approval to send potential participants an informal e-mail prior to the recruitment letter and the informed consent. The second addendum requested approval to a new interview guide that had been modified after a test-interview was performed. Both addendum received acceptance on November 1, 2013 (see Appendix G). Ethical clearance was also renewed in July of 2014 (see Appendix H) and 2015 (see Appendix I).

Participants were provided with information about the study, first via a recruitment letter then further detailed on the informed consent form, which also detailed the four aspects to which the subjects agreed. Participants gave free and informed consent by signing the informed consent form. It also specified that the research subjects were free to withdraw from the study at any point during research process without prejudice, nor consequence. They were aware that there was no direct benefit from participating in this study. During research process, the researcher made sure to ask participants if they had any questions prior to recording the interview and ensured that subjects felt no obligation to participate in the study at any point in time. None of the participants withdrew from the study.

Any information from this study that can help identify individual subjects was kept confidential. Subjects' names did not and will not appear in any report of this study; instead, code names were assigned to all participants. The results of this study refer to individual interviewees in broad descriptive terms only, and when interview quotations are used to illustrate results, all information that might identify a subject were eliminated. Participants received a copy of the interview transcript and were encouraged to revise and confirm its content before data analysis started. The researcher has to date not received any complaint of ethical matters from participants.

Research records were kept on a password protected hard drive on the researcher's private computer and supervisors had access to the records via a privately shared folder in Dropbox. No one else but the above-mentioned has had access to the files. All data will be kept for a minimum of five years according to Memorial University Policy on Integrity in Scholarly Research. The researcher will share a copy of this final report with all participants once approved.

3.4 Data Collection

"While qualitative research is not given to mathematical abstractions, it is nonetheless systematic in its approach to data collection and analysis" (QDA Training, 2012, para.3). The approach chosen in the present study sought rigor and clarity in method, and authenticity and verisimilitude of data. Therefore, direct interviews with participants were selected as the main source of data, and to which other related written materials and external sources were later compared to. The interview process in the current study

occurred between January and April 2014. Data gathering used primary source materials in order to ensure authenticity and accuracy of data. First, a semi-structured interview via Skype (approximately 60 minutes) was conducted. This interview was recorded using the software GarageBand for MAC on the researcher's computer. The researcher followed an interview guide (see Appendix J) that focused on travel motivation and subjective wellbeing, but also allowed for natural interactions and new ideas to enter the discussion. A test-interview was performed prior to collecting data to confirm that selected questions were appropriate and gave the kind of answers expected, and that the recording device gave good sound quality. The interview guide was then revised and modified from its original version and an up-dated version was used for all further interviews. For four of the participants, the Internet connection was not reliable enough to conduct a Skype interview or pursue one already started due to a remote location or poor Internet services. In these cases, the interview questions were sent by e-mail instead. All interviews were transcribed verbatim by the researcher. Several rounds of back and forth communication were made with participants in order to clarify interview transcripts or written answers, and verify that the researcher understood correctly the thoughts that were conveyed.

Second, as many long-term travellers are also bloggers or article writers, trip reports, blog posts and up-dates on participants' website were examined for relevant information. Anything related to either travel motivation or subjective wellbeing was given particular attention and noted. Previous interviews posted on YouTube, documentaries, essays and books with the research participants concerned or as authors were also studied

for the same kind of information, and as a way to confirm consistency and clarity of data, contributing to the triangulation of data.

3.5 Data Analysis

Qualitative research primarily involves the analysis of unstructured data (QSR International). QDA Training (2012) noted that salient categories of meaning and relationship between categories are derived through inductive reasoning from the data itself, and not necessarily from pre-defined groupings. The analytic process involves systematically searching for relevant information and repeated patterns. The researcher then interprets and structures the meaning in the attempt to explain and describe the social phenomenon under study (Thorne, 2000).

For the current study, the majority of data (interview transcripts, scholarly articles, magazine articles, video transcripts, books, essays, personal notes, etc.) were uploaded into the software NVivo for MAC (QSR International Pty Ltd.) into one single NVivo project file. NVivo provided a digital workspace and tools for structuring, comparing and querying data. The researcher used a code-tree based on the interview guide at the start, to which several new codes (*nodes* in the NVivo language) were eventually added as themes emerged (see Appendix K). The node-tree and data within were examined and revised several times to ensure that coding was appropriate and complete.

Analysis was performed both during and after the interview process in an ongoing process, and can best be described in two steps: primary analysis and secondary analysis. Primary analysis was intuitive and explorative in nature, done with the intention of

questioning both frequent and infrequent topics, and of starting the reasoning process. The primary analysis helped providing the first descriptions of the two core concepts: 1) travel motivation and 2) subjective wellbeing. The researcher kept a personal journal, where thoughts could be noted spontaneously and wander freely. Periodic entries were made to allow cognitive progress. This approach gave a preliminary overview of the phenomenon without formal boundaries and helped illustrate the recurrence of certain elements.

Secondary analysis applied a constant comparison method and was used to provide a more in-depth interpretation of the relationship between these elements. The constant comparative analysis encompasses comparing pieces of data with other similar or different ones with the objective of conceptualizing the possible relations between them (Thorne, 2000). The method often follows a logical order of thoughts, going from reducing data into categories, to identifying the major themes, comparing themes between one another and with others, and finally to refining themes and keeping good examples to show how they were derived (Henderson & Bialeschki, 2002, as cited in Baumgartner & Hensley, 2006). Saldana (2008) further explains that a pattern can be characterized by the occurrence of: similarity (things happen the same way), difference (they happen in predictably different ways), frequency (they happen often or seldom), sequence (they happen in a certain order), correspondence (they happen in relation to other activities or events), causation (one appears to cause another) (p.155).

The two cognitive processes chosen for data analysis in this study may appear as contradictory, as intuitions are often seen as spontaneous, partly unconscious and more prone to mistakes and biases, while reasoning on the other hand is often seen as effortful,

conscious, with a high reliance on working memory and able to correct the mistakes and biases of intuitions (Mercier, 2011). But in fact, both processes complement each another well. In the field of psychology, several scholars support the idea that intuition and reasoning are closely related (Buchtel & Norenzayan, 2008; Mercier & Sperber, 2009; Norenzayan, Smith, Nisbett & Kim, 2002). Mercier (2011) noted that proper reasoning highly depends on a set of intuitions that in return help finding good reasons to accept or reject a given conclusion. In other words, intuition is "the mechanism that makes the more effortful version possible" (ibid, para.3). In the case of the current study, primary analysis served as an introductory process that naturally led to the more in-depth understanding. While primary analysis helped discovering themes and describe research topics as a whole, secondary analysis dug into the details of those themes with the intention of uncovering the details hidden within. The next chapter presents the findings as a reconstruction and an interpretation of the themes identified.

CHAPTER 4

- FINDINGS -

Travelling trends have greatly evolved over the years and there are many ways to spend longer journeys abroad. Meeting an overlander in Africa, a backpacker in Europe or a world sailor along the coasts of Asia is no longer bizarre. Regardless of the rationale behind the journey, long-term travellers have more in common than the literature suggests. If the demographics aren't enough to differentiate, several personality patterns arose during data analysis. Most importantly, long-term travellers are a group who have adopted travelling over the traditional lifestyles and consider the journey more important than the single value of a temporary relief from the every day stress, also called a holiday. They generally wish to liberate themselves from the constraints of time and place, and value this freedom above all in life. The stories long-term travellers tell reveal untraditional views on life and suggest how they live to the fullest. But their lifestyle does not come without considerable compromises: the strength to persevere, and a dedication to freedom that often sets them apart from the short-term travellers.

Chapter 4 presents the findings of this study. The chapter is divided in three sections in line with the three original themes: 1) Characteristics of the long-term traveller, 2) Push factors of long-term traveller and 3) Subjective wellbeing of long-term traveller. Throughout, the descriptive understanding that developed during primary analysis is located in the introductory part of each section. The findings from secondary analysis are presented in each theme that follows and in the sub-categories when appropriate. Table 2

presents an overview of these main themes along with emergent sub-themes and their sub-categories.

Table 2: Emergent Themes

Main Themes	**Emergent Sub-Themes**	**Sub-categories**
Long-Term Traveller	Demographics	
	Key Attributes	
	Lifestyle Choices	
	Travel Manners	
	Companionship on the Road	
	Digital Nomading	
	Home in the World	
Push Factors	Preconditions	Restlessness
		Personal Interests
		Triggers
	Motives	Overcoming Fear
		Simplicity
		Freedom
	Challenges	Sacrifices
		Difficult Lifestyle
		Hard Work
		Gender, Safety and Health
Subjective Wellbeing	Concept of Time	
	Reflection on Self and Life	
	Social Interaction	
	Understanding of the World	
	Giving Back	
	Balance Within Chaos	

4.1 Characteristics of the Long-Term Traveller

"Not all those who wander are lost" (Tolkien, 1954, para.1).

The long-term travellers in this study shared both commonalities and differences when compared with typical holiday-takers. The following section presents the findings that help define the participants in terms of demographics, personality traits, lifestyle choices, ways of travelling, companionship on the road, use of the Internet and views on the concept of home.

4.1.1 Demographics

"In reality, long-term travel has nothing to do with demographics — age, ideology, income — and everything to do with personal outlook" (Potts, 2003, p.5).

Twenty-two participants were interviewed for this study; twelve identified as male and ten identified as female. They ranged in age from 26 to 61 with the large majority (17 of 22 participants) being middle aged (30 to 50). Half were currently single (of which two had been married but were divorced), eight were married (of which seven were travelling with their husband/wife and child/children), and the last three were in a relationship (one engaged, one girlfriend, one partner). Most of the participants in this study originated from Western countries (Turkey, Germany, USA, Canada, Austria, Australia and England). There was also one participant from Thailand and one from South Africa.

Twenty participants had post-secondary education (e.g. university), and the average length of post-secondary studies was 4.85 years, implying that most had reached either a bachelor's or a master's degree. Participants studied a wide variety of subjects:

photography, videography, literature, theatre production, publicity and media to telecommunication engineering, administration, commerce, law, counselling, theology, anthropology, mathematics and education. For the two remaining, one was self-educated and a successful magazine journalist, and the other was self-educated in immigration laws and had created his own business. Work experience prior to long-term travel was also extremely varied: magazine writer, lawyer, social worker, nurse, carpenter, biologist, business administrator, real estate specialist, journalist, project engineer, environmentalist, and even cowboy.

When asked about their financial situation prior to long-term travel, participants' answers varied greatly. AX, who survived the aftermaths of the Second World War in Eastern Germany said, "[When we started,] we had nothing, zero. We had no bicycle, no sleeping bag." Freshly out of university, JAM replied, "I had a little bit of money that, by most people's standards, was not a lot at all!" On the opposite end of the spectrum, others had large amounts of savings gained either from a salary and/or the sales of a house, car or various types of belongings. Most participants though, fell between these two extremes. None of the participants substantially financed their journey with the help of sponsors, although some received in-kind donations of equipment for their travels (i.e. clothing, shoes, sunglasses, parts for the vehicle).

4.1.2 Key Attributes

When participants were asked to describe themselves using only a few words, the single most recurrent response was *curiosity*. JME instantly replied, "I'm just an extremely

curious person." In a similar vein, MK remarked, "Curiosity is what drives me to see and understand the world, and to keep learning and improving," while emphasizing the importance to preserve and let live our own childhood curiosity. AL said, "My mother said that I have unlimited supply of motivation!" When asked to clarify how curiosity steered the way they lived their lives, many identified an innate inquisitiveness that was never satisfied, therefore always searching for something new to discover. This insatiable quest for knowledge was also expressed by SI in terms of passion: "A passion for each other and all things decadent, irreverent, funny, foreign, spicy and inspiring." Several others argued that they are simply not content with only what other people tell them to believe; they would much rather find out by themselves.

Apart from generally being curious, independent and open-minded, the long-term travellers in this study were also undoubtedly *adventurous*; not necessarily in regards to their risky activities, but adventurous in how they left a previous life of stability and comfort to face the world and live one day at the time and with the bare minimum. In a life of constant unpredictability and uncertainty, everything became an adventure: finding food and shelter for the night, meeting the locals, deciding what to do with the day, searching for ways of subsistence to keep the journey going, or even just staying healthy. The search for adventure not only meant a will to take risks, but also to try out new methods, ideas and experiences, all of which made the learning on the road more exciting and the trip more intense and memorable. Many participants in this study recalled obstacles they faced along the way (e.g. complicated border crossings, hospital visits, broken vehicle in remote areas, etc), but the happy outcomes or lessons learned always were the highlights of every story.

At the time of the interview, the participants' number of visited countries had ranged between 20 and 160, averaging 50 visited countries per person. None of them thought the count had any special significance and very few followed it attentively. It seemed as though the longer time spent travelling, the less they wanted to feel special for what they did. Being called a *hero* was almost as insulting as being called a *tourist* for some. AL explained, "I don't think I really did anything special to be honest." AX agreed, "I'm just a guy, nothing special." ML did not like being referred to as 'special' either, much preferring the casual, "I permanently travel and am homeless, I guess would be the politically correct terms."

However, if pride and fame from their travel achievements was not directly sought, peer-recognition did seem to matter. Using social media and public websites, most sent and shared deep and personal stories, and cared about the feedback and comments from the general audience and other travellers. Many websites included a *connect* or *contact* link for people to get in touch. AL explained, "This crazy number of people that read the things I write; so it's nice!" Another one continued, "I love connecting with people through my writings, receiving letters from people all over the world. I've made lifelong friendships because people read my articles and reach out to me." Although people initially wrote publically to be read, many insisted that the number of readers did not matter. For DV, it was not a game of "personal fame and fortune"; the true reward simply resided in the feedback and comments that people left.

4.1.3 Lifestyle Choices

> "Perhaps I have commitment issues, but I hate to be locked into ironclad plans; it never has been nor will it ever be my style" (BA).

The long-term travellers in this study considered the standard life path, which many called *the rat race*, as a trap leading to a total lack of freedom. JN explained in this way, "In the Western world, people have too many obligations and don't make time for the most important things in life, such as family and close relationships." JI further noted,

> I think a lot of people have trouble conceiving of a different life, because to do so would necessarily undermine the choices that they've made, in order to respect your choices and also to acknowledge that it is ok they didn't do that same thing. Not too many people are willing to do that.

