Università degli Studi di Padova

Dipartimento di Scienze Storiche, Geografiche e dell'Antichità

Corso di Laurea Magistrale in Local Development

Gender, walking and tourism:
Femininities walking the tourist space

Supervisor: Prof. Chiara Rabbiosi

Candidate: Myrto Barmpouza
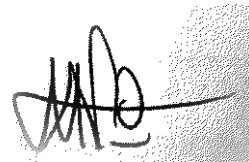
Registr. number: 1236977

Il candidato dichiara che il presente lavoro è originale e non è già stato sottoposto, in tutto o in parte, per il conseguimento di un titolo accademico in altre Università italiane o straniere.

Il candidato dichiara altresì che tutti i materiali utilizzati durante la preparazione dell'elaborato sono stati indicati nel testo e nella sezione "Riferimenti bibliografici" e che le eventuali citazioni testuali sono individuabili attraverso l'esplicito richiamo alla pubblicazione originale.

The candidate declares that the present work is original and has not already been submitted, totally or in part, for the purposes of attaining an academic degree in other Italian or foreign universities.

The candidate also declares that all the materials used during the preparation of the thesis have been explicitly indicated in the text and in the section "Bibliographical references" and that any textual citations can be identified through an explicit reference to the original publication.

Student's signature

_____

Abstract

Walking as a form of tourist mobility has been constantly rising in Italy in the last 5 years. Both walking as a form of holiday (walking tourism) or as the means to explore a place (walking in the context of tourism) can be considered tourism mobilities that are well aligned with the concept of local development in terms of environmental, cultural and social sustainability. In this thesis, I consider the social aspect of walking as a form and a part of tourism through the conceptualization of tourism as a gendered space that affects the access to women through a 'geography of fear'. While the concept is not new to geographical research concerning the use of public space, it has little been discussed with regards to both Italy and tourism. Hence, the current thesis examines the experience of individuals that engage in walking for/during their holidays across Italy, through an online questionnaire that revolves around the axis of the ways that gender identity can influence tourist practices when engaging into walking. Secondarily, the motivations and constraints of the respondents are explored, for the various components of walking tourist experiences to be better understood. 215 individuals replied to the online questionnaire shared on Facebook groups related to walking in Italy. The closed- and open-ended questions enabled analyzing the data both quantitatively and qualitatively. The former regards descriptive statistics and chi-square tests among the variable of gender identity and tourist practices, such as walking solo or in company, clothing, etc. The latter concerns a thematic analysis that was conducted through a transfeminist point of view. The quantitative results showed some differences among female and male identifying individuals (e.g., regarding the role of gender identity regarding the path chosen, the overnight stay, etc.), although not statistically proven. However, the qualitative data indicated three emerging themes, in accordance to previous literature: (1) *constraints* (such as fear for one's safety) that lead to the adoption of (2) *safeguarding strategies* (e.g., avoiding walking alone during the night), *(3) restricting*, thus, the "space" that women occupy. These dynamics should be taken into consideration for more effective regional tourism policies to be adopted that would allow networks of support to be created, so that women are both informed and supported concerning the challenges that gendered space comes with.

Table of contents

0. Introduction

Walking as a form of mobility can be considered to be related to the concept of local development. As the latter refers to a paradigm of development characterized by the centrality of sustainability, community participation, preservation of local cultural heritage and prioritization of local needs (OECD, 2001), walking can be considered not only as a legitimate means of transportation in everyday life but also an alternative recreative activity that is compatible with the forementioned core values of local development (Hardiman & Burgin, 2015). In this framework, walking has been recently discussed as a form of tourism (Simeoni & De Crescenzo, 2019; Stevenson & Farrell, 2018) and in the context of mobility during traveling (Brown et al., 2020). However, female walking mobility has received far less attention than the one that is coded as male (Männistö-Funk, 2021). This neglect of the female experience of mobility is manifested in two ways: 1) through the "neutral" narratives of mobility that may not be coded as masculine but they actually are, as mobility is analyzed from and for a masculine viewpoint, and 2) through the bigger chunk of academia that has been dedicated to the mobility that is coded and discussed as masculine in comparison to the one about the feminine mobility (Pollard & Wagnild, 2017). On this ground, it would be useful to address the experience of walking for different femininities (meaning whoever identifies as a woman). *How accessible is walking tourism for women and under what terms? Is tourism a space where socio-cultural and gendered norms are transferred from everyday life? What are the implications for the experience of femininities? Is there any space for developmental practices to improve or ameliorate the current situation?* These questions are supposed to be answered by the current thesis, which aims to approach the topic from a transfeminist viewpoint.

0.1 The Concept of Local Development

Development is a concept and a practice that has been theorized and applied, respectively, in diverse ways over the years. Overall the term includes ideas and practices about politics, economics, the environment, culture and the society, that can have significant effects on places and the livelihoods of people, including the existing communities and social networks (Palomino-Schalscha, 2012). Thus, development can be considered as deeply political and ideological, as certain values underlie the practices and policies adopted. In this framework, it is worth mentioning that development had been conceived for many decades as a discourse aiming mainly at economic growth achieved through authoritative intervention (de Salvo, Calzati, & Soglia, 2019).

However, during the 1980s, the understanding of development started changing. A body of criticism occurred as a response to the status quo, encapsulated in what came to be called as alternative development (Pieterse, 2000; Sidaway, 2007b). Alternative development supports a new redefined hybrid of development as it puts emphasis, on the one hand, on focusing away from growth-oriented development definitions and, on the other hand, on generating more human oriented frameworks (Sidaway, 2007a). Moreover, the importance of local and grassroots autonomy and participation is highlighted, while development is looked at from the viewpoint of the disempowered (Pieterse, 2000). Overall, a strong civil society is put centrally in alternative development, which is, in parallel, supported by a strong state (Brohman, 1996). In this framework, the concept of local development was born.

Local development, embracing all the above key points of alternative development, refers to a bottom-up form of regional development where the principal role is played by endogenous factors, including institutions and/or local people (Brohman, 1996; Coffey & Polese, 1985; Potter et al., 2008). The economic growth is locally induced, which means that it is originating and sustained by the population of a regional unit, conditioned by social and economic factors deeply rooted in the local area. A very central point here is that the enhancement of growth should be based on the use of local resources that create different prospects for different territories, without cutting them necessarily off the international environment. Furthermore, it is recognized that growth alone is not enough regarding the satisfaction of social needs; for that, local development has occurred as a bottom-up attempt that aims to collective well-being, through the improvement of employment opportunities, incomes and, thus, quality of life in the respective locality of a community (OECD, 2001). Hence, the process of local development can contribute to strengthening the local democracy and participation, since the mobilization of local institutions and people is required to compensate for the failure of the markets and national policies to provide what is needed (OECD, 2001). Lastly, natural resources are also taken into consideration, as the potential, the needs and the limits of the respective territory (along with the social and economic ones) constitute the very starting point of the developmental design (Brohman, 1996; Coffey & Polese, 1985; Potter et al., 2008).

0.2 Walking (in)to Change

Walking can be considered related to the concept of local development, as described above. And this is because walking, either as a means of transportation in everyday life or as an alternative recreative activity, is compatible with the forementioned core values of local development, such as the centrality of sustainability, community participation, preservation of local cultural heritage and prioritization of local needs. Besides that, walking is thought to enact a socio-material relationship between the walking person and the spatial dimension by means of diverse performances, which allow for an intricate interaction among the materiality of the landscape, the sensual perception which is linked to the embodied experience of moving in space, and multifarious symbolic meanings of both moving embodiments and the landscape (Middleton, 2010). This is considered to be of great importance in the context of local development, as the locale is the source from which every development initiative emanates from.

However, only a very specific part of the world has the privilege of enjoying walking as an activity taken for leisure or discovery, and that is the global north. On the contrary, war and climate crisis are currently forcing people to use walking as a way out of their respective territories in order to save themselves (Truman & Springgay, 2019). A striking example that encapsulates the contrast of the conceptualization of walking in different spatio-temporal contexts is that of the ongoing migration crisis in Europe; in one of the multiple cases, refugees were forced by the police to walk all the way from Serbia to the reception center in Opatovac, Croatia (3uestio. 15 kilometres) in cold, rainy weather, on the basis that they had previously broken through the police cordons (Čapo, 2016). Besides that, there are still populations that use walking as a means of transportation in order to carry out daily labor, as there is no infrastructure, and thus alternative means of transportation available. For example, women in sub-Saharan Africa spend 2-3 hours per day on water collection, which means that they spend up to 25% of their daily time to collect water for their households; this is time that they could otherwise use in order to generate income or attend school (Gross et al., 2018). Hence, walking as a concept can have a negative connotation and indicate a critical situation. Walking could be connected to local development processes as it is considered as the most democratic means of transportation, on the ground that it provides accessibility to almost everyone, since almost everyone can walk (Delclòs-Alió et al., 2021). Other than the underlying ableist presumption that such conceptualization of walking entails, there are limitations in terms of who gets to walk where and under what terms, that render walking not as democratic as it is presented.

In particular, research data show that it is more possible for women and low-income groups not only to use walking as a means of transportation, but also to have discriminating experiences while walking (Delclòs-Alió et al., 2021). Besides walking as a means of transportation, walking tours as conceptualized conventionally, have been criticized for "reinforcing dominant histories, memories, power relations and normative fixed understandings of place" (Kavaliauskaite, 2018, nr of page); there is a variety of examples that demonstrate how the governmental and political authorities might influence the representations of colonial/slavery stories so as black pages of the history are excluded or narrated in a way that is favorable for the government and the state. As long as these narratives are the most prevalent, though, colonization violence is perpetuated, while bodies that are disabled, racialized, outside the gender norms keep being excluded (Springgay & Truman, 2019a).