Long-term travellers often expressed dissatisfaction toward their home societies and the immense pressure that came along with responsibilities that 'tied everybody down'. They consequently accepted to be different and made choices that set them on a deviating life path. They chose to move away from the security provided by the predictability of a routine, regular income, education system, health care system, retirement plan, and everything else with a certain organizational dependence and control. Implicitly they questioned, and in most cases firmly opposed to, material consumption and predictable schemes, as their lifestyles included next to none of these.

Participants recalled with great emotions how they felt trapped in their lives prior to travelling. SI said,

> I feel boxed in, which isn't surprising, I spend all of my time in boxes: my apartment, my car, my cubicle at work: all boxes. I sit in meetings scheduled down to the quarter hour, my time: a box in Outlook. I sit in traffic. Boxes backed up for miles. At home I update Excel spreadsheets: more boxes. By bedtime, I'm exhausted but can't sleep. I stare at the ceiling, reviewing the days' tedium, and ask myself what any of this has to do with living life.

MY, now travelling across the world with her husband and three children, explained, "You grow up thinking that [the mainstream life path] is the norm and really believing it is what you 'should' want. So I blinded myself into thinking it was. It took me walking away from it all to see how very much I did not want that traditional life!" JME, one of the youngest participants, continued: "I just felt sort of like pressured by my society to live a certain way and follow what their idea of success is and their lifetime line (…) I felt like trapped by that and I didn't feel like that really fitted my personality."

For the long-term travellers interviewed, the regime in the Western world forced them to spend an enormous amount time doing things they did not want to be doing. Leaving the mainstream lifestyle gave them freedom to choose how they wanted to spend their lives. CI concluded, "I think we all should write our own script."

4.1.4 Travel Manners

"We do not travel to places to see things, but to see things differently" (DV).

For most people, the real world is a hard grind, being at work and raising a family, and the holiday is the break from the real world. For the long-term travellers in this study,

the travel was the real world. Viewed as such, the travel was not a holiday; it was a lifestyle, a way in which one learned through living and experiencing. For MK, the short holiday was not enough to dig beneath the surface of a country, place or culture; “You can't really have an authentic experience just by following everyone else's fanny packs.” EC explained, “If you claim to someone else’s representation of what a place is about, then you're not open to how you were supposed to see it, how you were supposed to interpret it, how you were supposed to experience it.” Too many tourists come home, they have the same anecdotes as every other tourist, and no genuine knowledge of the place they have just visited. BA clarified,

> Independent travel is NOT taking a tour or staying at an all-inclusive resort. It’s NOT having an itinerary that schedules every minute of your holiday, leaving little possibility to take advantage of opportunities that may come your way. It’s NOT rushing around to see all the top tourist sights.

On the contrary, participants felt that long-term travel was about figuring out where you want to go, striking up conversations with locals, trying to blend into the new culture, eating street food, couch surfing, tenting or sleeping in a cheap hostel, and always keeping the options open for how long to stay or when to leave. Instead of a compressed schedule, a tight itinerary, and stressing to get it all in before the flight home, the long-term travellers in this study had more flexibility in regards to time which allowed them to slow down, absorb the on-route environment, and even leave and return later if it fitted better. MK explained,

> People who are just there for a vacation aren't too worried about carving their own path and having their own experience, then they will be happy with their rum and

cokes and nice poolside bar. But I think those people who are to discover how to test themselves and become better people [referring to the long-term travellers] I think will quite often be curious about what lies beyond the postcard.

EC, who had been travelling long-term for 25 years, accused the standard holiday-takers of including in their short vacation "a lot more than anyone who truly loves travel" would ever do "without having to move faster than they wish they would." Similarly, HN described: "[as a long-term traveller,] there is no urgency to see everything before it's over; there's no winding down at the beginning and winding up at the end, no disappointment at having to go back to the rat race at the end of two weeks." Besides, slow travel enabled a more intimate connection with people, land and even animals, more so than if flown into a tourist destination and isolated into a resort (SI).

When asked about the differences between the standard holiday-takers and the long-term travellers, MY noticed that the first ones did not invest themselves in the community in the same way: "A traveller sees more! I don't mean that they travel longer so they see more physical sites, but more that their eyes are open to the lifestyle, culture, similarities, and differences between countries." Not all participants agreed that all world travellers have an open mind. JI argued that, "Travel itself will do nothing unless you have an open mind and a desire to learn. There are plenty of people who see places and don't actually take the time to truly understand them, or try to."

GM described the Westerners' typical way of holidaying in these words:

Beautiful vistas, monuments, waterfalls, beaches, luxury and brochure perfection are the qualities that we look for in travel. We don't want to be hot, dirty or

> inconvenienced. Travel is sold to us as heaven on earth and we expect perfection — hell, we paid for it — we demand it. If the sun does not shine, if the wind blows too much, if the waiter is slow, the cocktail too warm, the bed too hard, the view obscured, we only have ourselves to blame. If we had only spent more money we could have found paradise (…)
>
> The problem is perception and ambition. The worlds' rich can afford paradise; most of us can afford only paradise light. Luxury (and aspirant luxury) travel is an illusion. From the airport to the lobby, we undergo a transformation from whoever our profession deems us to be and we become tourist, holiday-maker, relaxer, and master. People will serve us, we will be anonymous and we can be who we aspire to be. We plan each day around where to go, what to see, what to eat and what to buy.
>
> We stood in queues, smiled too much, and reprimanded the kids for being tired, hot, bored and ungrateful. All they want to do is swim! 10 days fly by, we return home with photos, curios and often a dim unsatisfied itch. We want to do that more often. If only we had the money.

However, most of the participants said that one does not need to be a millionaire to travel the world, insisting that one only needs to use his/her money more wisely, consume less, and lower his/her standards. As a result, the long-term travellers studied were master budgeters. SI described, "When you're on the road, you are living a much more rustic life." GM added, "The difference is commitment, I suppose," although all of the participants agreed that the rewards that came with the lifestyle were well worth the low standard of living. Travelling at a slower pace and avoiding the biggest tourist attractions not only

served as a way to better learn a new culture, but also to save money since moving around was expensive.

The choice of destination was also largely influenced by the cost of getting there, the cost of moving around the destination and the cost of living. As a result, South America and Asia were typically popular destinations. Africa was generally less visited, most likely because of the poor roads, poor Internet connectivity, and the difficult or dangerous boarder-crossings between countries. Australia, on the other hand, was a popular country to visit, as the destination was also known as an easy place to find temporary work, thus favouring sustainable travel. At last, Europe typically included much shorter stays (6-8 months) due to higher costs of living and getting around.

There were no typical travelling patterns amongst this study's participants, and if plans were semi-laid out from the start as they all said to have tried, they certainly changed several times along the way or took a totally new direction. GM explained, "We tend to make decisions and change those decisions almost on a whim. The idea is to get as much as we can out of this journey and if that means that we are a little bit spontaneous then so be it. We gave up on strict structured routes a long time ago." The long-term travellers interviewed generally hated the possibility of missing out on once-in-a-lifetime opportunities. A flexible schedule and an open itinerary were common to all of the participants in this study. Stevie further expanded on the matter,

> We usually know which country is next and what general areas we'd like to explore, but our plans are loose enough to allow for Big Bang style spontaneous expansion. We meet locals and fellow travellers who make suggestions, one place leads to

another, we get lucky, shit happens, something else amazing happens, and we wind up experiencing way more than we could have ever planned!

Some rented an apartment for a few months in one part of the world and used it as a base to travel to and from. Others appreciated the convenience of a house on wheels. Some considered themselves permanent expatriates, changing country of living every so often. Others returned home to *the rat race* to earn money for a short while, then regrouped and left again for a new long-term adventure. When visiting a new place, the timeframe from arrival to departure varied from a few days to several months, all depending on how it felt to be there and how curious they were to learn about the area and its people.

Participants' methods of travel also varied considerably: if airplanes, trains and ferries were commonly used for longer hauls, local transportation (buses, trains, tuctucs...), hitchhiking, driving own vehicle (Land Rover, motorbike, motor-home), travelling by foot, bicycle, kayak, raft, and even horse were also identified. Some had extreme ways of getting around, while others relied on more common methods. As an example, one of the participants decided to walk from Europe to Japan in order to get attention from politicians and the general public, and to then spread a message about sustainable growth and the preservation of local environments. Another extreme-style travelling scenario was to kayak to some Indian tribes, which often required 3-4 months of kayaking, and then stay there for another 3-4 months in order to come close to the local culture. Some, especially those travelling with children, were more activity-oriented; choosing destinations according to what there was for the children to see and do. Others simply liked to vary their 'office place' from day to day.

4.1.5 Companionship on the Road

A little more than half of the participants in this study preferred travelling solo, as they said interactions with locals and other travellers were a lot easier than if travelling with someone else. BA explained, “Take local buses. Well if I'm with someone I'm sitting with that person. If I'm alone I'm sitting next to a local.” CN continued, “I find that when I’m on the road by myself, I reach out to locals more, I open my eyes a little wider, and I live a little fuller. It’s a completely different experience than when I travel with friends or family, and it’s really self-empowering.” Other advantages of solo travel not only included the total freedom of decision, but also avoiding the constraints of different timetables, budget restrictions and resources management styles. As CI stated, “Everybody is kind of proprietary about their time on the road. Nobody wants to share.”

If travelling with someone was an impediment to getting to know the locals, it had the advantage of security and protection to some participants. AL, who had been mostly travelling solo for more than six years, admitted that when travelling to ‘dodgy’ places, he would rather partner up with someone than ‘throwing himself into the wild’ on his own. Interestingly, the interviewed parents in this study affirmed that kind opportunities of hospitality arose when travelling with children: locals invited them to their homes, introduced their own kids, and shared meals with them. Another traveller, who pictured himself as a ‘large man’, believed that travelling with his family gave strangers the impression that he was sympathetic and caring, thus less scary and more easily approachable.

Long-term travellers were in fact rarely alone, regardless if travelling solo or not. DV affirmed, "I generally travel solo as it turns out, but I team up with other travellers at different points. I travelled with other overlanders for a number of weeks, then I've picked up backpackers in some places… we've travelled together for anywhere from just a couple of days to a couple of weeks." Groups often formed on the road and many travellers had niches in several corners of the worlds, like in Bangkok, Thailand and Medellin, Columbia. Communities of long-term travellers and travel bloggers were steadily growing: social media groups (Facebook only: Travel Bloggers Mega Share, Travel Bloggers Network, Travel Bloggers Unite, Travel Massive), conferencing networks (Travel Blog Exchange - TBEX), associations (Travel Bloggers Association, Association of Land Rover Clubs), travel magazines (Budget Travel Magazine), discussion forums (Expedition Portal), travel guides (Lonely Planet), as well as thousands of travel blogs. It seemed as though loneliness on the road had lost its meaning since the introduction of Internet, as long as connectivity was within access.

4.1.6 Digital Nomading

> "Vagabonding is about using the prosperity and possibility of the information age to increase your personal options instead of your personal possessions" (Potts, 2003, p.5).

For many of the long-term travellers interviewed, online work was the key to making the journey viable. SI explained, "We're both lucky that we can pursue our careers remotely from anywhere in the world, so long as we have an Internet connection." Every

participant in this study was a worker, of which the great majority was either doing freelance work (e.g. photography, newspaper or magazine articles, travel blogs, inspirational conferences upon sporadic returns home), or was running an online business of their own (counselling, computer security, marketing, teaching). *Digital nomading*, as participants called it, had become a fast-growing trend according to them. Its major drawback: a dependence on a decent Internet connection and having to make travel-related decisions according to its access. AL, one of the first digital nomads to his knowledge, said, "I plan most of my movements around Internet connectivity. I can't really go longer than a week or so offline." MY further justified, "Electronics are necessary evils in our life. My husband and I both work remotely so Internet access and at least 8 hours of screen time a day is pretty much the standard. We rely on it for nearly everything and to be honest I can see now what an addiction it can turn into."

Pure digital nomads represented about half of the participants in this study, and all of them had at least one website of their own. Otherwise, many of the participants were blogging about the destinations visited and their lives on the road, regardless of their occupation. But when asked about the importance of online popularity, several hesitated to admit that numbers mattered, and several re-phrased as such: "[Originally] I wanted to have a blog where I could post photos and share crazy stories so that my friends and family could follow along from afar" (JI). While some used their personal website as a portfolio, for advertisers, or to sell their business to future clients, others simply enjoyed the fact that the blog was a wonderful way to keep a digital record of the journey. Their presence on the social media was also undeniable, all but two participants were active on at least three

major networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Google+, LinkedIn, Instagram, StumbleUpon, Flickr and Tumblr.

4.1.7 Home in the World

> "Besides, with the whole world before us, I just don't think we could buy a house big enough for us to call home!" (SI).

For the long-term travellers interviewed, all of whom considered travel as their normal life, the concept of *home* changed meaning. "I don't have a home!" was the immediate and simple answer to the question, 'Where is home for you?' "Homeless and happy" usually came next. Participants often recalled as the closest to what home is, where family and friends were: Ankara, Salvador de Bahia, Medellin, parent's place in California, as examples. Very few of the participants kept a base somewhere (shared a little apartment or had storage at their parents' house), as most had sold all belongings and carried with them only the bare minimum.

The long-term travellers in this study rather associated *home* with the feeling of safety and comfort as opposed to an actual place, for example the place where they would settle for the night. JN explained, "Home is where I feel most welcome and most comfortable. Home is where we are." JI noted that when home is not location dependent, one quickly learns to get familiar with each new surroundings: "Every place moulds to you, and you to it." MY referred to home as the feeling of togetherness: "Home is just a state of mind. When we are together, we are home. I definitely have one in my family!" she admitted. After five years of continuous travel, CI wrote,

> I used to feel that I was always in search of *home*, trying to find my way back to that mythical place once again. Gradually, each image, each bed became the whisper of an incantation, and home stopped being a specific, physical place but became rather a state of mind, a broadening of the consciousness. Home is where I am.

If a world citizenship existed, every long-term traveller in this study would have applied for it. Several of the participants considered themselves *permanent expatriates.* Nearly all considered themselves *citizens of the world*, in which *home* remained vaguely defined as 'anywhere'.

4.2 Push Factors of the Long-Term Traveller

Many crucial factors played a role into shaping what compelled the long-term travellers to cease living by the norms: key attributes, personal interests, previous travelling experience, innate feeling of restlessness, triggers of change, desire to overcome fears, desire for simplicity, attraction for novel experiences, and choosing freedom above all. The following section deploys the findings that help understanding what pushes long-term travellers to pursue a life of travel and how the above-mentioned factors affect their travelling choices.