WalkingLab, an international queer-feminist art collective, has come up with the so-called Queer Walking Tours as a response to the conventional walking tours that usually take place in the context of tourism (Springgay & Truman, 2018; Truman & Springgay, 2019). These tours take place on foot and are led by guides that hold a first-hand knowledge or expertise on the place, while educators, scholars, and /or artists are invited to create lectures or pop-up artistic interventions that are relevant to the concept of the respective walking tour. The aim is to dismantle the notion that all bodies have the freedom to walk through space equally and to disseminate queerness not only with regards to gender identities and sexualities, but also in terms of developing an anti-racist, anti-colonial and anti-ableist method to familiarize with a place (Springgay & Truman, 2018; Truman & Springgay, 2019). However, it needs to be recognized that even initiatives like these that aspire to be more critical and responsible in how they approach a place, have been generated in the western world where there is the privilege of conceptualizing walking as a leisure activity, as mentioned previously in this sector.

0.3 Relevance of the Study

Having set walking into context, it is apparent that the way in which people engage into walking as well as the implications it has for their lives differs according to their race, gender, class, and the existence of any disability. As the personal interest of the current thesis conductor lean towards gender issues and, particularly, into the ones that women have to confront, the literature review that has been conducted was focused on the relationship among walking tourism and women's

experience. The review showed that there has been some discussion in academia on women's experience with regards to walking. Particularly, the existing literature can be divided in the following categories according to their thematic framework: 1) research on women's relationship to the public space as experienced when moving around (including walking), and 2) women's experience of tourism. In the first category, two subcategories can be spotted. The first one contains all research that examines historically the relationship among women and public space, as well as the way that their current position in the latter was formed. Such research has been conducted, for example, by Männistö-Funk (2021) on the role of gender in walking through the examination of photos taken in Turku, Finland between 1890 and 1989. In the same line, Munson (2002) has examined women's presence in the streets of Spain and its evolution through modernization.

The second subcategory includes research that deals more with women's experience of public space nowadays and the geography of fear generated around their mobility in it. Andreola & Azzurra (2021) introduced a mapping of gender related geography in the city of Milan, through their project "Sex and the City", in an effort to spot differences in the use and perception of the city by different genders. Accordingly, Clifton & Livi (2005) have looked into gender differences regarding the perception of safety of the walking surroundings and the following pedestrian practices in three Maryland communities. On an investigation of the 'right to the city', Beebeejaun (2009) through her project in UK cities aimed not only to illustrate how the planning system has generated an agenda that overlooks women as citizens of the city, but also to encourage women to address safety issues in public space. Furthermore, women's experience and access to public space has been examined in gender-segregated places as well, as in the article of Almahmood et al. (2017) that was conducted in cities of the Arab peninsula.

As mentioned above, there is also a body of research that concerns the female tourist experience. Some researchers have examined the experience of female tourists who like to walk during their holidays, in terms of benefits, constraints and practices, using mainly a feminist lens (Brown et al., 2020; Brown & Osman, 2017). Some other have investigated more specific topics, such as the motivations and practices of solo independent women travelers (McNamara & Prideaux, 2010) or tourism as a liminoid time-space where women can explore their sexuality and rediscover themselves through alternative sexual behavior (Berdychevsky et al., 2013). Lastly, an interesting bibliographical review has been conducted by Tonelli (2014) with regards to female tourism in its

whole, covering the following aspects: women travelers, lesbian tourism, gender discriminations in tourism and gender responsible tourism.

Reviewing the issues that have already been discussed in literature, as well as the different ways with which they have been approached, it can be said that some parts of the bigger image are missing. It is true that both the experience of walking in public space and tourism have been discussed from the women's viewpoint; however, there has not been a synthesis of the female experience while performing both walking and tourism, hence walking tourism. Besides that, the discussion on female experience of the above topics has been including only the experience of women. Nonetheless, the female experience does not refer exclusively to women, as understood conventionally; it can include the experiences of individuals that identify as female, regardless of the compliance among this identity and their biological sex (see section **1.4.1 Why femininities?** for more information). For the above reasons, the current thesis will be focused on covering these untouched areas by synthesizing the topics of walking tourism, walking in the context of tourism and female experience, in order to shed more light on the relationship among each of the former with the latter.

0.4 Research Questions

In order to generate a full picture of tourist walking, both walking tourism and walking in the context of tourism will be examined in this thesis (for more information on the difference among the two concepts see sections **1.2 Walking Tourism** and **1.3 Walking in the Context of Tourism**). As mentioned above, the female experience needs to be explored besides women's experience; thus, experience that originates from everyone that identifies as a woman will be integrated. The main questions around which the thesis will be developed are the following: Does the geography of fear apply in walking tourism and walking in the context of tourism? Is gender positioning affecting the walking tourist experience? If so, in what ways?

These questions are going to be investigated in the area of Italy, a country where both tourism and walking tourism are commonly practiced. Therefore, in order to investigate the topics addressed above, there are two research questions related to each tourism 'category'. The main questions are followed by some sub-questions, which would contribute to this investigation:

1) *How is walking tourism experienced and practiced by individuals of different gender identities in Italy?*

> ➢ What are the motivations for each gender category? What are the differences among them, if any?

> ➢ Does gender identity influence the walking practices/choices? In what ways?

2) *How is walking in the context of tourism experienced and practiced by individuals of different gender identities in Italy?*

> ➢ What are the motivations and constraints for each gender category? What are the differences among them, if any?

> ➢ Does gender identity influence the walking practices/choices? In what ways?

In order to reply to the questions above, a literature review was conducted so that previous research could be taken as a point of reference, regarding what has been discussed and what has not been properly addressed. As a result of this review, in the following section, walking as a form of mobility per se, walking tourism, walking in the context of tourism, as well as how the above are experienced by individuals identifying as female, will be covered.

1. The "on foot" Experience

1.1 Walking as a Sensory and Embodied Experience

The "mobilities turn" in the social sciences and humanities that occurred in the 1990s has originated from the generally increased levels of mobility, which pushed for a new conceptualization of space, mobilities, and stasis (Sheller & Urry, 2006). Cresswell (2010) has contributed to shape a new viewpoint from which mobility can be looked at, by focusing on three interwoven aspects of it: 1) the physical movement as the very "raw material" that enables mobility, 2) the representation and the meaning that is attributed to a form of mobility, and 3) the practice of mobility itself as it is being experienced and enacted by the human body. In the context of this "turn", walking is theorized as a practice through which humans can sensorially interact and form a relationship with place, while meanings and feelings are being attributed to this experience. Essentially, the embodied and sensory nature of mobility in general and walking in particular is acknowledged and highlighted. This sensory nature of walking refers to the mediation and/or disruption of the walking experience by senses and sensations that external stimuli cause to the body, while the embodied nature refers more to the elements produced by the body such as the pace and velocity of the movement, in response (or the absence of it) to these senses and sensations (Cresswell, 2010).

The sensory aspect of walking is considered as having a crucial role on how it is experienced, as sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch, can mediate or interrupt the practice itself (Middleton, 2010). For example, the loud sounds of the city can easily interrupt the flow of walking through it, as people are often startled by unexpected sounds, e.g., cars honking. If this image is juxtaposed to the quiet and contemplative walking experience on a mountainous landscape, the effect and the entanglement of senses with walking as an experience is easily demonstrated. Thus, an interlinked relationship among place, senses and walking appears that, furthermore, creates a basis on which the so called "sense of place" occurs as an offspring of pedestrian activities and only, as walking comes with a range of senses that facilitate picking up on the atmosphere. The role of the body and its response to the interconnected elements described above, appears to be of equal interest. According to Hubbard (2017), the body can have an intentionality, which is expressed in its capacity to function as a type of subject, directing the person's behaviors in a shrewd, preconscious way that render them as automatic or mechanical. This discussion brings into attention how people can be both aware or unaware of their bodies as they walk, which could be the result of the presence

or absence of senses, respectively, revealing the multi-faceted nature of the walking experience as sensorial, embodied and spatio-temporal (Hubbard, 2017; Middleton, 2018).

Lastly, mundane technologies are another element that has to be mentioned when walking as a sensorial and embodied experience is discussed. The technologies that are considered as mundane are the materialities that are usually taken for granted as they do not carry any big novelty, but still have the potential to either restrict or facilitate on foot mobility (Michael, 2000). Examples of such technologies can be luggage, signs and obstacles in a path or route. Despite their "insignificance", mundane technologies as such can have an effect on the interaction among humans and nature by intervening among them in many different ways. For example, the embodied experience of walking can differ significantly if a heavy backpack is added in the equation, or if a pair of good hiking shoes is substituted by a pair of flip-flops when on a hiking trip on a rocky mountainous place. The above examples demonstrate how the sensorial aspects intersect with the embodied products on mobile and, especially, walking experiences, while prove how the focus should be kept on the very unique combination of environment, humans and objects that each mobile experience is composed of, comprising an inseparable unit itself. Hence, mundane technologies function as a form of mediation among the environment and the walker, so that time and space are not necessarily experienced per se, but as a set of interactions among different actors with different goals, spacing and timing, rendering walking is a process "in, or of, itself" (Michael, 2000).

The conceptualization of walking as an embodied experience entrained by the mobilities turn calls for acknowledgment of the so called "geographies of exclusion". A representative example of such geographies are the geographies of disability, which refer to the exclusion that persons with physical impairments might face in their everyday lives due to inappropriately built environments that generate feelings of hostility (Middleton, 2010). However, geographies of exclusion go further to include, also, other groups of people that might face such feelings in everyday life, such as racial minorities, older people, women, LGBTQ2+ community, etc. Such geographies apply to walking, as well, as certain bodies might be excluded from access and mobility. With a critical eye towards the importance of the lived experience, so that it is not essentialized, this thesis aims to examine the experience of walking as a form of and in the context of tourism (both in urban and rural spaces) as it is lived by women, as literature has mainly focused on the everyday walking experience in an urban setting. In the following paragraphs the topics of walking tourism and walking in the context of tourism will be discussed.

1.2 Walking Tourism

Walking tourism has been rising through the last decades, as shown by the growing investments on infrastructure that could support this type of tourism, as more and more people are interested in taking active holidays or in undertaking physical and healthy activities when on vacation (Simeoni & De Crescenzo, 2019). A very representative indicator of that rise in Europe is the increase in the number of people walking the pilgrimage path of Camino de Santiago from 55.000 to 300.000 between 2000 and 2017 (Simeoni & De Crescenzo, 2019). As a form of tourism, walking tourism covers the whole spectrum of recreational walking activities, from walking holidays and long-distance trail paths to short walks at destinations in the context of a more general holiday (Giovenco et al., 2018). In particular, walking holidays refer to walking for most of the holiday and for most of the day between accommodation places, in a circular or linear route, with the main purpose being the exploration of a locus on foot. On the contrary, holiday walking refers more to walking as one activity among others during the holiday, with a duration of one or two days out of the total stay. Lastly, day walking is mainly used as a term to describe day visits for which the main activity is walking, while stops for sightseeing and refreshments might be included (Giovenco et al., 2018). This last category of walking tourism falls more under the umbrella of walking in the context of tourism, which will be discussed further below (see section **1.3 Walking in the Context of Tourism**).

As a form of tourism, walking tourism is represented as a type of alternative and "slow tourism", due to its main principles that are built around sustainability and low carbon emissions (Rabbiosi, 2021). Specifically, walking is considered as one of the most sustainable means of transport and travel, since it does not entail the use of motorized transportation means and, hence, any heavy environmental impact (de Salvo et al., 2019; Fistola & La Rocca, 2018). Besides that, the sustainability of walking tourism lies in the low level of investment and management needed for its realization, which renders it as a form of tourism that opts for the minimization of resource consumption and the consequent environmental interference. As a recreational activity, walking tourism implies the need for provision of resources, creating, thus, employment opportunities for the local community (UNWTO, 2019). Representing examples of local stakeholders that are usually involved include tourism and environmental organizations and equipment retailers (Davies, 2016). Furthermore, walking encompasses time and rhythm which, in turn, awaken the senses,

facilitating a deeper situated spatio-temporal engagement; this allows travelers to engage more not only with the hosting community, the surrounding environment and the local culture, but also with themselves and with each other (Middleton, 2010). Those features of walking tourism make it a "caring", slow tourist model that contributes to a shift towards a new type of lower environmental impact tourism, that is considered to promote responsibility and solidarity ethics and more profound community involvement (de Salvo et al., 2019; Fistola & La Rocca, 2018; Kato & Progano, 2017).

With regards to other categories of tourism, walking tourism can be considered as intersecting with cultural, sports and adventure tourism. Walking tourism can be categorized as cultural, since walkers quite often choose cultural destinations and/or attractions to walk to, in order to satisfy their cultural needs by gathering new information and experiences (Fistola & La Rocca, 2018). In the same category falls the much rising pilgrimage tourism, a more particular type of walking tourism. Traditionally, a pilgrimage is conceptualized as "a journey to a holy site, for spiritual purposes and internal understanding" (Kato & Progano, 2017). However, nowadays pilgrimages have been mainly undertaken as secular but meaningful travelling to religious or non-religious but still spiritual places (Das & Islam, 2018). Pilgrimages have been gaining popularity, as more and more people seem to be attracted by the detached nature of such walking journeys that allow for dissociation from the quotidian life and the potentiality for emotional and spiritual experiences (Scriven, 2021). Nonetheless, walking tourism appears to be connected to sports and adventure tourism, since it involves outdoor physical activities away from home, while it is possible to contain some elements of risk (e.g., hiking in rocky spots without support. Rabbiosi, 2021).

As a form of tourism that combines all the features mentioned above, walking tourism renders beneficial for both the tourist destination itself and the visitors. As far as the benefits of the tourist destination are concerned, first of all, the facilities and services necessary for the development of walking tourism need only modest investment and development, as mentioned above. This means that it is relatively easy for the destination to develop and maintain such a tourist model, while at the same time, minimum environmental and community intervention is ensured (UNWTO, 2019). What is more, the tourist product that occurs can be unique if combined with other local experiences, with the destination becoming the exclusive point where the walking product can be found and its value being, hence, increased. In addition, walking tourism provides an opportunity for a tourist model that encourages pressure decreasing is temporal and spatial terms if confronted

with common tourism seasonality and destinations, as less visited areas can appear optimal for a walking trip/travel, while the seasonality of the tourist flows is avoided since walking tourism can be mostly undertaken throughout the whole year. The very nature of walking demanding slow mobility and exploration favors, also, longer stays of the tourists, supporting this way the local community financially by intervening as little as possible in their everyday life, the culture and the nature of the area. This minimum disruption usually occurs naturally, as through walking tourists get to engage more with and understand the local territory (UNWTO, 2019).

Walking tourism holds benefits for the walkers, as well. First of all, it is a type of tourism that is usually quite affordable and procurable, as it requires the bare minimum equipment and is feasible for a big part of the general population, respectively (UNWTO, 2019). Also, walkers have the possibility to choose a walking route/path that works the best for them in terms of needs, by choosing, for example, the difficulty, the length or even the attractions that they want to visit. With regards to personal benefits, since walking usually takes place in natural and/or rural environments, the very fact of being in nature is said to be working favorably towards the tourists' physical and mental health. Feelings of greater self-esteem, relaxation, freedom and no stress were some of the feelings that have been found to be associated with the experience of walking tourism (UNWTO, 2019). Lastly, the slow pace that comes with walking being a mode of transportation or travel, is said to favor a more profound understanding of the local heritage and culture, as well as a deeper connection to the place and its people (de Salvo et al., 2019). Furthermore, intense temporary relationships among the walkers can be developed due to the team spirit that the shared journey generates (Scriven, 2021). These characteristics altogether constitute a unique tourist experience with embodied, emotional and physical aspects.

While walking tourism – and the slow pace that comes with it – strongly implies a desire for the reintroduction of the rhythms and practices that allow for the valorization of the territorial identity, minimizing the globalization phenomenon, many theorists point out that it is still a form of tourism developed in a capitalistic system (Bieri, 2017). Essentially, there has been some criticism about the fact that walking has been mainly developed as a commodification, for which additional commercial products have and are being developed, from specific clothing and equipment to the walking holidays as tourist packages (Ram & Hall, 2018). Such commodification of walking tourism comes with an implicit reinforcement of a consumeristic way of living that is contradictory to the sustainable values that it conceptually complies with. Other than that, given the fact that

consumption can be a means for social distinction, class differences and inequalities are perpetuated (Bieri, 2017). Thus, walking tourism is an activity of socio-political importance, as when, where and who can walk can be nowadays bound to the intersection of social structures, such as class, gender, culture and religion. Lastly, there has been criticism with regards to the scant attention and space that has been devoted to divergent bodies in walking tourism, such as queer and disabled bodies (Hannam et al., 2021).

1.3 Walking in the Context of Tourism

According to research data, people tend to walk more as tourists than in their everyday lives (Ram & Hall, 2018). And this is attributed to the fact that walking is quite often used as the main means of transport in the context of tourism and/or to the fact that the choice of the location of the accommodation is such that allows the easy access to the attractions, city center or the beach; thus, people avoid losing time from their holiday activities. Apart from that, exploring tourist areas, especially urban ones, can be easily achieved by walking, which in turn facilitates the engagement to the city, by strolling around and experiencing the places with all senses involved (Farkic et al., 2015; Hannam et al., 2021). Hence, exploring on foot comes with some benefits in experiential, ecological, economic, educational, health and social benefits. Especially as far as the experiential benefits are concerned, walking provides a different prism through which people can look at spaces and attach emotions to the surroundings. Altogether, walking in the context of tourism is a composition of access to different places of interest, physical exercise and social interactions, with the balance among these elements changing from one tourist experience to Ir (Farkic et al., 2015; Giovenco et al., 2018).

A well-designed infrastructure for pedestrians that facilitates the generation of a sense of place, can enhance the attractiveness of urban places and play an important role in "pulling" tourists (Farkic et al., 2015). Most theorists refer to this factor of attraction as "walkability": a term that signifies the level of friendliness of the environment to the presence of pedestrians carrying out activities such as working, shopping, engaging in leisure activities and living in general (Bieri, 2017; Farkic et al., 2015; Hannam et al., 2021; Ujang & Muslim, 2014). All in all, a walkable area is an area where walking is not only facilitated but promoted as well, by providing the pedestrians with safety, the possibility to reach different destinations within a rational amount of effort and time, while they can experience a visually interesting journey (Farkic et al., 2015). Additional

factors that can affect walkability levels of a place are the purpose of walking as well as cultural aspects of the very location (Ujang & Muslim, 2014). Consequently, in urban contexts walkability can mediate the tourist experience, as visitors are allowed to experience different parts of the city by walking around. Given the above, walkability has been gaining ground in most city centers of the Western world; in particular, the revival of pedestrianization in Europe can be traced back to the late 1990s, while taking off in the 2000s, when urban regeneration projects contributed to give parts of public spaces back to the citizens moving on foot and, thus, attract more pedestrians (Bieri, 2017; Kanellopoulou, 2018; Leinberger, 2010). This process is still ongoing nowadays as complete districts are built or re-built in an innovative way in order to facilitate mixed use, e.g., work, home and leisure time.

These walkable environments have facilitated the attraction of pedestrians, both residents. City users or tourists. In this context, more and more tourists integrate walking in their tourist visits with diverse and multiple motivations. Specifically, people choose walking instead of other motorized means of transport, in order to explore a place by using the totality of their senses and, thus, be able to pick on the atmosphere of a territory. The part of exploring the city can be either spontaneous or organized, with the latter being very common and having the form of walking tours. Walking tours are a common walking activity that usually take the form of architectural and historical tours, during which people have the chance to learn information about the architecture and the utility of buildings and the history of the place, respectively (Giddy & Hoogendoorn, 2018). However, during the last decades, there has been a growing interest on cultural tours, which involve getting to know the culture of the local community and getting involved with it. The benefits of such tours are many, including the removal of stigmas that the territory might be associated with, as tourists are provided with a safe way to explore such aspects (Giddy & Hoogendoorn, 2018). Lastly, walking as a practice can be integrated in the context of tourism for physical health reasons and shopping   activities.