4.2.1 Preconditions

Findings in this study suggest that there are certain preconditions to becoming a long-term traveller. Three of them were recurrently identified during data analysis: innate

restlessness, personal interests (for learning and understanding, experiencing something novel, and for adventure and travel), and triggers to action.

4.2.1.1 Restlessness

"The longer we stay in place the grumpier I get" (GM).

A great number of participants in this study felt an urge to move on or do something new after only a short time being static in a location. EC admitted, "I've always felt a compulsion to just see things, do things." Restlessness, viewed through MY's eyes, was expressed as a constant and strong pull to experience things, and was generally fulfilled by exploring the surroundings or leaving the area. Most agreed that somewhere between five days to a week represented the ultimate limit. JAM explained, "I feel restless and stagnant if I stay too long in one place. More if I don't do anything; actually getting up and going cycling or going for a run or just exploring." Stagnation quickly caused *itchy feet,* as many called it*,* which propelled them to action. One participant (JI) expressed what restlessness meant to her in these words:

> I left New York because of a deep (some might say destructive) restlessness. It became bigger than me, a restlessness that corroded. It grew and it grew until I had to act on it; ignoring it was just hurting people around me and myself.
>
> When I left for what I thought would be a year, I found that the restlessness dissipated. I wasn't looking to travel around the world indefinitely. That's never been an aim. However, the restlessness was replaced by an extraordinary curiosity for just about everything I saw. I wanted to build a life around that curiosity."

Participants often referred to restlessness in terms of *wanderlust*, or casually called it the *travel bug*, and they described it as an innate and incurable disease. DV expressed how powerful the travel bug was to him with a simple, "I'm a terminal case!" before adding, "…in the sense that, you know, you have a nice day outside and you don't want to waste it." This 'must travel' feeling seemed to push the travellers to escape stagnation in the large sense of the word, and continue looking for new challenges.

4.2.1.2 Personal Interests

Almost all participants in this study had a prior taste for travel, and many argued that their parents had instilled travel in them from an earlier age. DV wrote, "You can argue that I started to travel before I was even born. My parents were driving overland across Australia. That's when I came to be." CN added, "I've always had it in me since I was a little kid I think, because of my parents taking me abroad when I was 10." Other more adventurous individuals had done several short trips on their own: tenting across the country at 17, one year study abroad, cycling trips across Norway, day trips to France, skiing weekends in the Alps, as examples. GM recalled, "As soon as I was old enough (about 16!) I started hitch hiking and camping along the road. I hated the town I lived in and was desperate to do more than the nothing the town had to offer." None of the participants were travelling long-term at that early stage of their travelling career.

As years passed by, the original interest for travel grew stronger. MN explained that for every little holiday, he would always be living out of his backpack to spend time "in the open to explore a local area." Every little occasion to travel somewhere turned into an

opportunity not to be missed. One participant even joined the Dead Head movement, "not because I wanted to go see 200 Grateful Dead shows, because it was an excuse to go on a two week vacation, you know like the Spring tour and the Fall tour!" But many were yet missing the great spark — or trigger — that led their passion to turning into a more permanent lifestyle.

Curiosity was clearly an important motivational factor for all participants. MK said, "I grew up always wanting to understand how things work!" All mentioned a strong interest for learning and understanding. JI explained, "I live abroad because I love to experience life instead of just reading about it." GM agreed, "The entire trip is a learning experience!" Travelling generally provided infinite choices within the unfamiliar and the adventurous, and participants found inspiration through those. One said, "I want to see things I've never seen before and never knew existed." JAM wished to create new memories, every single day of his life. CI was in "search of that brilliant, sublime moment that haunting photographs are made of and to collect stories that makes me weep in my sleep." For the great majority, new and unfamiliar settings provided physical and intellectual challenges: everything from having to navigate a way around, interacting with locals, experiencing local traditions, facing new beliefs that in return caused them to question their own values and behaviours.

For these novelty seekers, experiencing new things (e.g. culture, food, nature, animal life, cities, etc.) was mainly a way to satisfy that hunger for curiosity. ML agreed, "I'm always up for a new meal, a new sight, and a new friend!" A few participants believed that it was the constant act of discovery — the thrill of the surprise — that turned every

novel experience into something intriguing and fascinating. JI noted that, "the newness of places you only just discovered, and then getting to understand them, is part of the thrill."

The interest for adventure was also common to the majority of participants. SI specified, "We want to kayak and raft the world's rivers, dive and surf in our oceans, hike the mountain trails, camp beside the waterfalls and sleep beneath the stars." MK added, "I'm not talking about resorts and beaches; I'm talking about actively seeking out the most adventurous things on our planet." For the marine biologist, lifting rocks in different parts of the world opened up to thousands of new creatures and phenomena to explore. Participants also had a vigorous desire for exploration, experimentation and discovery, regardless of where their curiosity led their wanderings. AL said, "I've always had a keen interest in culture, technology, and travel, and loved to pick things apart to see how they work." Another explained his motivation for travel as such: "[there are] simply more things that fascinate me and remind me how wondrous this world around us really is."

Although the topics of interest varied greatly between participants (people, history, religion, philosophy, politics, natural landscapes, animals, etc.), the single most mentioned was *culture*. Since culture in itself is an all-encompassing term that comprises human manifestations that serve to identify a certain social entity (e.g. religion, food, art, music, history, language, politics, government, customs, traditions, attitudes, behaviours, etc.), the single most common interest of long-term travellers, in other words, was people. The purpose of knowledge about people was generally expressed as a desire to better understand how others live, so that they better understood where they fitted into the wider world. To acquire such perspectives, the long-term travellers queried, observed and

compared foreign cultures with their own; "[It's] like wanting to meet the people and just talk about something, like what's their regular day-to-day life, just to see how we are different, how we are the same," JI described. Participants seemed to have the pull to experience life through others' eyes and use the knowledge to make better sense of their own lives. For them, genuine and insightful outlooks on life were almost solely acquired in the field, which implied that the travel was an essential part of learning about who they are.

4.2.1.3 Triggers

Data analysis found the recurrent presence of triggers in most of the participants. A trigger is understood as a meaningful source of inspiration that helped nurture the original interest for travel and discovery into a lifestyle. AL explained,

> Inspiration to travel can come from anywhere and just about anyone. While you can't discount the powerful influence of family and friends, many of us have been eager to explore the world, encouraged indirectly by these unintended travel icons. These figures are famous for a number of accomplishments in various fields and have fed our collective consciousness to see the world around us...

For some of the participants in this study, hours of browsing National Geographic Magazines and looking at pictures of beautiful, remote places was the trigger. For JI, it was a documentary about the Trans-Siberian Railway. For another, playing video games as a boy was a way to throw himself into a fantasy world; one in which he could be someone else, be somewhere else, and do something else. And for the African born, a meeting with a

Brazilian family in his town got him thinking that there was a world outside of home worth exploring.

Some of the participants clearly remembered one specific moment when the call to travel struck them. DV recalled, “I sat that morning, going through emails, and caught my reflection in the monitor. I was like, you know what? I could be looking at the same reflection in another 10 years, be 40 and still sit in front of this computer.” To him, life wasn’t miserable; it simply felt stagnant at that point. For the couple that lived three blocks away from the World Trade Center when the attacks hit on September 11, 2001, the events got them questioning their way of life and their understanding of the world. One of them explained, “Curiosity about America seeped into our lives as we watched the U.S. give into fear, division and an us-versus-them mentality.” For the environmentalist, the World Summit of Environment in Johannesburg in September 2002 gave no significant outcome and got him frustrated; “I can do a better job if I do it on my own!!!” From something as memorable as the fall of the Berlin Wall that finally represented freedom for a man of East Germany, to an ordinary face-to-face encounter at Wal-Mart that made reality of the Western world difficult to digest for a woman in the late twenties, the need to live a life that one has chosen was indisputable. As JME put it, “I don’t want to live a life that was designed by someone else, a life that my society tells me epitomizes success.”

The long-term travellers in this study most often remembered life before travelling as happy and prosperous. DV said, “I had plenty of money to do anything I want. I had a good job, had a great group of friends, I was doing a lot of physical activities. It was a good

life as it was! And to be honest, I could have easily done that until the day I die." AL agreed, "I didn't leave my job because I hated it. I loved my job!"

However, closer data analysis revealed that *happiness* was then understood in line with the Westerners' understanding of success. JI explained, "I was *traditionally* successful: law job in a big city, no debt, great friends, great family life." Another description of the traditionally successful scenario was,

> I had a sweet little apartment, I was living in a really great city and I had a boyfriend. I was having fun knowing that I wasn't having as much stress, because I could leave work at work. I knew I could pay my bills. Things were a lot more set out for me. Everything was very stable.

Happiness, the concept by which one qualifies as happy or unhappy, was first described by the long-term travellers interviewed in terms of fulfilment of the Western's standards of happiness: work and income, house and cars, stable relationships with family and friends, etc. But when it came to the deeper meaning of the term, which refers to happiness as an individual (personal accomplishment, self-enhancement), data showed feelings of discontentment or lack of being challenged. One said, "My wife and I owned and managed a small business in Japan for a decade. We made good money and could buy everything we wanted, but we weren't challenged and felt that we were missing out on other dreams we had for ourselves." Another explained, "Six years ago we were living the American dream with a big house, good jobs, nice cars and debt. But one day we realized it was all a trap to lock us into a narrow range of experiences." JAM concurred, "I had gone to school, worked enough to get by, and came out with a Masters in Mathematics. I was all

set for the big step up to a good job and continuing on the path I was meant to walk — or so I had been told. Yet, all this time I knew that something wasn't quite right."

It was the wish for something qualitatively better that pushed these travellers to embark on a long-term journey. DV agreed, "It's not so much a thing and an unhappy place for most long-term travellers; it's about wanting to take time to go and do those experiences to enrich it [life] even more." Another one noted, "I was happy in different ways before. I was happy before because it was stable and I was making good money. But, I was frustrated that I wasn't doing what I wanted to do." The expression of freedom to do what one wishes to do was the most recurrent explanation. Other attempts to become happier had simply failed, like this example given by GM:

> We were so bored with our life, with our real life… We went into retail therapy and bought a bunch of shit, but that didn't help. We moved to a beautiful coastal town with an amazing pass and we just rented and it was fantastic. After 3 months of that, we were like 'okay this is boring'…
>
> We realized we had surrounded ourselves with all the luxury you could imagine. I mean we had a house with 4 bedrooms, a Jacuzzi; you name it! It had everything! It had a 180-degree sea view; you could wash your hair, shower and watch dolphins and whales go by!
>
> But we realized that we were happier as a family in the Land Rover on some dirty back road sleeping in a tent having an adventure. We were a lot happier than we were with the day-to-day structured lifestyle.

JN also noted, “We weren't being challenged anymore. We weren't growing. We weren't being fulfilled or satisfied in our life, so just missing a piece of our soul I guess,” like a mundane and stagnant routine that left a fundamental hunger unsatisfied. Many of the long-term travellers interviewed replied something like this: “All I really wanted to do was just to be free.”

4.2.2 Motives: Initial and Current

“I felt like I needed a big change in my life” (JME).

For the people interviewed, the long-term journey represented the pursuit of a utopia, a life filled with greater happiness and opportunities for new achievements. GR said, “On the summit of Mount XXX, I made a decision. I wanted to walk thousands of kilometres around the world to visit environmental initiatives to show how a sustainable lifestyle was possible.” BA, who had just partly recovered from Lyme disease said, “As soon as I was healthy enough, I left my job, strapped on a backpack, and travelled solo around the world… determined to visit the places I’d always wanted to see.” CN summarized, “This is my chance to really do what is meaningful to me.”

When setting out to travel, almost all initially aimed at a shorter stay abroad, but attraction to the several rewards of travel quickly turned six months into a year, two years, and even no return. ML explained, “I set off in December of 2008 in an attempt to circle the globe without ever using an airplane (…) then came back and sort of just decided to keep travelling.” Likewise, SI did not plan on the trip to last indefinitely,

> Originally, the plan was just to do the Pan American Highway, turn around and go back. But once we started travelling, we loved the lifestyle so much (…) I mean we were only in Central America when we decided we wanted to keep doing this forever and just drive around the world.

As travel and life moved on, so did interests and motivation. The long-term travellers in this study frequently changed their activities and orientations as they changed countries. Eventually, it always came down to the common presence of an insatiable curiosity. CI stated, "There is a beast inside. It's insatiable. It likes far-flung places, hidden corners and hot spots. Its curiosity is endless; it wants to see the world and tell stories from these places." DV simply said, "I have taken thousands of photos and still I want to see more." Regardless of what set them off in the first place, there was always an underlying desire to see more of the world, a curiosity about what was over the horizon and what challenges could be there. During the secondary data analysis of the motivational factors, recurrent themes were identified: overcoming fear, simplicity, novelty and freedom. These will be described under the following sub-section.

4.2.2.1 Overcoming Fear

Data from this study showed that long-term travellers have not always been intrepid. One admitted, "As a kid, I was scared of the whole world. Fear overpowered me. It stopped me from doing so many things in my life," before adding, "and I think that many people see it in the same way. We find it much easier to stay within our comfort zones." According to the participants, fear of the unknown and of leaving the safety zone was often

what prevented the aspirant-traveller from taking the plunge. Childhood fears and initial nervousness haunted several of them; fears that also quickly dissimilated after making the first step out of the door. JN described, “For most people, it’s just making a commitment [to do it]”. JAM, who previously lived in fear, concluded that, “It is very easy to see our fears and our problems as obstacles that cannot be overcome. Mental, physical, and financial barriers can all be overcome if you want something enough. No dream is too small or too big to be realized.”

SI explained that, as long-term travellers,

> “We’re not underestimating the dangers of the places we travel, we’re just not letting fear control our lives. Nor do we give the media any credibility. They are selling fear in 24-hour doses. We do research, ask lots of questions, consult our intuition, and then make the best decisions we can. And then we ride the energy!”

GM agreed, “I have stopped worrying about cocaine warlords, drug wars and anacondas. My experience has taught me not to be so narrow-minded,” to which he added, “Wild experiences are there if you go looking for them, but if you want to cruise along and stop for a cold beer and a cheeseburger you can do that too!”

4.2.2.2 Simplicity

> “Simplicity — both at home and on the road — affords you the time to seek renewed meaning in an oft-neglected commodity that can’t be bought at any price: life itself” (Potts, 2003, p.32).