1.4 Walking (Tourist) Femininities
1.4.1 Why femininities?
The term femininities will be used through this thesis consciously and intentionally. However, in order for its meaning and the reasons for its usage to be better understood, the following paragraphs will be focused on topics, such as sex and gender, gender identity and gender expression.

In research, it is common that people are referred to as women and men, males and females without any further category being mentioned or some kind of discussion being made on the difference among sex and gender. This fact can create the following misconceptions: 1) that sex and gender overlap conceptually and, 2) that they only exist in terms of a fixated natural binary, rendering it a self-evident fact. Regarding sex and gender, they refer indeed to different concepts. Sex is considered to be more of a biological construct encapsulating the various characteristics that can be met on a genetic, anatomical, physiological and hormonal level for humans and species in general (Delphy, 1993). To this moment, a variation on sexes has been revealed that cannot be captured by the binary, which has led to a wider understanding of the concept; for example, the term *intersex* has been used to refer to people "born with variations on sex characteristics that may involve genital ambiguity and/or combinations of the chromosomal genotype and sexual phenotypes other than XY-male and XX-female" (Johnson & Repta, 2012). Regardless the biological nature of sex, its dependence on culture should also be highlighted, as it is a concept that has changed through different times, cultures and places (Johnson & Repta, 2012). In short, sex as a concept can be used to categorize people according to mainly physical characteristics, but goes further than the binary of male/female, while its biological "objective" nature is limited by subjective cultural interpretations that have occurred in different spatio-temporal contexts.

Gender is a social construct, as well, but even a more complex and polysemic one (Butler, 1993). In general, gender refers to the diverse roles, experiences, responsibilities and limitations, as well as societal and cultural expectations on how people should behave and live their lives based on their assigned or presenting sex (Davis, 2021). Hence, it is a social construct that is built on the basis of and reinforced by the assigned sex, in order to make a meaning out of the differences among sexes (Johnson & Repta, 2012). Gender is attributed through categorizing individuals in labels, historically those of the binary (women/femininity and men/masculinity), a categorization that comes hand in hand with a set of expectations on how people should behave (Delphy, 1993).

As a multidimensional concept, many different approaches have been used to better comprehend it, with the most important involving institutionalized gender, gender roles, gender identity and gender expression. All of them will be explained in the following lines, not as strict distinct categories, but as overlapping channels of comprehending the manifestations of gender and the extent to which it influences the way different individuals understand and carry themselves. To begin with, institutionalized gender is the conceptualization of gender (including expectations,

roles and responsibilities) as it is shaped by institutions such as the educational, medical, political and social systems, religion and the media; thus, it is vastly influential and almost never questioned due to its deep foundations in the societal structure (Johnson & Repta, 2012). Gender roles, usually produced by institutions, have to do with social standards and norms that direct the opportunities, interests, responsibilities, behaviors that men and women have and experience; their internalization can influence everyday life choices, that range from the choice of profession to the way of clothing. Gender roles are strictly connected to the gender binary, which is the enforced dyadic system of male and female gender identities, and the subsequent societal pressure to develop a sense of gender that is 'compatible' with the assigned sex at birth (Johnson & Repta, 2012). What is more, gender roles are closely related to space and its construction through the centuries; According to Massey (1994), society has "spatialized" gender roles by associating women to the reproductive role and the men to the productive one, while this division has been reinforced by the space produced, encouraging men to use public space and women to stay home safe. This restricted mobility of women has multiple effects, as restricted use of public space means limited presence in public life, which reinforced the idea that there is no need for women to participate in the latter (Massey, 1994). From the discussion on gender, the concepts of gender identity and gender expression could not be omitted. In particular, the concept of gender identity pertains to the internal understanding of individuals when it comes to their self and gender, an understanding that is related to physical embodiment and may or may not be in accordance with the assigned sex at birth and their gender expression (Davis, 2021). Thus, people can identify as *cisgender*, which means that their gender identity correlates with the sex assigned at birth or as *transgender*, which constitutes an umbrella term that represents all the gender categories of individuals that identify in a way that does not comply with the sex assigned at birth. The way through which people communicate or not their gender identity is known as gender expression and it includes all the outward characteristics, such as the appearance, the behaviors and attitudes, the way of speaking and moving; all in all, gender expression can be encapsulated in the way that people "style their bodies and carry themselves around", regardless their assigned sex at birth and their gender identity, as well (Davis, 2021). For example, a person may identify as a genderfluid person (a gender identity that is not confined to a fixed gender expression or representation), to present externally as different genders at different times and/or places, while their assigned sex at birth being female. In both concepts of gender identity and gender expression, the weight of the binary still weighs heavily due to its

16

embeddedness in society, leading to internalization of stereotypic and conventional gender roles and the discrimination of anyone that identifies themselves beyond it (Johnson & Repta, 2012).

Moreover, there is profound discrimination even within the binary. Essentially, patriarchy as a social system has men more highly considered than women and usually holding more political power, money, access to opportunities, presence in public life, moral authority and control of property (Massey, 1994; Paechter, 2016). Furthermore, it is more possible for women to be subjected to violence due to their gender, which can even lead to death (Eurostat, 2015). These homicides are widely known as feminicides and are caused by patriarchal practices and attitudes authorized by a hitherto patriarchal society that justifies them. According to data collected by Eurostat (2015), in the European Union, since the age of 15, one in three women has experienced physical and/or sexual violence, one in two women has experienced sexual harassment, one in twenty women has been raped and reported it (a different number would express the unreported rapes), while 95% of victims trafficked for sexual exploitation are women. Besides this tangible discrimination against women, femininity as a set of practices and behaviors, a way of being, that is often associated with femaleness, is constructed as subordinate to masculinity, which is usually represented as the gold standard (Paechter, 2016). Strength, courage, independence and aggression are commonly attributed to masculinity, while sensitivity, supportiveness, sweetness, nurturance and passivity are usually related to femininity (Paechter, 2016).

Therefore, the usage of the word femininities throughout this thesis is used to include whoever identifies as a woman; either this identification is related or not to the sex assigned at birth and/or the gender expression in terms of external looks or way of being. This means that femininities is used here as an inclusive term that can fit both cis- and transgender individuals that identify partly or completely as women. Lastly, it is worth mentioning that the experience of other transgender individuals is not overlooked. On the contrary, the discriminations towards individuals that are recognized as such are more than recognized. However, in the current thesis the experience of woman-ness/femaleness/femininity will be explored as the interest of the researcher is inclined more to the discrimination against individuals that express themselves through the above.

1.4.2 Walking while not male

Historically, women and other femininities have been subdued with respect to when, where and under what terms they could walk due to social, cultural and physical restrictions (Männistö-Funk,

2021). Particularly, since walking stopped being a mode of long-distance transportation in the 19th century, the walking figure that has mainly been met in literature on mobility is the male 18uestio. The 18uestio is a lone white male urbanite, conditioned by ability and autonomy, who – exactly due to the above characteristics – has the possibility to walk everywhere, strolling around and observing his surroundings while being disconnected by them (Männistö-Funk, 2021; Stephanie Springgay & Truman, 2019b; Wearing & Foley, 2017). This figure, besides being the one represented the most, has also been the main prism through which modern life narratives have been generated (Männistö-Funk, 2021). On the contrary, the bourgeois laws during that time-frame were limiting the freedom of women to walk in the streets according to their will; the main possibility for women to roam the city regarded bourgeois women walking on shopping streets or newly established department stores (Männistö-Funk, 2021). According to Judith Walkowitz (1998), in Victorian times independent women walking in the streets were usually categorized either as vulnerable middle- or upper-class women or as working girls that belonged to the streets/prostitutes.

Männistö-Funk (2021) has conducted an analysis of the changes of urban walking practices through street photographs of the city of Turku in Finland, taken between the 1890s and the end of 1980s. In her research, she notices that, during the late 19th and 20th century, women would walk frequently in the city without a male partner or even exceeded the male pedestrians; However, the mobility patterns among male and female pedestrians seem to differ, as women have been found to take more trips for the sake of others, such as carrying of water and groceries, in comparison to men taking trips mainly for themselves. Thus, structural and societal gender divisions, such as the gender roles of the woman as the primary care-giver and the man as the bread earner, have led to gendered pedestrian mobility patterns and, thus, to the lack of an actual corresponding concept of the flâneur for women[1]. The above findings hold true also for the city as a settlement, in general, as conceptualized in the Western world. Thus, contemporary cities are all settlements that had been built in a way that serves traditional gender male roles, with the male experience being the norm, ignoring women's experiences of the city life (Andreola & Azzurra, 2021). A representative

---

[1] The term "flâneuse", as a corresponding term to the male wanderer exists in literature, as introduced by Elkin (2016). Elkin states that, even though invisibility is a significant characteristic of the flâneur that women usually do not enjoy due to the objectification imposed by the flâneur's gaze, women have taken this role in the past; she proves her point by referring to female observers of the past, such as Virginia Woold in the streets of London. However, her conceptualization of a flâneuse has been criticized by feminist theorists, on the ground that it does not provide a critical turn, but it rather perpetuates binarism (Wearing & Foley, 2017).

example of this neglect of women in the city design is motorization, which did not favor women at all as they did not own driver's licenses; however, since motorization started, the cities were being developed in a way that would favor car use, and thus men, e.g., by scattering different functions of a city, creating extra difficulties to women that usually combine different types of tasks (Männistö-Funk, 2021). However, in the present moment cities hold space for women; they allow them to move around more freely and independently than before. That being said, there are two points that should be made. First, the benefit of freedom in moving into space is not enjoyed by the totality of women, as the urban contemporary city is holding space for mainly white, middle-class women who are allowed this mobility freedom due to other, less fortunate, poor, black women fulfilling a task that used to be assigned to them before. Secondly, women might have a more active presence in the city nowadays, but the way their bodies are sexualized by society can limit their mobility in indirect ways (Glapka, 2018).

The above demonstrate that space is not neutral, but gendered and is 'made' by cultural and social values, which seems to apply also in the tourist space. In general, research data on tourism, as experienced by women, show that they enjoy many benefits by engaging with it. Specifically, tourist experiences have been associated with relaxation, education, social interaction, as well as with self-empowerment processes such as self-discovery, sense of autonomy and an authenticity in terms of existence (Brown et al., 2020). Moreover, tourism has been mentioned as a type of a space where women feel free to oppose not only to the gendered norms of what is expected by them culturally, but also in social and sexual intercourses. Nevertheless, tourism, consisting of a profitable recreational activity, developed in the current societal, cultural and financial system characterized by systemic male power, is still a space where existing power relations are preserved if not maintained; thus, what holds true for women in their everyday life in the current capitalistic patriarchal system is transferred in tourist experiences as well. This can be proven by literature data that demonstrate how women, other than the benefits that they enjoy, are confronted with constraining factors that men do not face and which hold them back from engaging fully with leisure activities (Brown et al., 2020).

Essentially, women very often incur in the so-called male gaze, a prism through which they are mainly sexually objectified, and which has a sort of surveillance power on them; this, in turn, can create a suspicion towards men when travelling and a concern about safety (Brown et al., 2020; Brown & Osman, 2017). As a consequence, physical appearance can render as a significant

mediating factor of tourist experience for women, as they are aware that it can affect their experience; e.g., Asian women have mentioned that they feel like they attract more attention by men, which can put them in a position of feeling vulnerable (Brown et al., 2020). Indirect consequences of the above processes, are the development of strategies to ensure safety, such as avoiding destinations deemed as unsafe or going out alone, changing the way they dress, limiting themselves in certain time periods along the day and/or certain activities (Brown et al., 2020; Brown & Osman, 2017). Hence, women's tourism appears to be very much affected if not shaped by gendered, sexualized, societal and cultural constructions.

Similar experiences and sentiments were mentioned by women that stated that enjoyed walking as part of their holiday in the article by Brown et al. (2020). The participants that had undertaken short or long walks in urban or rural settings, stated through narrative interviews with the researchers the benefits and the constraints of walking while being a tourist. Among the benefits mentioned, categories such as clearing the mind, being in attunement with nature, exploring and negotiating the territory, and improving the physical health were extracted as often discussed. Regarding the challenges they had to face while walking, they referred to feelings of vulnerability that for them were connected to their gender, as there was an insecurity deriving from the notion that identifying as women could be a reason for a possible attack. This insecurity was often accompanied by increased alertness for the confrontation of a possible danger and the adopting of safeguarding techniques, such as choosing carefully the type of holiday taken, the areas and the timing in which they would walk, the way they would dress and whether to travel solo or in company.

Wilson & Little (2008) have introduced a categorization of constraints faced during tourist activities referring specifically to constraints women face when traveling alone. In particular, the analysis of in-depth interviews with 40 Australian women solo travelers revealed four interlacing categories of constraints: sociocultural, personal, practical and spatial constraints. Sociocultural constraints have been conceptualized as factors originating from both the socio-cultural frameworks that women come from and travel to, such as for example their roles in society, the perceptions of others on them traveling alone, etc. Personal constraints, on the other hand, are used as a term to express more internally induced restricting factors, such as emotions, beliefs and self-perceptions, that might take the shape of vulnerability, fear, self-doubt etc. Practical constraints, as the name reveals, are related to the lack of funds, time, knowledge of a place or even the weariness

of traveling alone. Lastly, spatial constraints as a category are used by the researcher to express the restriction in movements and tourist destinations (Wilson & Little, 2008a).

Thus, women seem to be forced to go along with what is safe and sensible in order to avoid any danger; a practice so commonplace to women that comes with some implications in terms of their interaction with and negotiation of public spaces in many conscious and unconscious ways; hence, a geography of women's fear is constructed by all the detours and changes in pace due to the fear of sexist violence (Wilson & Little, 2008).

Data as those mentioned above show the restricted status of women tourists when engaging to walking and not only. For sure, women, femininities and gender minorities are not the only group of people that is susceptible to these feelings and the practices that follow them, as public spaces are built to serve mainly the "typical" citizen, which is epitomized by a white, cisgender, heterosexual and able-bodied male (Andreola & Azzurra, 2021). For example, victimization of gay tourists is common leading them to undergo through same processes, while accessibility is often hard-to-reach for disabled people, which forces them to often change routes (Agovino et al., 2017; Brown & Osman, 2017). The female experience is the ground on which feminist and transfeminist theories start from and build upon, in order to include other minority groups as well. One such theory is the one that conceptualizes the tourist as a "choraster" highlighting the interactive nature of tourism, deconstructing the notion that spaces are preconstructed, supporting the multi-directional construction of space and abolishing the dipole of tourist-resident (Wearing & Foley, 2017). In this context, space ceases to just be the object of the 21uestio's gaze, but the construction of many different power agencies, creating possibilities for the marginalized to occupy the places in which they were not given space before (Andreola & Azzurra, 2021).

Taking into consideration all the points discussed in the section above, the design of the current study as well as its methodological specifics, including the tool used, the process followed and the analysis conducted, will be explained in detail in the following chapter. Moreover, the positionality of the researcher will be addressed, as well.

2. Methodology

2.1 Definition of the Time-space Frame

As the topic under investigation can be wide and differ from place to place and time to time, a specific locus in which the research would be conducted had to be decided. This process was quite automatic for the present thesis as the researcher was living for the time in an Italian city and studying in an Italian university. For that reason, the research refers to the broad and diverse territory of Italy, in accordance, also, to a research internship carried out by the researcher. The latter was conducted at MobiLab, a digital laboratory for mobility research, where one of the tasks assigned was the development of an online survey to gather data on walking holidays and holiday walking in Italy. Furthermore, Italy as a locality was quite fitting to the research question of the thesis, as it is not only a known touristic country but also a country where walking tourism is a widespread form of tourism and a common choice of the citizens, according to some recent data that will be presented in section 4 (**Findings**). It could be, hence, said that the touristic developing pattern in big part of the country as well as the rising popularity of walking tourism inspired the question under research.

The research took place during the peculiar time period of the Covid-19 pandemic. Specifically, the research was conducted in September 2021, when the acute phase of the worldwide lockdowns had more or less already seized, at least in Europe, and less restricting measures, such as the use of the mask only in closed spaces and social distancing, were applying. However, since November 2020 and until April 2021 a semi-lockdown had been taken as a measure for containing the spread of the virus. Particularly, the country was divided in three zones, "red", "orange" and "yellow", with the "red" one being the most restricted in terms of mobility restrictions (Council of Ministers, 2020; Mari, 2021). Except for the "yellow" zone, the measures applied were prohibiting the transportation among different regions and municipalities for motivations other than work, studies, health and necessity, while closed spaces of cultural interest were also closed. At the same time, a night curfew that was valid from 22.00 to 5.00 in the morning was applying for all types of zones, while transportation was discouraged or prohibited even in the very municipality of the citizens in zones "orange" and "red", respectively. Since this situation lasted for the whole winter period with the majority of the regions and municipalities being labeled as one color or another every 15 days or so, according to the number of Covid-19 cases, there were serious disruptions in walking

mobilities, both in terms of everyday leisure walking and tourism (Council of Ministers, 2020). This should be taken in consideration when reviewing the data of the current thesis, as the latter was gathered at a period of time that was certainly affected by what had preceded.

2.2 Research Design

The research design that was chosen as the most suitable for giving answers to the questions set by the researcher was a pluralistic one, where different types of data were collected while using the same methodology. This mixing of data types, quantitative and qualitative, is widely known as *data triangulation* (Jick, 2016; Olsen, 2004; Sandelowski, 2000). The scope served by collecting both quantitative and qualitative data is illuminating a topic from diverse viewpoints and the enrichment of research by combining different techniques, each one offering different type of answers to the research questions (Olsen, 2004). In the case of the current thesis, the main data collection technique used was the survey research, which included the design and administration of a questionnaire. A questionnaire is generally considered a quantitative methodological tool, but the data provided can be enriched by the addition of open questions that allow the respondents to share briefly their personal point of view. This way of combining data types was selected for the thesis under discussion. In the next paragraphs, the reasons for which this specific design was chosen will be analyzed.

As mentioned before, a part of the research questions regards the experience, and more specifically, the motivations and constraints, of both walking tourism and walking in the context of tourism, as lived by different gender categories (for more information see sector **0.4 Research Questions**). Since the juxtaposition of the experience of different groups is requested, a quantitative technique was selected in order to allow a bigger number of individuals to report their experience, rendering the data more pluralistic. Besides that, as the above question has not been set before in the context of Italy, it seemed useful to the researcher to explore and understand the level of occurrence of certain experiences and practices for different gender categories in the country, so to gain an overview of what holds true. Thus, the survey research was selected as a tool that allows for "systematic gathering of information from the respondents" with the aim of understanding the experience of the population of interest, since it offers the chance to generalize the findings from the sample to the general population (Jick, 2016). Moreover, survey research was used as it serves, also, for examining the factors that affect the perception of the population (Sandelowski, 2000).