For the participants, life on the road involved carrying the very minimum (e.g. one

pair of pants, a few shorts and t-shirts, night time necessities, a passport, and for most a laptop); all of which should fit into a large backpack or in a small cubicle inside a travelling vehicle. DV described, "The most things that I own are means to an end." Each item had its daily life purpose, otherwise not taken aboard. Sleeping under the stars or renting a small apartment, cooking own meals or eating cheap street food, avoiding popular tourist attractions; all tricks were employed in order to make the trip last… "It's all natural wonders and a lot of wild camping. So you can travel really far with very little money" (DV).

It is easy to assume that *living on a budget* is not a personal choice but a necessity to make the lifestyle viable, but the participants clearly expressed a predilection for this simplicity. Long-term travellers did not view living simply as a strain; in fact they did much rather live this way than otherwise. Even living on the road with her baby girl, SI affirmed, "We love our minimalist, modern nomadic lifestyle!" She further explained, "You need a whole lot less than you think (…) Pleasure extracted from these afforded comforts didn't lift the frenetic fog of anxiety that was descending on my mind, weighing everything down" in her life prior to long-term travel. GM suggested that some things in life were more important than money, "Most importantly we have our health, our dreams, courage, wanderlust and lots of love."

Living simply enabled self-empowerment, a feeling of efficiency, as in taking charge of events and destiny. JAM explained, "I had little money, but I didn't care. I learned to survive on next to nothing." Viewed as such, rejecting materialism — possessions for possessions' sake — was for them a natural part of the process of becoming

a nomad. One participant argued that in return for having less, he created more and interacted more. Besides, "getting comfortable doesn't challenge you," MK admitted. When asked if there was anything they wished they had or were missing, the answer was unanimously something in the same line as what JS replied: "I don't long for material things because I've seen very happy people living in slums. I've shared meals with them. Lived with them."

By living simply, participants came to show little interest for material investments, even to a point of clear dislike. Being able to decrease their consumption and give focus on life and experiences instead also required a certain mind reset. JN described his rejection for materialism in these words:

> I've started and sold many businesses. I was always focused on money and all the things I thought I needed to be happy in life: big house, big car, stereo, espresso machine, drinking expensive alcohols, and eating out at restaurants. All those things society says we need to be happy in life. I got all that. But they didn't make me happy. They caused a lot of hassle, cleaning, maintenance, shopping, and added a whole bunch of stress. I strived for them my whole life.
>
> In fact, possessions have become a sign of weakness. We have been getting fat, stupid and lazy with a diet of fast food and television, while polluting our planet at an increasing rate. All that 'convenience' we have been consuming is making us sick.

The dislike for the label of *consumer* was nearly as strong as the dislike of being called a *tourist*. Participants criticized the Western modern civilization as too focused on this purchased convenience, in which the richer you get, the more you own. JN mentioned

that one of the advantages of being a long-term traveller was that, “As a traveller you're not expected to have anything. There’s no competition to buy more stuff or have a car or anything. So, you feel there is no social pressure to conform.” Another participant phrased what he liked the most about meeting other travellers living similar lifestyles: “People were stripped down to their bare selves. No make-up, no gelled hair, no fancy clothes. The mask was discarded, and we lived a perfect life with little ‘wants.” Participants often voiced that they wanted to live life; not buy it.

Making conscious and wiser decisions on how to use money on everyday needs was the key to travelling long-term. GR continued,

> Only by letting go of familiar things I could leave for new destinations and the backpack in this case was my best teacher. So I asked myself again and again the question: How much do I carry in my life? What can I leave? What do I really need? This is true not only for the backpack, but also for the everyday life. We all have our *backpack*, but in contrast to the daypack, it is mostly invisible: there are patterns of behaviour, habits, material things we have accumulated and that often prevent us to live our dreams.
>
> As the Tibetans say, “All suffering comes from attachment, all happiness comes from letting go” (translated from German).

4.2.2.3 Freedom

“I had no plans, except life” (JAM).

What the long-term travellers most wanted through their journey was *freedom*, e.g.

a general independence and a release from pressures and constraints. Freedom as they described, was an all-encompassing term that was often used in relation with time, place, thoughts, movements or life choices. Participants aspired to be the masters of their own destiny and live on their own terms. A renowned trainer in digital nomading wrote, “Freedom for me is getting to choose how I spend my time. Getting to be where I want to be, getting to invest myself in things I want to, on my own terms, not answering to someone else or someone else's ideas for how I should spend my time and energy.”

For KN, a girl of many dreams, freedom first and foremost started with a feeling. The journey gave her the chance to do things differently, and to live spontaneously. KN explained, “We have the freedom to say yes when we are tipped off to new places to explore or new reasons to remain longer where we are and we also have the freedom to cut a visit short.” For each new area of discovery, participants stayed as long or as briefly as they wanted. For them, living freely was essential to their happiness.

4.2.3 Challenges

It is easy to believe that living a travelling lifestyle can bring a lot of happiness; most people enjoy taking a holiday, breaking from the routine, seeing spectacular views, making new friendship and so on. But living permanently abroad demands major sacrifices that not many are ready to make on a permanent basis: most relationships suffer from the distance, the lifestyle brings no safety and no stability, covering the everyday basics like food and accommodation is not always easy, and staying healthy all along is not a given. Earning enough money to pay the bills at the end of the day is not an easy task when on the

road. The following section is dedicated to the challenges long-term travellers in this study faced.

4.2.3.1 Sacrifices

Living a nomadic lifestyle comes with sacrifices, whether it be renouncing to the materialistic world, leaving the loved ones behind, or simply having to face opposition about living eccentrically. BA agreed, "I think very few people could do what I do; to give up your house and not have a base, to buy a one-way ticket to a continent and not know where you're going to be in a week or in a month from now…" GM wrote about sacrifices in this humoristic way,

> Do not forget that you will be sleeping in a tent for an extended period of time. That you cannot take your Simmons Super Sleep 10 000 Turbo + with you. Or your shower, loo and TV. The call of the wild and romantic may seem irresistible but getting out there is usually everything but wild and romantic (…)
>
> Be prepared to put everything material you have worked so hard for into cold wet storage, safe in the knowledge that you will return eventually to a large green mass with which you will rebuild your life. Be prepared for hidden expenses and a month of sleeping in your step-mother's study after you have, essentially, become homeless.

EC was driven by the conviction that there was a give and take in everything; that all it came down to, was priorities. However, most of the long-term travellers interviewed agreed that sacrifices — big and small — were worth taking when the outcome was to live one's true passion. EC admitted, "We sacrificed a lot to do this and it's scary, but many

dreams in life require that leap of faith."

One of the most difficult sacrifices that participants faced was not being a part of people's day-to-day lives. JI explained,

> Your friends and family will start getting married and having babies, and you won't be there. Other times, the relationships with friends that you make on the road can't really progress because there are no shared experiences after you leave a certain place. And romantic relationships are extra challenging.

Many long-term travellers complained that keeping and maintaining relationships when abroad was strenuous, even with the regular contact via Internet. ML stated, "It is almost impossible to have a normal social life and it gets really old saying goodbye to people all the time. The less I think about both the better." AL added that with friends at home, those not living the nomadic lifestyle, small chats had become challenging and incomprehension from other people often created a barrier. "I sound like a big jerk because I'm like: well yeah, I just went to Romania or I just went to… Life is not very normal so it's hard to talk about it with people," he said.

Many of the interviewed travellers also expressed the idea of not belonging, of missing a sense of community in which one really feels they belonged to when abroad, or not having a close-knit group of friends to regularly visit. Upon the occasional visits home, even if for a brief period of time, many felt difficult to readjust to the Westerners' emphasis on efficiency and attitude towards time. One of the participants said, "I've seen so much of the world now. When I came back [after the first year of travel], everybody was exactly the same as I had left them, which was wonderful, but then I needed to find my spot in

everybody's lives again."

The enthusiasm first manifested by family and friends about the idea of leaving for the road, typically turned into a "Are you out of your mind?' type of questioning. The African father of two explained,

> When we left to drive to Northern Tanzania in early 2010, our hearts were in our throats. Our friends and family told us we were mad. An aunt told us we were irresponsible to take our young children into deep dark Africa and others (extreme types) suggested we might not return.

JAM continued, "When I shared my idea with others, I was told that I was crazy and at the very least, I would be robbed and abducted." And even after four years on the road, HN confessed that her mother was still asking when she would come home, settle down and prepare for retirement. Confessions about these long-distance relationships revealed a deep incomprehension from those left behind and difficulties in keeping those bonds as time went by.

4.2.3.2 Difficult Lifestyle

> "Often the road is challenging, the heat unbearable, the food unpalatable, the beer warm" (GM).

For the long-term travellers in this study, exhaustion resulting from their lifestyle was typically caused by long-distance bus rides, frequent visa inquiries, endless border crossings, and the uncertainty of finding food and a place to sleep from time to time. GM explained, "A lot of what we're doing is just getting by, you know (…) We don't know

where we're going. We got no idea where we're gonna sleep." The excitement of moving into the unknown was felt with a mixture of excitement and trepidation; the chances for uncertain events and unpredictable encounters to happen were numerous. AL noted, "Some countries are very difficult to plan, some countries are difficult to work around." HN added, "Our route through Africa is subject to the frequently changing politics here (i.e., especially Egypt)."

Participants in this study believed that the lifestyle was growing in popularity, despite the large number of travellers who did not make it past the first two to three years on the road. AL and BA, who both considered themselves as pioneers in the field of professional travel blogging, have seen many recent blogs disappear only after a short time. BA said, "It's definitely not easy. It's much more difficult than most people believe." All participants agreed that the lifestyle was a lot less glamorous than most believed. MK put it in these words,

> Travel will make you dirty, smelly, sleep deprived, broke, and sick. It will bring out the best and the worst in you. It is the ultimate test for a relationship, and the ultimate test of your patience. You'll be put in uncomfortable situations, and no doubt at times you'll feel as if you're in danger.

In fact, many viewed constant travel as stressful and tiring and, as a consequence, eventually moved a lot slower than initially thought.

4.2.3.3 Hard Work

Because travelling is a constant economic drain, making the lifestyle sustainable represented one of the biggest challenges for the long-term travellers interviewed. A personal budget could only be stretched so far, and coming across lucrative work in lower developed countries was nearly impossible. GM explained,

> Drawing up a budget taking into consideration all the money your business has owed, how much your business is worth, the possibility of an unexpected inheritance and the combined glorious total of all your credit cards can be deceiving!

Most of the participants running online businesses ended up working harder on the road. "Ask any long-term, full-time traveller and they'll tell you that they work as many hours (or more) as they did at home in a cubicle," KN said. ML agreed, "I work more hours now than I ever did as a lawyer, for far less money…" Data showed that digital nomads, especially new ones, did not make much money, if any. And worse, it was far harder for travel bloggers than for any other online careers taken on the road. Maintaining a blog and answering the clients' demands required a tremendous amount of time. AL complained, "I get about 300 emails a day!" JI noted, "When you are travelling you are not writing, and when you are writing you are not travelling. It's hard to make a routine when you are on the move." On her website, KN made clear,

> Let go of any romantic notions you may have about a carefree, sexy life as a full-time traveller full of hammocks and jaunty hats. The reality looks more like travelling all day, then sitting on a dumpy bed in the cheapest room you can find with your computer on your lap struggling with dire internet service so you can work all night

researching future travel, researching and pitching stories and eking out the energy to find the creativity to complete assignments.

Travel bloggers maybe were in paradise-like locations around the world, but deadlines had to be met, and projects had to come to closure as in any other work assignment. On top of this, CN noted that the media personnel was currently overworked and underpaid, and did not make a good example of a sustainable business model. “You never know in this lifestyle, when you're going to get paid for a project, or if it'll even be a project. Some things will need to change in this industry, and it’ll be interesting to see where it’s all headed.”

Because the nomadic lifestyle implied crafting a career based on passions, the path to success was not well laid out. MK admitted, “I wish this lifestyle had an instruction book, because it is difficult at times.” BA supported that because the lifestyle currently was at an evolving state, digital nomads had to reinvent themselves every couple of years or so in order to stay on top of the game and earn enough money to live. AL summed up, “Travelling all over the world and funding your journey with a travel blog is a personal dream turned reality, but one that also turns exploration into an occupation.”

4.2.3.4 Gender, Safety and Health

Participants generally agreed that it was easier to travel the world as a man, than as a woman, but yet it was not impossible. In a few areas of the globe (for example in the Middle-East), it was not considered normal for women to wander freely nor be physically exposed in public. Doing so represented a strong violation of the societal norms and was

viewed with great disrespect. In other parts of the world where political tensions were high (i.e. in northern Africa), travelling solo was not always recommended. Fortunately, the participants in this study hadn't had serious misfortunes while travelling the world, but many admitted refraining from the most dangerous areas and taking precautions to avoid unnecessary trouble. AL commented, "If anything crazy or bad thing that has happen to me travelling, it's really been between the airport and where I'm staying." The first arrival was regarded as a moment of vulnerability because of the lack of local knowledge about getting around and prices.

Most long-term travellers in this study felt relatively safe on the road. However, this was not always the case for staying healthy. Unpleasant hospital visits caused by food poisoning, intestinal parasites, or malaria was common. Pit toilets and bucket showers were among the frequent answers to what challenged health when travelling. Some believed that because of the fast rate at which they moved, their body was at times not able to cope with new bacterial encounters, adding to this the fact that nowhere were hygiene standards as high as in most Western countries. HN also remarked that eating healthy was not always easy when food choices were limited, and that living outdoors in all weather had its price on the body. GM insisted, "Have your health checked. Because a rip in any part of your anatomy and a rotten tooth will only be piddle on the parade." Another plausible cause for the vulnerability of travellers' health was the accumulated exhaustion from constant changes of environment and routines. ML said, "It beats down a lot of people after a while."

4.3 Subjective Wellbeing of Long-Term Traveller

When travelling long-term, participants in this study had the advantage of time over traditional holidays, which provided them with endless opportunities to deepen their travel experience. Since travel is by nature a subjective experience, the various impacts of the journey on each participant varied greatly. During the interviews, all agreed that regardless of what came their way, the journey had nothing but rewards. As JI put it, these rewards were manifold: "Exploring places by living through them, sharing the quirks and wonderful little things that make this world so fascinating, meeting like-minded and completely opposite types of people from far-flung places." SI continued,

> To drive around the world, to visit as many countries as possible, to interact with as many cool people as we can, to experience different cultures by living slowly, eating and drinking local foods and libations, appreciating the art from the streets to the museums, dancing to the regional music, and learning the history, beliefs, and needs of the community that we are within.