However, since the research question and the interests of the researcher include the understanding of the different ways in which gender identity might affect the tourist walking practices of people in Italy, the collection of mere quantitative data would not be enough. In particular, both elements of the above research question are socially constructed and based. Gender identity, as discussed before (see section **1.4.1 Why femininities?** for more), is considered as a social construct referring to one's internal understanding of self and gender, while tourism (including walking tourism) is for sure a socially constructed leisure activity, during which similar societal norms and dynamics might occur. Thus, the nature of the interaction among gender identity and tourist walking practices seems to be multi-faceted, with private and public aspects being involved. Since this part of the research question is related to the social realm, which exists only when individuals try to make sense out of it by interpreting their experiences through language (Braun & Clarke, 2006), it made sense for the researcher to integrate some qualitative type of data through open ended questions. Besides the latter, the extended literature review that has preceded the generation of the questionnaire can, also, be considered as a qualitative technique, since it entails the analysis of concepts and meanings as a preparation step before the collection of additional data (Olsen, 2004).

Qualitative data has usually been used in social research in order to gain a better understanding of a social phenomenon, by recording and analyzing people's experiences and the significance and meaning they attribute to those (Olsen, 2004). Thus, the utilization of data triangulation for the scope of this research is expected to illuminate aspects of the research question that could have been totally ignored by a standard survey-based research design (Jick, 2016). The integration and comparison of different data types can be useful in order for the researcher to examine uncovered factors and aspects of the phenomenon, especially in the case of divergent results (Olsen, 2004). In the following paragraphs, the specifics of the methodology used will be analyzed.

2.3 Methodological Tool: Questionnaire

As mentioned above, questionnaires can serve as a cost-effective way to collect data from large parts of a population. Particularly, questionnaires can be a very useful tool as they can be administered in a geographically dispersed target population, providing at the same time anonymity and, thus, encouraging respondents to be more honest regarding their answers (Marshall, 2005). For the purposes of the current thesis, which included reaching a large number of the population

scattered all over the country, an online questionnaire was created based on the already existing literature. Online questionnaires are commonly used nowadays and they can be considered as the upgraded version of post and email surveys, following the rapid technological advancements (Bhutta, 2012). In the following paragraphs, the purposes, the building process, the digital tool used and the structure of the questionnaire will be described.

In order to start building the questionnaire, an extensive literature review relative to the main elements of the research questions was conducted. First of all, articles that were discussing and/or examining subjects such as the interplay among gender and tourism, gender and walking, walking tourism and walking in the context of tourism, were gathered all together and conceptually analyzed. The main aim of this review was to collect all the existing literature on these matters in order to spot recurring findings, themes and concepts discussed. The review showed that the most common topics discussed in literature were the differentiation in practices followed in walking and tourism by different gender categories, as well as the corollary concept of the "geography of fear", a term used to demonstrate the fear-driven mobility of femininities in space that is not shared as an experience by men (for more information see section **1.4.2 Walking while not male**). Moreover, the motivations and constraints, as well as the constraining factors that people face have been widely discussed.

Taking the above in consideration, the online questionnaire that was created for the purposes of this thesis was built around three main axes/queries:

1. The practices that different gender categories follow when it comes to walking (either regarding walking tourism or walking in the context of tourism),
2. The motivations and constraints they might face, as well as the relative importance of constraining factors as perceived by them, and
3. The ways gender identity might affect the practices followed, according to the respondents.

Regarding the structure of the questionnaire, it is divided in two sectors, the one of walking tourism and the one of walking in the context of tourism. Furthermore, the questionnaire[2] is based on respondents answering questions recalling their latest experience of walking vacation or walking during vacation (summer 2021). In the first part, the questionnaire includes some information about the research in process, the estimated duration, while some demographic data, such as the age range

---

[2] For the whole questionnaire please visit the following link: https://arcg.is/0WzKT8

and the educational level are asked both in the first and last parts of the questionnaire. The main core of the questionnaire includes filtering questions in each section for sorting out the respondents having had the tourist experience under discussion. These questions are followed by closed ended questions of different types that examine the three main axes: category questions (where a list of mutually exclusive answers is provided), list questions (the respondent can select more than one question) and five-point Likert scale questions (the respondent can choose a ranked option from a list that indicates the level of agreement/disagreement with a statement). Lastly, an open-ended question in the very end of the core part of the questionnaire for allowing the collection of qualitative data.

It is worth mentioning that some of the questions that were included in the section of walking tourism of the online survey were inspired by the survey of Terre di Mezzo under the name "Italia, Paese di cammini" (2022); the latter is a comprehensive report on the walking paths of Italy. In particular, the questions that were inspired by this survey were the following: frequency with which participants engage in walking trips, duration and location of the walking trip, company during the walking trip and motivations for going on a walking trip.

As one of the study's goals was to examine the walking experience in a tourist setting for different gender categories, adopting an inclusive transfeminist approach (see section **2.6. Positionality** for more), the multiple question on which gender category participants identify the most with, included a range of options. In particular, for options outside the binary to be included, the gender categories of female, male, transgender female and transgender male were listed, with the option of "other/not listed" being included, as well, together with a pop-up answer space allowing for clarification.

For the creation of the online questionnaire, the digital tool *Survey123* provided by ArcGIS was selected. Survey123 is available both in the form of software and online tool and is used for creating, sharing, and analyzing surveys in multiple languages. Furthermore, it allows for a survey design with questions (predefined or not) of multiple types and easy to fill answers of different forms, including embedded audios, images or map pinpointing. What is more, the data collection can be implemented via web or mobile devices, even without Internet connection. Thus, Survey123

was used for all the possibilities it offers, as described above, as well as due to the relatively easy and user-friendly layout[3].

After the creation of the questionnaire, the latter was tested by administrating it to researches with an expertise in the fields enquired, as well as by non-specialists, in order to reassure how understandable the different questions were and if the questions that the researcher aimed to ask were coinciding with the questions that the respondents perceived. The questionnaire was piloted twice before its final form was decided.

2.4. Sampling and Questionnaire Administration

As mentioned before, the Internet nowadays provides not only a variety of survey software that is easily accessible and inexpensive, but also the possibility to distribute a survey to a significant number of potential respondents (Fricker, 2012). Particularly, online social networking sites (SNSs) have led to the generation of a new era in research implementation offering innovative, quick and cheap ways to conduct research (Baltar & Brunet, 2012). Facebook is considered as the SNS that serves the best for such type of research, as its size (2.9 billion worldwide users) and features facilitate the drawing of participants (Baltar & Brunet, 2012; Bhutta, 2012). Regarding its features, Facebook offers among others (marketplace, events, pages, presence technology) the possibility of creating or participating in groups, that basically constitute virtual communities that are supposed to link users with a common interest, cause or attribute throughout the world. This characteristic of Facebook groups has rendered them as a popular way to collect sample, as it has offered for the first time the possibility to conduct research with geographically dispersed populations (Baltar & Brunet, 2012; Bhutta, 2012).

As the current thesis aims to collect responses from people that engage in walking tourism or walking in the context of tourism throughout Italy, Facebook was chosen as the most suitable SNS. The idea behind this choice was that Facebook group feature could allow to spot a sample of the population under discussion through groups that are relevant to walking and walking tourism. Thus, a preliminary mapping of Facebook groups created and composed of Facebook users based in Italy with a shared interest in walking was implemented. The keywords used were: "*cammino in Italia*",

---

[3] ArcGIS Survey123 was selected as the tool serving the best the study's goals after carrying out an extensive review of a series of digital tools, as part of the research internship at MobiLab.

"*cammini in Italia*", "*camminando*", "*camminare*", as well as "*donne in cammino*" due to the particular focus of the thesis on the female experience.

The mapping procedure resulted in a long list of Facebook groups, from which I chose to join twenty-two, according to the location of the users or the walking route under discussion, the aim of the group (diverse group themes were preferred, e.g., walking women but also walking in a certain region), as well as the size (groups with a larger number of members were preferred). Out of these groups, five are relevant to walking and walking paths in Italy as a general location, six are relevant to specific walking routes of Italy (e.g., Via Francigena), four are relevant to walking in specific regions or cities, six are relevant to women walking in Italy as a general location or in specific regions, one of them relevant to walking as a disabled person, and one of them relevant to searching company for walking. Moreover, only six of those groups are private, which means that the group administrator/s must approve of the requests of non-members that want to join. The rest of the groups are all public ones, which means that everyone can join as well as invite other users to the group, usually after complying with some rules set by the group administrators (for the whole list of the Facebook groups, see Annex 3).

After having become a member in the groups mentioned above, the researcher proceeded with making a post to each one of these groups in order to share the online questionnaire providing a link (see Annex 4). The latter was accompanied by an informational text that was providing to the group members some basic information about the goal of the post, the thesis and the questionnaire, the people it was intended to reach, and the researcher's email address in case that any clarifications were needed. The post was written in Italian and posted in the groups' "wall" in September 2021, by the personal Facebook profile of the researcher and the supervisor, so that the procedure would not render impersonal. Lastly, it was up to the group members to decide if they would complete the questionnaire or not.

The final number of respondents was 215, of which 167 identified as female and 48 as male. There were also three respondents that identified as transgender men, which were included in the sample as male for the statistical analysis.

2.5 Data Analysis Techniques

2.5.1 Quantitative analysis

The data provided by the main core of the questionnaire have been statistically analyzed by using R Studio (R Studio Team, 2022). In particular, descriptive statistics, such as tables, charts and average counts, were performed for the questions that referred to demographic variables (age, gender identity, disabilities, education and region of origin). Moreover, in order to identify any differences on the motivations and the influence of the gender identity on the walking practices/choices among the gender categories, Chi-square tests of independence were performed. The latter refer to a type of statistical test that aims to compare two categorical variables in a contingency table and, thus, check whether their distributions move together, proving the existence of a relation among them (Jick, 2016).