For MY, each country or area had a unique set of things that brought about new knowledge, "on top of the intangible things that we are learning each and every day no matter where in the world we are," she explained. The unlimited learning, the freedom, the flexibility and the ability to absorb each and every moment was mainly what made the lifestyle so enjoyable. Participants mentioned other distinct advantages of long-term travel, such as getting a better understanding of one-self, becoming less scared of the world around, learning to be more adaptable to new environments, getting better at taking decisions, and improving social skills. The last section of Chapter 4 focuses on findings that relate to the

subjective wellbeing of the long-term travellers. Data are gathered into recurrent themes: concept of time, reflection on self and life, social interaction, understanding of the world, balance within chaos and giving back.

4.3.1 Concept of Time

> "Vagabonding is about time — our only real commodity — and how we choose to use it" (Potts, 2003, p.15).

In the Western world, a big part of the daily focus is on work. Work, responsibilities, home duties, maintenance of all belongings, and care of family members fill the days. And time eventually slips by, "weekends come and go, months come and go, Christmases come and go" (MY). It is this typical use of time that was for all participants the single most hated thing about living the regular mainstream life path. The long-term travellers in this study thought of time as the immediate span of *now*, as opposed to the span of freedom that only comes at retirement and after one has 'lived a prosper life' and 'made a good living'. For them, the travelling lifestyle was about making use of time as they pleased; guided by instincts, not driven by the hopes of a better future. The long-term travellers interviewed looked at time as a continuous count down, and therefore saw a greater value in enjoying the very moment and making the best out of every situation, knowing very well that it would not last forever.

As a consequence, the participants had a very vague view of what the future held, sometimes as if they were scared that it might come too soon, or that it would disappoint them. Uncertainty about the future or about the possibility of eventually settling down was

common to all participants in this study. When asked where they saw themselves in 10-20 years from now, absolutely none had a clear answer or a laid-out plan. “I have no idea!” came spontaneously and was the most common answer. However, many participants expressed a desire to slow down the travels in the near future, though all had trouble seeing themselves giving up the road and the freedom brought by the nomadic lifestyle.

4.3.2 Reflection on Self and Life

GM believed that during the longer journeys, the traveller did not feel social pressure the same way and that it was easier to let go of the every-day negativity or the bad habits “that you’d have back at home and that kept dragging you down.” Many participants believed that life in the Western world was shaped by corporations and the vicious circle of consumerism. JN explained, “We have minimal control about the people we've grown up to be. We've been socially trained through TV and school and our peers and parents and so the biggest thing about living in different countries is you get to really see that I think.” He added, “A lot of it is not true. It’s not universal.” To him, the ability to question his own values on a regular basis helped the shaping of a more authentic life. Stepping out of society was also a nice way to look back at it. DV remembered,

> During the countless hours of driving, my mind has wandered, to say the least. From thinking of people I used to go to school with and wondering where they have got to in the world, to thinking of past decisions I have made on my way through life and considered how different the present would be had I made other choices. Not to say I regret any of the choices I have made, but to understand how vastly different life to

date could have been. The overall outcome is a clarity of thought and an inner peace to know I'm making the best of life and doing and experiencing things I enjoy. I am happy!

Long-term travellers in this study generally believed that the more they travelled, the more they grew as persons. MK admitted, “A lot of growth comes from being uncomfortable and being in a new place and feeling like you don't belong, and having to be there for a while.” MY agreed, “There is nothing like seeing real poverty with your own eyes to put your own needs in perspective.” As a professional writer travelling solo, ML explained that during times of solitude came reflection on self and society: “You have time to digest and reflect on your life and that changes your worldview, thus changes yourself.” Many agreed that travel taught them that the world does not revolve around a single individual. It broadened their mind to the ideas and beliefs of other cultures; it made them more tolerant.

Most participants believed that long-term travel challenged their minds to deal with new situations and resolve problems. MK said, “Life on the road force-feeds you to be flexible.” He explained that it was the process of figuring things out and putting pieces of the puzzle together. BA added, “I learned to pay attention to my gut.” MK agreed, “You become quite self-sufficient and independent just a lot of being able to search out what you want.” The lessons learned were multifarious: “Be patient. Relax. Don’t take yourself too seriously. Open your mind and heart to new cultures and customs. The most important is that people are generally good and will help you if you’re in need,” as JME put it. Above all, travel taught them to let go of the will to control everything. CI continued, “So, the bus

doesn't show up, the train doesn't leave on time... you get to that point where it just doesn't phase you anymore." Most participants also believed that long-term travel helped them enjoy the simple things in life, such as a comfy bed, a warm meal and good company (DV), and loving each day for whatever it contained (JAM).

The participants in this study were convinced that the changes long-term travel brought to their lives were positive and long lasting. DV said, "I have certainly become more understanding, considerate and calm over the years." MY added, "It is just something I have realized over the years and that helps me to be the best person/mom/wife I can be." SI concluded, "Our mission is not just to see things but, rather, to see whom we become on our journey, to let 'others' press upon us, and change us in beautiful ways, to shape us into more compassionate, charitable, and aware human beings."

4.3.3 Social Interaction

The long-term travellers interviewed generally had outstanding inter-personal skills, as their survival in a world of unknown highly depended on it. Covering their basic needs required them to interact with people: from asking advice on routes and destinations, to ordering food and making arrangements for the night. SI explained, "You're forced to interact, forced to rub shoulders, have friction with the culture, with the people." Participants also learned to trust strangers. Some appreciated the unfamiliar contacts more than others, and even sought invitations to share meals with people they had barely met, or stayed with locals for the night. From the regular encounters with strangers (travellers and locals alike), friendship quickly blossomed. CN thought that it was easier to make closer

bonds, because being abroad forced her to be disconnected from home, to really live the moment and take time to get to know strangers. JAM summed the topic well,

> I met so many wonderful strangers who fast became friends, I made so many friends that I struggle to remember them all. When you are constantly interacting with people for many hours at a time, you experience accelerated friendships and become close to them in a shorter period of time compared to when you work with them and only interact for a few minutes each day.

When participants in this study were asked what memories they kept of the places they had visited, the single most recurrent answer was *people*. HN said, "Everywhere we have visited has been a favourite for different reasons although the one consistent reason for all of the countries we have visited has been the friendliness of the local people." From the person they greeted in a café, a local that offered help when the travelling vehicle broke down, to the kindness of the owner of a tiny shop where they bought food, there were several banal connections that made the trip exciting, rewarding, and memorable. SA said, "When I think back at what I remember the most, it's always the people that we met." HN agreed, "Mostly our memories have been about the people; the kindness of strangers, the different sense of community — or the existence of community — not found in the West."

4.3.4 Understanding of the World

> "Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness, and many of our people need it sorely on these accounts. Broad, wholesome, charitable views of men and things cannot be acquired by vegetating in one little corner of the earth all one's

lifetime" (Twain, 1984, p.444).

All participants expressed ideas of commonness between the people of all cultures. KN believed that long-term travel gave her daily reminders that "everyone everywhere has the same deep-down core dreams, desires and needs." She also admired the opportunity to take charge of forming her own opinions about important things such as the way people lived and acted in society. BA agreed, "Travelling long-term does really change your view of the world."

DV explained, "I have certainly been marvelling at what our small blue and green planet has to offer. I have never failed to be surprised by both its complexities and its similarities." Many also articulated the thought that people were generally more good than bad. Even in the most vulnerable scenarios (e.g. stopped somewhere with a broken vehicle with nowhere to go), locals were generally good to their word and offered help. All recalled episodes of random moments of kindness from strangers. They talked about foreign cultures with great respect and admiration; not necessarily in approval, but in fascination and appreciation of the differences; they believed that, after all, we are all humans. BA explained,

> We may speak different languages, practice different religions, eat different foods, and dress differently, but we all want a safe and comfortable place to live, sufficient food to eat, clothes to wear, freedom, and a better life for our children. I fervently believe that the better we get to know one another, the less likely we'll want to kill each other.

The participants not only described changes in terms of outlook and perspective on

self and life, but also displayed changes within the relationships individuals have with society and nature. SI affirmed, “Compassion and gratitude are the bedrock of happiness.” Most tended to have an immense respect for nature, for its beauty and for the resources it provided to animals and human beings. As GR put it, it is “the confession of a simple, conscious living in respectful relationship with the Earth.” SI agreed, “Because of the compassion you feel for the beasts and the biosphere, you make choices that honour your connection and protect the planet we all call home.” Most participants interviewed were also very concerned about their own footprints, and they treated both people and nature with the same kindness and respect as if it were theirs to preserve.

4.3.5 Giving Back

Giving back to the people and the nature they surrounded themselves with during the journey was a common endeavour for every participant interviewed. Almost every participant shared a desire to help somehow, or give an extra meaning to the journey, as if the act of simple wander was too selfish, or not gratifying enough. Sharing knowledge about the world with school children, raising awareness about malaria, creating homes for orphans in Bolivia, working on humanitarian or sustainable projects in developing countries, leading environmental projects for nature preservation and sustainable growth, and inspiring others to travel through the stories they wrote, are just a few examples of their efforts. Helping others not only gave them a sense of fulfilment, but was also a way to show gratitude to the world.

4.3.6 Balance Within Chaos

"Vagabonding is about looking for adventure in life, and normal life within adventure" (Potts, 2003, p.15).

The travelling lifestyle was for the long-term travellers in this study a strange mixture between leisure and work, freedom and settlement, and the art of dealing with both ends at once. The path was unpaved and the direction to where it led was full of unknowns. MY said, "Everyone always has a choice and when you choose one path you choose against other paths. For now this is ours and when the balance is tipped too far to one side we can always alter it." But no lifestyle is perfect; even within balance, one finds chaos. SI explained, "It's like boiling water! Everything is bubbling all over the place but at its core, there's actually a really strong structure, or a value structure to what we're doing and that makes me feel it's balanced." The long-term travellers interviewed created for themselves a lifestyle of freedom built on unconventional views on living. They called it: *balanced chaos*.

JAM recalled, "I had fallen in love with the sense of freedom and adventure that I found in the world and I wanted more. I wanted to push myself further and I wanted to never stop. Like a drug, I was hooked on life." Participants liked the idea of expansion, of being limitless, of freedom in every sense of the word; a freedom that was not 'allowed' in the society they previously lived in. JS said, "What I learned most is that there is really no correct way to live your life." KN also made clear, "We value the lifestyle we've created more than the stuff, opportunities we've sacrificed." Feeling alive and content, living a life that they chose for themselves was how most described the perfect scenario of a satisfying life. CN added, "I am happy now that I am following my path; it's definitely meaningful to

me. I'm happy now that I am doing what I want to do."

Of the greatest rewards long-term travel brought to their lives, happiness was by far the most gratifying. Recalls of moments of overwhelming happiness were frequent when discussing about the positive sides of their long journey abroad. JI noted,

> Travel has also helped me keep life in perspective in the long and short term, and led to many reflections on what it means to be 'home' in a world of in-betweens…
>
> Despite the hard moments, I found out that I really loved it. It is a vindicating feeling to know that something I thought that I really wanted to do, felt right, felt like an exciting thing to do.

To the same question SI concluded, "We feel free, fulfilled and connected in a way that we'd never felt before… It's the first time I've ever felt incredibly authentic, you know. That what I'm thinking, what I'm saying and what I'm doing, are all in line. I have so much more integrity in my lifestyle."

CHAPTER 5

- DISCUSSION -

Chapter 5, the final chapter of this thesis, discusses the nomadic lifestyle of long-term travellers, and sheds a new light on the eccentricity of this travelling segment. The chapter contains a discussion of the methods used in regards to the study aims, an overview of the study limitations, a summary of the findings, and a discussion of the importance of continued research in this area.

5.1 Discussion of Findings

Modern technology has significantly changed our every-day lives over the past decades and, as a result, the idea of the successful individual: efficient, productive and master in the art of multitasking. Tse (2014) believed that perhaps it is not such a great surprise to see the rising intensity of life with more and more individuals wanting to explore new ways to cope with increased pressure. In fact, as travel provides several health benefits, it is plausible to believe in pursuing a dream of utopia, while keeping distanced and stress-free liaisons with the 'orderly' world. As JN explained, "There is a clear and growing movement in the world, and people are starting to realize that old concepts of work, play and success do not really satisfy any longer."

However, the modern era, with the invention of Internet in particular, has greatly simplified the logistics of travelling as well as opening for countless new opportunities (i.e.

pursuing a career online and not physically be present at the office every day). Arguably, the amplitude of the trade-off for travelling for an extended period of time is significantly reduced when work can follow along and income can continue. Never has it been so easy, convenient, and affordable to travel, as a way of leisure, but also as a way to live a sustainable life without a fixed home. A global lifestyle is no longer reserved for 'the rich and famous.' As JN noted, "It is within grasp of anyone willing to embrace adventure and break from dated definitions of how we are supposed to spend our lives." In sum, for the participants in this study, the answer to modernization was the creation of their own unique lifestyle, one that gave travel a central role.

5.1.1 How the Findings Differ From the Literature

Findings from this study showed that there are numerous differences from the long-term travellers of the 1970s to those of the present day, and that some of the clichés behind long-term travel are erroneous. Four of these misconceptions are discussed below: 1) modern long-term travellers still meet the definition of the 1970s drifters, 2) long-term travel is best suited for the single men, 3) the journey is essentially an escape from modern urban life and an avoidance of adulthood responsibilities, and 4) the journey is a way to gain status and recognition.

5.1.1.1 Earlier Drifters

Findings suggested that earlier depictions of the long-term travellers as drifters, i.e. anarchistic, self-indulgent and irresponsible (Cohen, 1972), are no longer accurate. Neither

is the presumption that they aimlessly wander. The connection with the 1960s hippy drug subculture is largely outdated. None of interviewed travellers were rebelling against something; if anything, they fought for justice and equal rights (e.g. women's rights, equal access to malaria treatments) by sharing knowledge and raising awareness with locals and through social media. They may not have carried the same amount of responsibilities as the standard Westerners who work full time and pay a mortgage, but some still had deadlines to meet for their online work, some decided to educate their own children on the road, and others overtly cared for their own footprint while travelling (e.g. used a partly solar driven vehicle, generally avoided travel by air, highly reduced their daily consumption, etc.). While it is true that most travelled on a flexible schedule, they all had aims for their current travel (e.g. knowledge, exploration, work…) and had future projects in the works.