Regarding the variables that referred to walking tourism, Chi-square tests were performed to examine the independence among gender identity and the following variables: walking trip duration, walking trip destination and company during the trip; these variables all together are considered as composing the walking practices variable. In the same way, the relation among gender identity and motivations to engage in a walking trip was examined. Lastly, Chi-square tests were performed in order to examine the relationship among gender identity and the perception that gender identity influences aspects of a walking trip, such as the route chosen, the clothing, the duration, the company, the decision on staying and the hours during which the trip was undertaken. The same procedure was followed, also, for the 29uestionns of the sector "Walking In the context of tourism". In this case, however, an extra Chi-square test was performed in order to examine the independence among gender identity and the constraints faced while walking as a tourist.

2.5.2 Qualitative analysis

As mentioned before, the qualitative part of the data derived mainly from two open questions (one referring to walking tourism and one referring to the walking in the context of tourism) of the questionnaire administered. The text answers that were given to these questions were gathered all together and thematic analysis was applied to the whole dataset. Thematic analysis as a method refers to the recognition, analysis and description of patterns across a dataset, that is then used in order to depict reality or even explain underlying layers of the latter (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The aim of this specific dataset analysis was to provide the researcher with an answer regarding the

ways that gender identity could influence the two types of walking discussed in the current thesis and, thus, examine whether the touristic space is gendered.

The procedure of thematic analysis that was followed was the one described by Braun and Clarke (2006). Hence, the different phases of familiarization with the data, generation of initial codes, identification and review of themes, and lastly, definition and naming of the latter, were undertaken in order to analyze the information provided and gather it back together in a meaningful unit. The coding applied could be considered somewhere between inductive and theoretical, as the process was driven by the theoretical interests of the researcher (see section **2.6 Positionality** for more information), but the data was not processed with the aim of fitting to a specific coding framework. On the contrary, the data gathered added more dimensions to the research questions. Lastly, the final result of the thematic analysis was a summarizing table where the key findings accompanied by the supporting chunks of text were assembled.

2.6 Positionality

An important disclosure on the positionality of the researcher has to be made, since the thesis was conducted under the general premise that knowledge is "situated". In particular, positionality refers both to the researcher's worldview (where the researcher "comes from" as an individual, which could be considered randomly determined) as well as the specific prism that they have chosen to use when approaching the research topic (England, 1994). This latter aspect of positionality is considered as having an influence on the whole research procedure, from how it is conducted in the first place to the outcomes produced (Darwin Holmes, 2020). Thus, a positionality acknowledgment and statement are needed in order to describe significant influencing factors on the perception and interpretation of the researcher with regards to the study, under the premise that they themselves make part of the social reality they study (England, 1994).

Regarding the worldview of the researcher, she identifies as a white, European, middle class, typically abled, cis-gender, 26 years old woman; these identity aspects might all have affected the way that social reality is understood and interpreted by the researcher and, thus, the reasons that she chose to examine the research questions under discussion, as well as the way she engaged into the data collection and analysis. As far as the specific prism of a transfeminism and intersectionality, it shall be considered that a transfeminist approach entails a variety of choices that will be described below.

First of all, transfeminism is considered as a "third wave" feminism that occurred in the 1990s, as an offshoot of intersectional feminism (Stryker & Bettcher, 2016). The latter addresses the need for acknowledging the differences in the embodied experience of individuals along multiple interrelated axes (such as race, ethnicity, sexuality, gender, class and age) and their integration in feminist theory and activism (Koyama, 2003). On this basis, transfeminism expands the theory and movement of feminism, as the empowerment of oppressed women by and in the society, to include trans women and girls, leaving at the same time space for inclusion of other entities, as well (Bettcher, 2017). The adoption of a transfeminist gaze does not allow for space to be considered as neutral; on the contrary, it is viewed as occupied by sexualized bodies with different embodied experiences of moving and living through space (Andreola & Azzurra, 2021). As sociocultural constructions, tourism and leisure spaces can be considered as shaped by gender relations, due to the societal norms in effect that inform equally these spaces (see section Literature review). Hence, in the current thesis, the touristic and leisure experiences of femininities are deliberately discussed through a gender-informed lens that pays service to the recognition of possible differences.

Lastly, transfeminist research entails a recognition of the weaknesses and limitations of the researcher's knowledge and, hence, the involvement of participants as an integral part of the procedure, due to the information and insight they can offer (Yuill, 2012). Thus, feminist research is, among others, about a reciprocal sharing of knowledge and a shift of power to the researched, in contrast to the old school neopositivist research approach (Yuill, 2012). In the same direction, the current thesis aims to be categorized as transfeminist as conducted by a female identifying researcher, encouraging individuals to reflect on how gender has impacted their walking experiences in the touristic space.

3. Context of the research

3.1 Walking Tourism in Italy

Italy is widely known as a tourist country, ranking as the fifth in the world and third in Europe in international tourist arrivals, as millions of tourists are visiting it every year (38.9 million in 2019. Statista, 2022). The main municipalities that attract the majority of tourists, as shown by the number of overnight stays in 2019, are Rome, Venice, Milan and Florence. Particularly, until 2019, there had been a steady increase in the number of international tourist arrivals, with a peak of 100 million tourists in 2019, while domestic tourism has been following a similar direction with 54.253 tourists in 2019. However, this upward trend was abruptly disrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, with the number of international tourist arrivals falling at 34.130 (Statista, 2022). Nonetheless, travel and tourism have been quite an important economic sector of Italy, as it comprises 10.2% of national GDP and 11.6% of total employment (Agovino et al., 2017). Some regions of the country, such as those in the north-eastern and western Alps as well as those in the northern and eastern coasts of Sardinia, are even developed according to a tourist monocultural pattern, which means that tourism is the dominant, if not only, means of economic growth (Della Lucia & Segre, 2017).

The reasons for Italy being such a famous tourist attraction are multiple: the wide range of beautiful natural landscapes that include both coastlines and mountainous areas in combination with ancient monuments, the rich cultural heritage and history, the various artistic sites, fashion and the renowned cuisine (Della Lucia & Segre, 2017; Trunfio et al., 2006). At the same time, the local climate facilitates the deseasonalisation of tourist flows and, thus, the extension of tourism activities and the financial benefits it entails through the whole year (Trunfio et al., 2006). The aforementioned characteristics of the country have favored the development of cultural tourism as the dominant value generator, through the exploitation of the cultural heritage and the local "Made in Italy'' products (Della Lucia & Segre, 2017). However, the variety of natural landscapes in combination with the favorable weather and the enogastronomic typicality of the regions across the country, have facilitated the occurrence of other forms of tourism, falling or not under the umbrella of cultural tourism, such as enogastronomic tourism and sports tourism (Trunfio et al., 2006).

Walking tourism, as an alternative form of tourism that potentially combines elements of the above-mentioned categories, has been gaining popularity during the last decades. According to the

annual research conducted by Terre di Mezzo (2022) on the so called "cammini" (which stands for walking trails/paths), 58% of the 1.821 respondents of an online questionnaire replied that they had already walked across at least one path before 2020, proving, thus, that walking tourism is by now a widespread form of tourism among Italian citizens.

Italy offers the possibility to follow walking routes, as many walking trails, already existent or created through the years, can be taken all across the country (Terre di Mezzo, 2022). Particularly, there is a range of walking paths, short and long, lasting from a few hours to days, in coastal or mountainous areas, with or without the essential infrastructure, offered for organized visits or not, and of different types, such as historical, religious or natural. A major part of walking tourism in Italy has been developed around the wide range of established paths that had been formed centuries ago within specific historical or religious time periods, serving the needs of that time. Thus, a big part of walking tourism in Italy overlaps with pilgrimage tourism. Specifically, the number of visitors to Via Francigena, one of the most visited walking trails of that type in Italy, reached the 11.500 visitors (Terre di Mezzo, 2022). According to the 2020 annual research of Terre di Mezzo (2021), there had been a significant increase in the number of people walking across established routes – of mainly historical or religious type – in Italy comparing 2018 with 2019, with 45.472 more walkers having followed a route, as demonstrated by the number of "credenziali" (which is a kind of certificate proving that someone has walked the pilgrimage) issued for the different routes. However, with the advent of Covid-19 pandemics, the number of walking tourists decreased by 20% in comparison to the previous year in 2020 (Terre di Mezzo, 2021). The annual research of 2021, though, the number of "credenziali" seemed to even exceed the old records with 59.538 individuals walking the paths (Terre di Mezzo, 2022).

Walking such *cammini* does not necessarily mean that the motivations of the walkers revolve around religious or cultural interests. The data of Terre di Mezzo for 2022, demonstrate that people choose to go on a walking trip in order to explore the territory, to improve their psychophysical well-being, and to be in the nature. Other less common but still often mentioned motivations were trekking, cultural interests, acquaintance of new experiences, physical well-being, and religion or spiritual connection. The main age range of walkers is 51-60 years old. The walking paths that walkers have chosen in 2022 were both away from or nearby to the region of origin and/or residency (Terre di Mezzo, 2022). With respect to the accessibility of the *cammini*, only little information produced by official research exists on whether disabled people can participate. By

scrutinizing travel blogs by disabled individuals having walked these routes, it is possible to acknowledge that there is not yet the infrastructure for a physically disabled person to follow a route by themselves, but it can still be possible if they are accompanied by a caregiver (Pellegrinando, 2015).

3.2 Walking in the Context of Tourism in Italy

As mentioned before, pedestrian activity is usually involved when visiting a place; in this case, walking might more be seen as a means to an end (e.g., exploration of a territory, sightseeing, etc.), than as a principal motivation, in contrast to the case of walking tourism, where walking consists the very core of the tourist experience (Giovenco et al., 2018). That being said, walking as only one part of the tourist experience occurs mainly in cities, towns or villages, and in general wherever there is some kind of organized form of settlement; this does not mean that walking as an activity and not as a researched practice per se cannot occur in places that are located outside settlements. Italy as a country that is famous for its ancient Roman settlements, with whole cities consisting in open museums of great cultural significance (such as historical city center of Rome or the Venice lagoon), and its characteristic architecture and style (e.g., narrow stone-paved streets, arches covering big part of a settlement), belongs to a category of tourist destinations, where walking is an integral part of the tourist experience, as far as abled people are concerned. On top of that, most of the country's city centers, especially those of the northern regions, have been for a major part pedestrianized, facilitating in this way walking as a means of transportation and exploration. Thus, the environment of many Italian cities, towns and villages appears to favor walking as a means of transport when in vacation, in order to sense the unique atmosphere of the locality by using all the senses to enjoy the sights, smells and sounds and feel like participating in the everyday life of local people (Le Pira et al., 2021).