Previous research accused long-term travellers of being indulgent and selfish because travel's impacts are predominantly self-centred. Nonetheless, the travel choices made by the long-term travellers in this study had nothing to do with the accusations of being rebellious, careless, and disrespectful that Cohen (1972) addressed to the drifters. Findings from this study suggested that modern long-term travellers behave much more like Maoz's (2007) modern backpackers and MacBeth's (2000) sea cruisers. Nearly all respondents avoided popular tourist locations and most preferred visiting untouched areas (e.g. natural reserves and national parks), remote villages (for ex. in the Amazon) or generally getting off the beaten path. Driven by a natural curiosity, interested in the genuine and the new, obsessed by people and the way others live, they sought adventure through the

unknown and unfamiliar. Figuring things out on their own and making their own travelling arrangements were therefore an important part of the experience.

The findings of the present study not only reject the label 'drifters' (Cohen, 1972), but also suggest that modern long-term travellers are in fact much more sophisticated than the drifters. Data showed clear evidence of an interest for continued knowledge. In sum, all of the long-term travellers in this study had at least one field in which they were well educated with the average length of higher education being 4.85 years. In research on the personal values of long-term backpackers, Paris (2010) explained that there may be a "possible relationship between 'bridge' values such as intellectual, independence, and broadmindedness could influence backpackers to be motivated to experience other cultures, to increase personal knowledge, and to interact with local people" (p.253). Findings from the current study also showed that participants preferred to be independent in the way they travelled, were all well-educated, and were all passionate about the people they met and the places they visited; thereby suggesting that Paris's theory can conceivably be applicable to the long-term travellers as well.

5.1.1.2 Single Men Only

An old cliché suggests that world travels are strictly reserved to single men (Cohen, 1972; Dann, 1977). In Riley (1988), long-term travellers were typically not as young as those of the 1970s. However, at that time, Riley supported Cohen (1972) in that most long-term travellers were single and had never been married. Findings in this study showed no noticeable difference in gender or in marital status among the participants and in data from

external sources. On the contrary, data showed a wide spread of answers to both categories. One possible explanation to these findings is that our society is changing and our choices in terms of leisure activities are evolving along with it. Another hypothesis is that the increasing accessibility and affordability of travel allows individuals from all walks of life to embrace a travelling lifestyle. The borderless access to information via the Internet has also broken many barriers, particularly for those who fear for the unknown and for safety, language and cultural behaviours. Travelling as a woman, even with children, is perhaps not as scary as it was perceived to be just a few decades ago, simply because of our extended knowledge about the world outside of home.

To a certain extent, demographic factors help understand the choice of destinations and the travelling methods employed (i.e. a 60 year-old might not wish to cross the African jungle solo on foot), but they do not necessarily help define the purpose and objectives of travel. Like all people, modern long-term travellers vary in nationality, age, gender, education, work experience, and in marital and life cycle statuses (also shown in Maoz, 2007), and a lot more so now than just a few decades ago. In fact, long-term travellers do not form as a homogenous group as they have been believed to do earlier.

5.1.1.3 Escape

In the literature, the most predominant misconception about world travel is that the journey is essentially an *escape* from various frameworks forced by society upon people (Maoz, 2007), and a withholding from settling into the urban routine (Cohen, 1972; Riley, 1988). Dann (1977) called it an *anomie,* which motive symbolized the 'getting away from it

all' feeling and the lust for leaving the everyday struggles. Other earlier reports suggested that long-term travel was triggered by a dissatisfaction with the monotony of the everyday life (Riley, 1988), or because of something having ended, such as a work contract, the life of a loved one or the anticipated end of good health (White & White, 2004). White and White believed that long-term travellers were at one of life's junctures, which in many cases caused them to feel a disconnection from community bonds and networks, leaving little or no sense of attachment to the home base. "Taking to the road was a way of grieving and distancing themselves from a way of life that had ended" (White & White, 2004, p.204). Whether the journey was caused by fear of responsibilities associated with settling down, from the loss of something meaningful or someone precious, or simply by stress and boredom, is very unclear in the tourism literature. Nevertheless, there exist a universal way to justify such behaviour, that is to call it an *escape*.

Interestingly, only four of the participants in this study felt they were at a life juncture prior to leaving long-term (business falling apart, loss of job because of the recession, loss of girlfriend, and the worsening of own health). Perhaps it made the transition 'easier' for them, but none highlighted it as the reason why they left in the first place. Almost none of the participants in this study felt miserable prior to leaving and none recalled running away from something unpleasant. In fact most lived a very successful life, traditionally speaking. Contrary to the cliché, data from this study suggest that the long-term journey represents the pursuit of a dream more than an escape from discontentment. The long-term travellers studied characterized life as an adventure, and they were attracted by the journey because of an innate curiosity and growing interest for travel and learning,

not because they were escaping something. To them it was not a major detachment from the home society, but rather a deeper connection to the world.

Most non-travellers view life on the road as suspicious and lacking legitimacy (Riley, 1988), like a subtle criticism to life in Western societies (Potts, 2003). Many too quickly assume that one must have a profound dislike for life in society in order to justify the adoption of such an 'eccentric' and 'egocentric' travel lifestyle. In Western societies, everything that falls outside the norms is more often picked on than acknowledged. As demonstrated in Chapter 4, the phenomenon is more complex than we assume. The *escape* theory thus seems inaccurate and pejorative, as it labels long-term travellers as non-conformists, rebels, and to a certain extent accuses them of being 'losers' by society's standards. It is an unfair label that puts them in a pigeonhole outside of the acceptable norms, and as the only logical explanation for such behaviour.

One plausible explanation for this misconception is that Western societies have created artificial schemes built around work schedules, monthly payments, business hours, break periods, rush hours and so on (MacBeth, 2000). The iterated structure of modern society arguably alienates natural rhythms of nature, and "insidiously controls the individual and removes the will or ability to follow rhythms and processes" (ibid, p.28). Modern Western societies have thus created expectations and given a false impression of what is socially accepted. The daily carousel is built on the laws of capitalism, in which individuals learn to become independent, efficient and productive. A respectable life in such a setting typically includes: go to school, work hard, get a good job, buy a nice house, buy a nice car, raise a family, retire when old, then die. Those who do not choose

accordingly are accused of being irresponsible, childish and disreputable. White and White agreed, “Long periods of absence from a permanent home and the frugal approaches to living arrangements clearly violate social norms and expectations of stability, permanence rather than mobility, and traditional forms of consumption” (2004, p.206).

This study suggested a different approach to the question, ‘What triggers people to leave and travel long-term?’ For most participants, life was not necessarily miserable in the first place; neither were most of the relationships at home (work, family, friends or private), thus there was no reason to ‘run away’. Something else pushed all along: restlessness, curiosity, sense for adventure, strong interests, or simply a different view on life. As a consequence — not as a cause — these factors led to moving on, experiencing something new and seeking new challenges. It is a misconception to assume that the journey is essentially an escape from misery, responsibilities, routines, hard work, settling down with someone, or even raising a family. As a matter of fact, all of these elements (with the exception of misery) were identified in the long-term travellers’ life stories. They simply refused to be slaves on others’ accounts, go aimlessly to work in order to gain sufficient amount of money to fall into our modern vicious circle of consumerism, and follow the same life path as everyone else.

5.1.1.4 Fame and Glory

Earlier research reports accused long-term travellers of being self-centred and eager to obtain fame and glory through travel (Crompton, 1979; Dann 1977; Fodness, 1994; Pearce & Caltabiano, 1983; Riley, 1988). Dann (1977) believed that *ego-enhancement* was

the second of two important push factor categories along with *anomie*; it originated from the desire of being socially recognized and it explained the aspiration for status that travel confers. Using Dann's theory, Riley (1988) reported that the budget travellers she studied found ego-enhancement in getting the *best value,* and that *hardship* was often important for travellers' status. She also believed that travellers' social standing and peer-recognition largely channelled travel behaviour.

Just as anomie, ego-enhancement was not a major push factor for the long-term travellers in this study. On the contrary, respondents predominantly used a sober tone and casual speech, and had a calm and sensible attitude, even when stories told were as exotic as climbing one of the earth's tallest volcanoes, remembering memorable encounters with wild animals, or taking part in a renown cultural celebration. The memories of special places, people and moments were generally told without the sensational touch or the overly exaggerated details. Most even had a hard time remembering how many countries they had visited so far, because the number simply did not matter. When congratulated for their achievements so far — travel-wise and life-wise — almost all immediately rushed to finish conversing on the subject. To them, they had done nothing special by choosing a different life path, without discarding the fact that their living style was probably not suited for everyone. Many also rejected the label of *heroes* or *deviants* (Cohen, 1972), neither did they intend to be someone else or something they are not. And although many of them shared their stories online and said to appreciate the support from readers, they affirmed not to get distracted or affected by others' deviating opinions. Findings showed that perhaps modern long-term travellers are not after as much fame and glory as they have been

accused to be.

For many non-travellers, long-term travel brings about a certain degree of mystique and prestige that imminently gives a sense of elitism to long-term travel. Hence, the misconception that people travel long-term to become part of an upper-class type of travel, as if to prove themselves 'better' than the standard Westerners that take occasional holidays abroad. As a consequence, many of the long-term travellers interviewed felt they were regarded with a mixture of admiration and scepticism; they felt misunderstood. Since their lifestyle was in many ways hedonistic, family and friends viewed them as egocentric, selfish and extravagant. Many of the challenges they faced (e.g. facing opposition when leaving loved ones, keeping and maintaining relationships, finding place in people's lives upon occasional returns) came from that misunderstanding. In fact, data revealed clear signs of altruism and compassion — giving back —, supporting that their lifestyle involved much more profound goals than that of selfish and aimless drift.

5.1.2 How the Findings Contribute to the Literature

This study's findings contribute understanding three major aspects of long-term travel: 1) *What* is long-term travel? 2) *Why* do people travel long-term? and 3) *How* does long-term travel contribute to happiness? The following section discusses the findings related to these three aspects.

5.1.2.1 What is Long-Term Travel?

> "The act of vagabonding is not an isolated trend so much as it is a spectral connection between people long separated by place and time, but somehow speaking the same language" (Potts, 2003, p.10).

Findings from this study support Potts' (2003) definition of long-term travel, seen as the act of leaving home — arguably called the 'orderly world' by Potts — to explore other places for an extended period of time. Long-term travel as so defined, is an individually meaningful act that emphasizes "creativity, adventure, awareness, simplicity, discovery, independence, realism, self-reliance, and the growth of the spirit" (ibid, p.7). The data also suggest that a travelling lifestyle can be explained as a powerful attraction towards freedom (the absence of boundaries) and the unknown. Like a giant love affair: a love for life at large and the world in particular. The outcome of such journey is believed to hit a deeper stage of contentment and give a more profound significance to and within the different encounters along the way (e.g. people, nature and places) than the regular short-term holiday.

Long-term travellers are generally not looking for a palpable, tangible type of experience; more those that are unpredictable, and that grab them in the moment. The experiences that touch them deeper inside, that question the *what* and *why,* as opposed to the *where* and *when,* for the regular travellers, and thus put a different perspective into their original picture of a place. For the same reason, most long-term travellers in this study strongly disliked being called tourists. Just like the backpackers of Larsen, Øgaard and Brun (2011) and the sea cruisers of MacBeth (2000), they all rejected the label. Findings

support Riley's (1988) view on the typical tourists: "Tourists are viewed as seeking a hassle-free holiday which includes comfortable accommodation, westernized meals, and minimal uncertainty" (p.322), which better fits Cohen's (1972) definition of the institutionalized type of travellers, but certainly not the long-term travellers. Besides, holiday-takers usually come home to the *normal life* when the vacation comes to an end (Sørensen, 2003), whereas long-term travellers generally have no intention of doing so.

5.1.2.2 Why Travel Long-Term?

> "Life is a journey. It revolves around the decisions you take, the experiences you have on the way, and the reflections you make on what you've achieved."
> (Griffiths, n.d., para.1)

Earlier reports on human motivation indicated that for the basic need of self-actualization to be met, freedom of inquiry and expression had to be fulfilled to a certain degree, "We shall then postulate a desire to understand, to systematize, (…) to look for relations and meanings" (Maslow, 1943, p.386). Maslow's theory of motivation (1943) supported that travelling helps fulfilling the human need of self-actualization at the very top of the pyramid (the desire for self-fulfilment or the actualization of one's full potential). Maslow stated that, even if all other needs were satisfied, discontent and restlessness would soon develop, unless the individual was doing what he was 'fitted for': "A musician must make music; an artist must paint; a poet must write, if he is to be ultimately happy" (1943, p.383). Additionally, the findings support that Maslow's theory of hierarchy of human needs helps explaining why long-term travellers reach out to the road in order to satisfy the

need of self-actualization. Long-term travellers in this study claimed to embark on a long-term journey to enrich themselves, as also shown in MacBeth (2000) and White and White (2004). But interestingly, the long-term travellers interviewed were also ready to sacrifice the needs from the lower levels (safety, stability, comfort…) to achieve that. The findings also supported White and White's (2004) theory of *new beginning*; for the long-term travellers interviewed, the journey served as a way to reset their focus on life and on what made them feel content and happy, requiring some of them to overcome fear and become more confident and independent.

Potts (2003) believed that what makes a person an explorer in the truest, most vivid sense of the word, is an honest and friendly interest in people, places and things. Findings support this affirmation. Travellers interested in the travelling lifestyle generally involve themselves into travel more than the standard holiday takers, both in terms of time and of aims. The expectations of the long-term travellers are not geared towards luxurious and pampered holiday, but towards both the originality and the commonality of all encounters. It is a different mindset: one that opens up to the world and absorbs the stimuli given by new surroundings, one that is curious to understand why people and places present themselves in a certain way.

For the long-term travellers in this study, the journey went further than the simple act of travel: it was an outlook on life, a value adjustment that put people in the centre and left the material world on the outside. For these travellers, long-term travel was about enriching life, not in terms of personal savings, but in terms of personal values, beliefs, knowledge, and meaning in association with the world. It was not an act of rebellion, and

not necessarily the result of a life juncture, but rather a desire to seek further than the eye can see and get a better understanding of the social and physical apparent reality. It was about making the necessary sacrifices to pursue a utopia, not in terms of perfection, but in terms of learning to embrace an endless life challenge.

Novelty has for a long time been widely recognized by scholars as the single most important push factor for nearly all types of travellers (Boo & Jones, 2009; Jang & Cai, 2002; Weaver, McCleary, Han & Blosser, 2009). Findings from this study elucidate a powerful curiosity (for people, places, and novel experiences) that all participants admitted having, and which correlates with the idea of novelty. According to the data, it is plausible to believe that it takes an infinitely curious mind to live a lifestyle that is perpetually changing and that offers no stability. The participants showed a strong attraction for the unknown in order to cope with the great deal of uncertainties brought by every new situation and encounter.

5.1.2.3 How Does Long-Term Travel Contribute to Happiness?

Previous studies showed clear evidence that long-term travellers feel happier when they travel than otherwise (Gilbert & Adbullah, 2004; MacBeth, 2010; Paris, 2010; Riley, 1988; Tse, 2014). The benefits of travel are numerous and manifold. Travellers tend to feel better about most things, "They feel more positive than non-travellers in their general wellbeing, attitude toward life, sense of control, and outlook" (Tse, 2014, p.989), and the impacts apply to both genders. Tse (2014) also believed that, of the impacts of travel, many go beyond the short-term gratification at destination and can last long-term. In accordance

with Moutinho (2000), whatever brings satisfaction to the individual — like traveling — will result in a state of need, or a condition for one to be happy, and will most likely to be sought over and over again (also shown in Tse, 2014), perhaps explaining why the long-term travellers in this study had no plans on returning home.

Findings from this study support the above theories and demonstrate that long-term travel has the potential to change one's own values and virtue, allowing for the flourishing of the soul and bringing general happiness. Long-term travel provides endless time to think and infinite opportunities for personal growth. It enables the traveller to be alone while in the company of others. In accordance with White and White (2004), long-term travel makes the shedding of old identities possible while providing new foundations for personal reintegration. By distancing oneself from the old, the traveller explores the new; "New physical and psychological surroundings provide an environment in which aspects of oneself can be mirrored or reflected back in a new light" (White & White, 2004, p.207). The findings also support Maoz's (2007) theory that tourism has the potential to form new identities through personal experiences of the world as opposed to paradigms offered by society and often associated with gender and race, thus help redefining the foundations of *selfhood*.

In Maslow (1943), even people from completely different backgrounds are much more alike than our first impressions let us believe, and the better we get to know one another, the more commonness we find. Tse (2014) also believed that through learning about other cultures, people came to better appreciate each others' company and were more motivated to build and preserve relationships. Riley (1988) agreed that interpersonal

relationships for long-termers were often very intense, "because time is short (before parting ways to visit the next destination) and because people are eager to share… friendships are made much more quickly than usual" (ibid, p.324). These findings suggest that long-term travel does not necessarily equal being alone in the world. Long-term travellers' approach to travel resembles in many ways the relationships they create with each place, or each encounter. Taking a few pictures then leaving does not satisfy them; they would rather stop and get to know people and places better. In doing so, they form their own perspective of a place, which in turn, impacts the person they are. And the wheel keeps turning: every time they move, they absorb, and evolve. They keep clear memories of experiences, new knowledge, and especially encounters with people that came their way. They make the world their own and as such, feel a desire to make it a better place for them and those who already live there.

The findings also agree with MacBeth (2000), who described the lifestyle as "a life of hardship and insecurity counterbalanced by powerful intrinsic rewards," (p.20) simply named balanced chaos by respondents. Headey and Wearing (1991) called it *dynamic equilibrium* (as cited in Gilbert & Abdullah, 2004). Long-term travel is a way for them to deeply connect with human nature for what it is, and reflect upon how common actions may affect others and the near future.

In sum, long-term travellers form an interesting mixture of contrasts. Although they are somewhat egocentric and independent, their interest in the world and its inhabitants is undeniable. Although they are adventurous and enjoy cultural and at times spiritual challenges, they show a softer side that understands others and waits patiently for an

answer. Although they live a non-traditional life of their own making and believe that their freedom is worth a great deal more than material belongings, they have an unconditional open-mindedness and a giant interest towards the different and the unknown. Although they appear to have found a path that follows their dreams, they can suddenly and easily stop and let their curiosity and intuition guide them in the completely opposite direction. Perhaps this is how long-term travellers find a state of equilibrium in life, by simultaneously touching both poles at once.

5.2 Study Limitations

As mentioned earlier, there is no single way of studying a phenomenon, and no method without flaws. Although the researcher is convinced that the methods employed in this study were highly relevant and adequate for its purposes, a few limitations are worth noting. This study intended to uncover the perspectives of long-term travellers in regards to their motivational factors and subjective wellbeing. More specifically, it intended to reach out for a better description of the push factors leading to extended travel and a deeper understanding of the *why* behind this eccentric way of life. Secondly, the study aspired to find out more about the search for a happier life through travel and the ways in which travel enhances happiness. Selecting a qualitative methodological framework for this exploration proved to be a good choice, as it was well suited to capture free meanings, feelings and perceptions. It turned out to be an effective method to describe and explain this social phenomenon. While moving away from the continuum constructs and the various tourist typology types, the data provided several new and rich insights on the phenomenon.

One potential limitation is the quality of data. In qualitative research, because of the dependence on the narratives of participants, the depth of data relies on the participants' memory of facts and feelings, and thus can be vulnerable. The accuracy of the data related to happiness, in particular, is highly dependent on the travellers' own recall and appraisals of experiences in terms of good/bad or pleasant/unpleasant. Thus, it is not an exact science; memory can forget or forgive. Data is also affected by the quality of the interaction between the participants and the researcher, even though intentions were good and precautions had been taken to ensure a natural encounter. And, as we do know that interests and motivations change over time, current findings might not represent the reality of the long-term travellers in 10 or 20 years. Nevertheless, it is worth emphasizing that qualitative research never aims to obtain generalizable results, but rather explores different avenues and gives a deeper understanding of social phenomena, something otherwise difficult to achieve. In this perspective, the current study is of great relevance to the identification and the understanding of the current trends, as well as to serve as a base of knowledge for future research.

Second, one of the major limitations of most tourism-related studies, including this one, is having the great majority of participants from Western origin and culture, due in big part to the recruitment method employed; using Internet and searching with English key words. In a report on the role of culture and nationality on travellers' motivations, Maoz (2007) also found that the vast majority of backpackers came from North America, Australia, New Zealand, and Western Europe. In accordance with the data shown by the World Travel & Tourism Council (2015), Western countries have a relatively more stable

political and economic situation than other areas of the globe, which allows their population to benefit from more freedom related to border crossing and personal income, among other things. However, recent studies suggest the emergence of new markets that are not yet well represented in reports to date, meaning that findings such as the ones in this study may differ in a few years (Cohen & Cohen, 2015; Maoz, 2007; WTTC, 2015).

It is also worth noting that, for a long time, research on tourism has been dominated by Western academics, who are now facing criticism for being too Western-oriented (Cohen & Cohen, 2015; Maoz, 2007). More often than not, researchers have assumed the Westerners to be the tourists, and the non-Westerners to be the locals. "That approach, which had a decisive influence on the theoretical discourse on tourism at least to the end of the twentieth century, ignored people from the emerging regions as tourists" (Cohen & Cohen, 2015, p.11). Consequently, scholars still have little data for long-term travellers of non-Western backgrounds.

5.3 Future Research

Previous research has found motivation to be one crucial psychological factor (i.e., attitude, perception, personality/self-concept, and learning) to determining tourist behaviour (Boo & Jones, 2009; Chen & Uysal, 2003; Fodness, 1994; Jang & Cai, 2002; Maslow, 1943; Yuan & McDonald, 1990). Boo and Jones noted, "Motivation and purpose are interrelated because the purpose of travel is determined by the motivation of why a trip is taken" (2009, p.61). Since people have travelled more and more in recent years, the necessity of understanding the push and pulls factors of travel has also become increasingly

important (Yuan & McDonald, 1990). Knowledge in return helps stakeholders to better accommodate the needs of future travellers of all kinds, namely in the planning of transportation infrastructures, accommodation, retailing, dining and entertainment (Li, Law & Wang, 2010). Thus, tourism research benefits the economic, environmental and cultural sustainability of touristic destinations, and especially in rural areas and in developing countries (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2015).

As years go by, trends in tourism continue to evolve at a faster rate and new travel markets constantly emerge (ibid). Combined with the knowledge that travel motivation is subjective in nature and is a rather complex aspect of tourism behaviour to uncover, it reinforces the need to pursue sustained research in the field and to increase knowledge to better understand and appreciate the eccentricity of all travel market shares, such as that of the long-term travellers. Although the latter group represents a marginal percentage of the total number of travellers worldwide, their impact is nevertheless significant, particularly in rural areas and developing countries. Long-term travellers are more likely to travel to remote areas than the mainstream tourists, they are more willing to endure hardship and they spend more time travelling than any other types of travellers.

The current study contributes to existing findings in shedding a new light on what long-term travel is, why long-term travellers prefer the road to the modern Western lifestyle and how the journey enriches their lives. The study highlights the pursuit of freedom and personal growth, open-mindedness to the world and its incredible diversity, and a life path for a self-fulfilling life. Findings on this utopian alternative to the modern Western life

increase our understanding of travel and, maybe most importantly, on mankind's pursuit of happiness.

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Appendix A

- Informal Recruitment E-mail -

Memorial
University of Newfoundland
School of Human Kinetics and Recreation
St. John's, NL A1C 5S7, (709) 864-8670

Informal recruitment

First contact via email

"Hi! My name is Valerie. I came across your website in search of world travellers and I thank you for sharing your incredible stories and providing such an authentic source for inspiration. I keep a website myself (www.valbertrand.com), but am not a blogger; I'm a traveller, but not on a permanent basis. The reason why I am contacting you is because I am intrigued to find out more about what drives people to travel perpetually, enough to make it into the topic of a Master Degree thesis. I could use some help; would you please accept to be interviewed?"

Please contact:

Valérie Bertrand: vrb012@mun.ca
Master Degree Student

Appendix B

- Recruitment Letter -

Memorial
University of Newfoundland
School of Human Kinetics and Recreation
St. John's, NL A1C 5S7, (709) 864-8670

Recruitment

Finding happiness through life-long travel?

Not everyone is meant for long-term travel. While most enjoy the comfort of their home, the stability of their work and the predictability of their life, others prefer to live on a day-to-day basis in a constantly instable and unpredictable setting. Are you one of those who'd rather spend a lifespan exploring what the world has to offer?

If you are a male or female having travelled for at least one year consecutively and counting, repeatedly on the go and over 30 years of age, I would love to have you participate in this research project which I am conducting as part of my master's degree at Memorial University of Newfoundland. If you agree, you will be asked to participate in a Skype interview lasting approximately 60 minutes. During the interview, you and the researcher will discuss the factors that motivate you to do long-term travels and how these choices affect the way you experience your life.

As of recently, most studies have put focus on the mainstream travellers, but almost none have shown interest for the globetrotter or the budget traveller that dedicates a big part of his/her life to exploring the world. Help us furthering the knowledge on travel motivation and better understand the tourist role of globetrotters.

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research (such as the way you have been treated or your rights as a participant), you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone at 709-864-2861.

Please contact:

Valérie Bertrand: vrb012@mun.ca
Master Degree Student

Appendix C

- Informed Consent Form -

Memorial
University of Newfoundland
School of Human Kinetics and Recreation
St. John's, NL A1C 5S7, (709) 864-8670

Informed Consent

Finding happiness through life-long travel: push factors of globetrotters.

Researcher: *Valérie Bertrand (Master Degree Student): vrb012@mun.ca*
Supervisors: *Dr. Linda Rohr: lerohr@mun.ca*
Dr. TA Loeffler: taloeffler@mun.ca

You are invited to take part in a research project and we are now sending you this form as part of the process of the informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. It also describes your right to withdraw from the study at any time. In order to decide whether you wish to participate in this research study, you should understand enough about its risks and benefits to be able to make an informed decision. Take time to read this carefully and to understand the information given to you. Please contact the researcher, Valérie Bertrand, if you have any questions about the study or for more information not included here before you consent.

Introduction
While most enjoy the comfort of their home, the stability of their work and the predictability of their life, others prefer living on a day-to-day basis in a constantly instable and unpredictable setting. What exactly pushes people to dedicate their life to long-term travelling then? As of recently, most studies have put focus on the mainstream travellers, but almost none have shown interest for the globetrotter or solo budget traveller that dedicates a big part of his/her life to exploring the world.

Purpose of study:
This research project intends to discover and understand the views and perspectives of globetrotters in regards to their motivational factors and subjective wellbeing. Participants in this study are all chosen because they possess certain characteristics: male or female having travelled for at least one year and counting, repeatedly on the go and over 30 years of age.

What you will do in this study:
If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to participate in an interview lasting approximately 60 minutes. During the interview, you and the researcher will discuss the factors that

motivate you to do long-term travels and how these choices affect the way you experience your life. The interview will be conducted via Skype, at a time that is convenient for you, and be audio-recorded with your permission. The interview will be followed by a quick chat session or email if information given needs more details or clarification.

Withdrawal from the study:
If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw from the study before, during, or after the interview. Should you change your mind about participating in the study, you are under no obligation to continue and any information you have given will be deleted unless the results of the study have already been published by the time you have decided to withdraw (publication of results usually occurs between 1 and 3 years following the end of the study).

Possible benefits:
There are no personal benefits from participating in this study, but your contribution will help researchers better understand the 'tourist role': motivations, the tracing of concepts of experiences, the narratives of untraditional ways of travelling and the culture of globetrotters. It will contribute in gaining rich insights into the eccentricity of the segment, which can both be of great interest for the tourism industry in predicting future travel patterns, for the social sciences in complementing the current knowledge on motivational factors and for the field of recreation to better understand leisure behaviours.

Possible risks:
There are no known or foreseeable risks to participating in this study.

Confidentiality and Storage of Data:
Any information from this study that can identify you will remain confidential. Your name, and the names of anyone with whom you are affiliated, will not appear in any report of this study. Furthermore, results of this study will refer to individual interviewees using pseudonyms and in broad descriptive terms only. If interview quotations are used to illustrate results, all information that might identify you will be eliminated or altered.

Research records will be kept on a password protected hard drive that only the researcher and supervisors –as mentioned above- will have access to. All data will be kept for a minimum of five years according to Memorial University Policy on Integrity in Scholarly Research.

Reporting and Sharing of Results:
Following data analysis, the results of the study will be shared with participants and each participant will receive a written report of the findings. The report will serve to complete a master's thesis and as a source for future presentations.

Questions:
You are welcome to ask questions at any time during your participation in this research or if you would like more information about this study. Please contact:

Valérie Bertrand (Master Degree Student): vrb012@mun.ca
Dr. Linda Rohr (Supervisor): lerohr@mun.ca
Dr. TA Loeffler (co-Supervisor): taloeffler@mun.ca

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research (such as the way you have been treated or your rights as a participant), you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone at 709-864-2861.

Consent:
Your signature on this form means that:

- You have read the information about the research.
- You have been able to ask questions about this study.
- You are satisfied with the answers to all your questions.
- You understand what the study is about and what you will be doing.
- You understand that you are free to withdraw from the study at any time, without having to give a reason, and that doing so will not affect you now or in the future.
- You understand that any data collected from you up to the point of your withdrawal will be destroyed.

If you sign this form, you do not give up your legal rights and do not release the researcher from her professional responsibilities.

Your signature:

☐ I have read and understood the description provided; I have had the opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered.
☐ I consent to participate in the research project, understanding that I may withdraw my consent at any time.
☐ I agree to be audio-recorded during the interview and have the audio recording transcribed.
☐ I agree to the use of quotations in written reports without my name to be identified in any publications resulting from this study.

* A copy of this Informed Consent Form has been given to me for my records.

_____ _____
Signature of participant Date

Researcher's Signature:

"I have explained this study to the best of my ability. I invited questions and gave answers. I believe that the participant fully understands what is involved in being in the study, any potential risks of the study and that he or she has freely chosen to be in the study."

_____ _____
Signature of Researcher Date

Appendix D

- Follow-up E-mail -

Memorial
University of Newfoundland
School of Human Kinetics and Recreation
St. John's, NL A1C 5S7, (709) 864-8670

Follow-up Email

Follow-up contact via email

***** *Sent on Oct 31st 2014*

"Hi again!
Almost half a year has past since our interview on Skype; indeed the time it took to complete all the transcripts, but very glad to move on to the next stage at this point! In the consent form you signed, I have promised you to share the transcript of our interview together. Please find a copy attached. Let me know if you feel something is missing, ambiguous or if you feel the need to rephrase yourself.

Also after our interview, you may have had further thoughts about your personal motives for long-term travel and how you believe it makes you a happier person. Perhaps you have written something about it lately? Drop me a line if so; my curiosity is insatiable!

Thanks again for your participation. I look forward to sending you the final report when completed.

Kind regards,

Valérie Bertrand
Master Degree Student
vrb012@mun.ca"

Appendix E

- Final Contact -

Memorial
University of Newfoundland
School of Human Kinetics and Recreation
St. John's, NL A1C 5S7, (709) 864-8670

Final Contact

Last contact via email

"Already a full year has passed since we last spoke about what motivates you to do long-term travel. As my study research has now come to an end, I am pleased to present you the final report (attached), as I promised I would. I cannot thank you enough for sharing personal insights about your journey, and truly hope that my words will reflect your thoughts in the best way possible. In the final report, there is a special acknowledgement to all those who contributed. As a matter of ethical concerns, and as stipulated in the consent form that you signed previous to the interview, all personal information has been retracted from the final report in order to respect the confidentiality of all participants.

May the pursuit of your dreams continue to be part of your daily regime.

Kindest regards,

Valérie Bertrand
Master Degree Student
vrb012@mun.ca"

APPENDIX F

- Ethics Clearance Letter -

ICEHR Number:	20140390-HK
Approval Period:	July 29, 2013 – July 31, 2014
Funding Source:	
Responsible Faculty:	Dr. Linda Rohr School of Human Kinetics and Recreation
Title of Project:	*Finding happiness through life-long traveling: push factors of globetrotters*

July 29, 2013

Ms. Valerie Bertrand
School of Human Kinetics and Recreation
Memorial University of Newfoundland

Dear Ms. Bertrand:

Thank you for your submission to the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR) seeking ethical clearance for the above-named research project.

The Committee has reviewed the proposal and appreciates the care and diligence with which you have prepared your application. We agree that the proposed project is consistent with the guidelines of the *Tri-Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* (TCPS2). *Full ethics clearance* is granted for one year from the date of this letter. However, you need to revise the first sentence in the second paragraph of your recruitment script to read "…over 30 years of age, I would love to have you participate in this research project which I am conducting as part of my master's degree at Memorial University of Newfoundland."

If you intend to make changes during the course of the project which may give rise to ethical concerns, please forward an amendment request with a description of these changes to Theresa Heath at icehr@mun.ca for the Committee's consideration.

The *TCPS2* requires that you submit an annual status report on your project to the ICEHR before July 31, 2014. If you plan to continue the project, you need to request renewal of your ethics clearance, including a brief summary on the progress of your research. When the project no longer requires contact with human participants, is completed and/or terminated, you need to provide the final report with a brief summary, and your file will be closed. The annual update form is on the ICEHR website at http://www.mun.ca/research/ethics/humans/icehr/applications/.

We wish you success with your research.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Shute, Th.D.
Chair, Interdisciplinary Committee on
Ethics in Human Research

MS/th

copy: Supervisor – Dr. Linda Rohr, School of Human Kinetics and Recreation

Appendix G

- Ethics Change Approval -

MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY

Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR)

Office of Research Services
St. John's, NL Canada A1C 5S7
Tel: 709 864 2561 Fax: 709 864 4612
www.mun.ca/research

ICEHR Number:	**20140390-HK**
Approval Period:	July 29, 2013 – July 31, 2014
Funding Agency:	
Responsible Faculty:	Dr. Linda Rohr School of Human Kinetics and Recreation
Title of Project:	*Finding happiness through life-long traveling: push factors of globetrotters*
Amendment #:	***01***

November 1, 2013

Ms. Valerie Bertrand
School of Human Kinetics and Recreation
Memorial University of Newfoundland

Dear Ms. Bertrand:

The Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR) has reviewed the proposed addendum for the above referenced project, as outlined in your email correspondence dated October 21, 2013, and is pleased to give approval for you to send an informal email to potential participants before sending the recruitment letter and informed consent form; and to use the revised version of the interview guide, as requested, provided all previously approved protocols are followed.

If you should make any other changes either in the planning or during the conduct of the research that may affect ethical relations with human participants, please forward an amendment request with a description of these changes to Theresa Heath at icehr@mun.ca for further review by the Committee.

Your ethics clearance for this project expires July 31, 2014, before which time you must submit an annual status report to ICEHR. If you plan to continue the project, you need to request renewal of your ethics clearance, including a brief summary on the progress of your research. When the project no longer requires contact with human participants, is completed and/or terminated, you need to provide the final report with a brief summary, and your file will be closed. The annual update form is on the ICEHR website at http://www.mun.ca/research/ethics/humans/icehr/applications/.

The Committee would like to thank you for the update on your proposal and we wish you well with your research.

Yours sincerely,

Gail Wideman

Gail Wideman, Ph.D.
Vice-Chair, Interdisciplinary Committee on
Ethics in Human Research

GW/th

copy: Supervisor – Dr. Linda Rohr, School of Human Kinetics and Recreation

Appendix H

- Ethics Extended Clearance I –

ICEHR Clearance 20140390-HK- EXTENDED

Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR)

Dear Ms. Bertrand ,

Thank you for your response to our request for an annual status report advising that your project will continue without any changes that would affect ethical relations with human participants.

On behalf of the Chair of ICEHR, I wish to advise that the ethics clearance for this project has been extended to July 31, 2015. The *Tri-Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* (TCPS2) requires that you submit an annual update to ICEHR on your project, should the research carry on beyond July 31, 2015. Also, to comply with the TCPS2, **please notify us upon completion of your project**.

ICEHR Ref. No.	20140390-HK
Project Title:	Finding happiness through life-long traveling: push factors of globetrotters
PI:	**Ms. Valerie Bertrand School of Human Kinetics and Recreation**
Supervisor:	Dr. Linda Rohr
Clearance expiry date:	July 31, 2015

We wish you well with the continuation of your research.

Sincerely,
Susan Mercer
Secretary, ICEHR

ORS reference only - 20140390

Appendix I

- Ethics Extended Clearance II –

ICEHR Clearance 20140390-HK- EXTENDED

Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR). Dear Ms. Bertrand,

Thank you for your response to our request for an annual status report advising that your project will continue without any changes that would affect ethical relations with human participants.

On behalf of the Chair of ICEHR, I wish to advise that the ethics clearance for this project has been extended to July 31, 2016. The *Tri-Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* (TCPS2) requires that you submit an annual update to ICEHR on your project, should the research carry on beyond July 31, 2016. Also, to comply with the TCPS2, **please notify us upon completion of your project**.

ICEHR Ref. No.	20140390-HK
Project Title:	Finding happiness through globetrotting: push factors of long-term travelers
PI:	**Ms. Valerie Bertrand School of Human Kinetics and Recreation**
Supervisor:	
Clearance expiry date:	July 31, 2016

We wish you well with the continuation of your research.

Sincerely,
Kim Russell
Secretary, ICEHR

RGCS reference only - 20140390

Appendix J

- Interview Guide -

Memorial
University of Newfoundland
School of Human Kinetics and Recreation
St. John's, NL A1C 5S7, (709) 864-8670

Interview Guide

Length: *approximately 60 minutes*
Type: *semi-structured*

** The topics and questions below are to be covered during the interview; however the interviewer might rephrase or add clarification questions if needed. The interviewer must feel that at least the two 'key questions' are well answered.*

Demographics:

- Gender:
- Age:
- Marital status:
- Country of birth:
- Current location:

Background information:

- What is your educational background? (bachelor/master, field…)
- How many years of higher education -University- do you have?

- How would you qualify your financial situation… before you started to travel extensively? At the moment? (broke, average, at ease…)
- How does travelling affect your financial situation?
- Who/What pays your current travels? (general terms ok: sponsors, magazines, freelance work…)

- Approximately how many countries/continents have you visited so far?
- How many years have you been on the go?
- How many more countries/continents would you like to see?

- How do you travel? Backpacking, biking, sailing, mixture of…?
- Do you mostly travel solo or with a partner? If so, is that person a girlfriend/boyfriend, just a friend, another traveller… Is it mostly the same person?
- Do you carry a website/blog? (web address)
- Is the popularity of your website/posts important for you?

Push Factors:

- What made you embark in long-term travelling in the first place?/What made you start as a globetrotter?
- Have your travel motivations always been the same?

- Do you have the *travel bug* ('must travel' feeling)? Can you describe it?

- What interests you about long-term travel in general? -EXPAND
- What do you remember the most about the countries you visit? (people, food, relationships, landscape…)

- How do you compare the globetrotter to the mainstream holiday taker?
- What positive aspects do you gain from long-term travel that you normally wouldn't get if just holidaying?

- What's your own pattern as a traveller? (one day at the time, plan ahead, stay and work then leave, home in between…)

  * Key question:
- **Most importantly, why do you dedicate your life to travelling?**

Subjective Wellbeing:

*Subjective wellbeing *means how well one usually feels and how well one perceives his/her own life achievements…*

- How do you describe your life situation before you started to travel?
- Were you happy then?

- Do you consider your life 'balanced' today? In what way?
- Is there anything else/more you could wish for, or miss?

- During your travels, when is it that you feel at your best? At your worst?
- In which way does long-term travelling enhance your quality of life?

- What is home for you? Do you have one?
- How long can you be at home/same location without feeling restless?
- What affects your decisions about staying or leaving again?

- How do you compare your own lifestyle with the standard 9-to-5-work-with-house-and-family lifestyle?
- Has this 'standard way of living' ever been appealing to you? Why?

- What is your scenario of a satisfying life?

  * Key question:
- **How does long-term travel contribute to your personal wellbeing?**

Sum-up

- If anyone asked: Who is _____ (name of participant)?, what would you respond (in short!) ?
- Where do you see yourself in 10/20 years from now? (life path…)

"Thank you for accepting to participate in this research project. Your participation is greatly appreciated. I will contact you in the next couple of days if details are missing or if answers need clarification. I will also make sure to send you a copy of the final report when finalized. Once again thank you and wishing you the best of luck in the pursuit of your dream!"

Appendix K

- Node-Tree for NVivo -

Memorial
University of Newfoundland
School of Human Kinetics and Recreation
St. John's, NL A1C 5S7, (709) 864-8670

Coding

Node-Tree for NVivo

A: About…
- -Who is…
- -In 10-20 years

B: Background information
- -Cyber world
  - -Social medias
  - –Website, blog
    - -Address
    - –Importance of popularity
- –Education
  - -Type
  - -Years of higher education
- –Financial situation
  - –Now who, what pays
  - -Prior
- –Travelling
  - -Globetrotter type
  - –How much longer
  - -Method
  - -Pattern
  - -Prior experience
  - –Solo or partner
  - -Visited
    - -Continents
    - -Countries
  - -Years

-Work experience

C: Challenges
- -Difficult lifestyle
- -Gender and safety
- -Getting around
- -Hard work
- -Health
- -Internet dependence
- -Language barrier
- -Money
- -Multitasking
- -Relationships
- -Reliance on others
- -Sacrifices
- -Travel blogging
- -Travelling with children
- -Unstable, unpredictable

D: Demographics
- -Age
- -Country of birth
- -Current location
- -Gender
  - -Female
  - -Male
- -Marital status

I: Interesting quotes
- -Digital nomading as a trend
- -Freedom
- -Global understanding
- -Happiness, wellbeing
- -Lifestyle choices
- -World travellers

M: Motivational factors
- -'Home' what, where
- -Giving back
- -Globetrotter vs holiday taker
- -Interested in
- -Kept memories
- -Motives
  - -Current
  - -Initial
  - -Trigger
- -Overcoming fear
- -Positives of long-term travel

-Travel bug
    -Restlessness
    -Staying or leaving
-Why dedicating to long-term travel

R: Research
-Discussion
-Introduction
-Literature Review
    -Cited sources
    -Findings
    -Happiness theories
    -Motivation theories
    -Terminology
-Methods and participants

S: Subjective wellbeing, happiness
-Balance in life
-Feeling
    –Best
    –Worst
-Mainstream life path
    –Attractive
    -Mixed
    -Unattractive
-Missing or wishing for
-Nomadic life enhances
    -Life quality
    –Personal wellbeing
-Pride in minimalism
-Prior to travelling
    -Happy or not
    -Life situation
-Scenario of satisfying life