However, the appeal of Italian cities, towns and villages has been attracting more and more tourists, resulting in what is called "overtourism" (Case et al., 2021; Celata & Romano, 2020; Popp, 2017; Seraphin et al., 2018; Stanchev, 2018). This term has been used since 2006 and had become a hashtag on Twitter in 2012, in order to address and oppose to the ever-increasing density of many metropolitan cities due to tourism (Celata & Romano, 2020). Overcrowded streets and transportation systems make walking, one of the main modes of transportation, very difficult. This, in its turn, has led not only locals but also tourists, to choose different routes or forms of

transportation to avoid the crowds, practices that are usually accompanied by feelings of stress and the loss of sense of place and belonging (Seraphin et al., 2018; Stanchev, 2018). Hence, the very motivation of visiting a place in order to sense it, loses its meaning, as visiting the place itself as a tourist can contribute to the place losing its very identity. Besides that, walkability as a factor of attraction might be met in terms of infrastructure, but in such cases cannot be practiced due to excessive density. However, the problem of overtourism is not that one-sided as some theorists claim that the cause of it is not the growing number of tourists per se, but their increasing penetration in the residential areas of the city where locals reside, increasing the density in these areas as well (Celata & Romano, 2020).

The problem of overtourism has been prominent during the last years for some metropolitan cities of Italy, such as Venice, Rome, Florence, Naples, Palermo and Bologna (Celata & Romano, 2020). The local authorities in some of these cities have even tried to limit the phenomenon by setting rules that would make the tourists to behave in a more disciplined way. For example, in Venice, in the pre Covid-19 era, the narrow streets and bridges were overcrowded with tourists, disrupting completely the local people's everyday life by forcing them to choose alternative paths and/or totally avoid areas that are supposed to be tourist (Celata & Romano, 2020). In parallel, tourists seem to have been facing some problems with regards to their walking mobility as well, as the mobility flow is disrupted by other people engaging in similar activities. For that, the local authorities decided to place entry gates in some parts of the city in order to regulate the access to the city center and, thus, avoid overpopulation by closing the gates whenever the amount of people having access exceeds a certain threshold (Seraphin et al., 2018). Practices like this might be effective in terms of limiting overcrowding but they disrupt human mobility as they only tackle the problem superficially and not at its root, causing side effects such as putting barriers in everyone's movements, locals and tourists alike. Both the presence of Other bodies and fixity are proved to play an important role in the case of tourism, in contrast to the notion that it involves only constant strolling, detached from the surroundings (Popp, 2017).

3.3 Walking as a Woman in Italy

Unfortunately, there is not much recent data on how walking is experienced across the country. However, a project conducted in the city of Milan, known as Sex and the City[4] (Andreola &

---

[4] https://sexandthecity.space/

Azzurra, 2021), has some data to provide. The project, aiming to an inclusive city planning, examines the development of women's lives in Milan, both in their households and the public urban space. Regarding violence received in public space, more than 70% out of the 1.400 female respondents claimed to have had an experience of sexual harassment within the city space, while 84.9% claimed that they experienced it in the street or the park. In particular, to the multi-choice question of the type of harassment received, 81.4% stated that had received unsolicited verbal appreciation, but a 52.1% had experienced unwanted and inappropriate physical contact and another 28% had experienced chasing or stalking by strangers. On the contrary, only 9% of male participants claimed to have experienced harassment in public space in the last five years. More interestingly, only 2% of the total male participants had an experience of catcalling (Andreola & Azzurra, 2021). This data might be the example of only one city in Italy, but demonstrate clearly that harassment in the public space is an existing problem, but mainly -if not exclusively- for women, femininities and gender minorities.

In the tourism sector, there is not much data on the experience of women. Nevertheless, grassroot initiatives have been taken that might have a positive impact on women's and gender minorities' mobility. One such example is the Association for Gender Responsible Tourism (Associazione per il Turismo Responsabile di Genere-GRT)[5], that was created as a blog and forum, in the first place that was supposed to be a meeting space among women working in the sector (Tonelli, 2014). However, in 2013 it was established as an association, that besides its primary aim of exchange among women of the field, has the additional aim of fair employment of women in tourism and the support of best practices and guidelines for a responsible tourism against gender discrimination. Such initiatives might lead to the creation of a safe space for female tourists and workers on the field across the country through the solidarity among them.

Taking into consideration everything that has been mentioned in the paragraphs above, the questions that are born are the following: is walking tourism an inclusive and equally accessible space for women, femininities and gender minorities? Could walking trails as a "separate" space be less sexist and gendered? Is geography of women's fear transferred from everyday life to tourist experiences when it comes to walking as an activity? In general, to what extent is the production and consumption of leisure and tourism related to the systemic male power? These questions are

---

[5] https://www.g-r-t.org/

going to be examined in the following sections with Italy being the local background, as a country where tourism (walking tourism included) has been constantly rising.

4. Findings

4.1 Quantitative Findings

4.1.1 General characteristics of the respondents

Gender

The final number of respondents was 215, of which 167 (77.67%) identified as female and 48 (22.33%) as male. There were also three respondents that identified as transgender men, which were included in the sample as male for the statistical analysis.

Age

The respondents of the online survey were found to be mainly middle aged, as the prominent age range was found to be 51-60 years old (26.98%), with the ranges of 41-50 (23.72%) and 31-40 years old (21.86%) following (See Annex 1).

Education

The majority reported having had accomplished a high level of education, as 30.70% has in possession a diploma; Moreover, quite a number of participants has a higher educational level, as 24.19% has followed postgrad courses and 20.47% has followed a Master's course (See Annex 2).

Origin

Furthermore, the majority of the respondents originally come from the region of Lombardia (38.6%), while other commonly mentioned regions of origin were Veneto (9.3%) and Piemonte (7.44%). Only a very small percentage of the respondents mentioned having some type of disability (5.12%), with the most common of them regarding problems with the back and knees (See Annex 2).

4.1.2 Walking Tourism

Duration

Many people mentioned going on walking trips quite frequently, as 28.84% takes a walking trip more than once a month and 27.91% once a week, while only 5.12% goes rarely, such as once a year (see Annex 2). A big majority (85.6%) of the general number of respondents reported having taken a walking trip in the summer of 2021. With regards to the duration of the walking trips

(**Figure 1**), many participants engaged in trips of four to seven days (27.9%), with trips lasting one day (20.5%) and more than a week (16.3%) being the next most followed. Half-day trips were the least followed by the participants (8.37%).

Figure 1

Duration of walking trips distributed by gender category
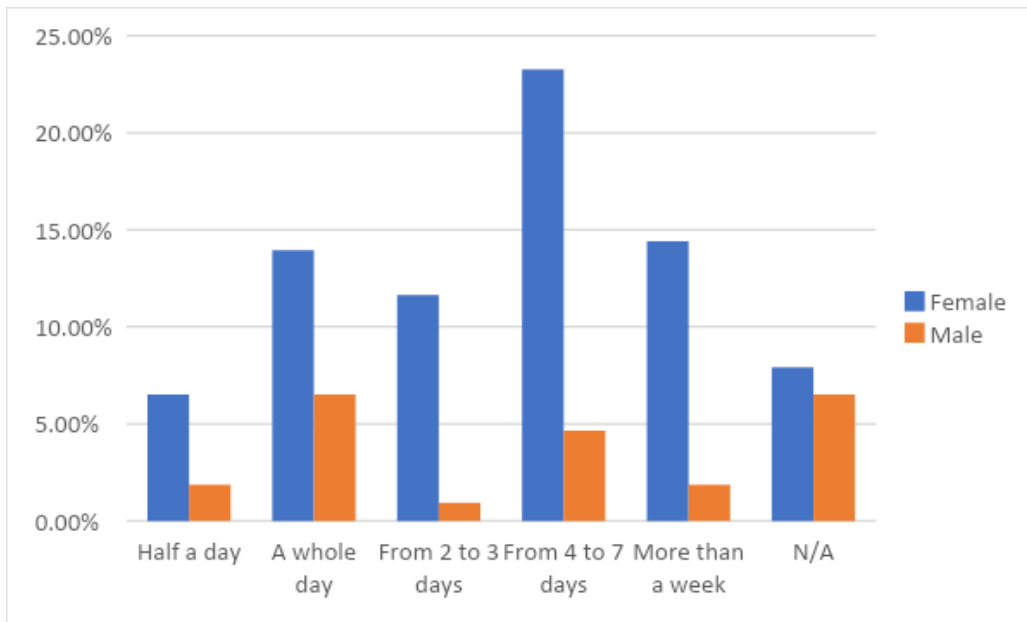
Location

As far as the location of the walking trips is concerned, most people (74.9%) chose Italy for their walking trips (see Annex 1); almost half of them (47.4%) chose to walk one or more of the established paths ("*cammini*") (see Annex 2). The three walking paths that were relatively most frequently mentioned were Via Francigena (9.77%), the Cammino Materano/Via Peuceta (6.51%), and the Cammini di San Francesco (5.58%), in relevant accordance to the most commonly walked paths that the survey Terre di Mezzo (2022) has reported. Many other walking paths, not included in the questionnaire's list, were walked by the participants, such as the Cammino del Salento, the Sentiero del Viandante, and the Cammino dei Borghi Silenti.

Company

The most reported choice of the respondents with regards to company on their walking trip was spouses (25.12%), with group of friends (15.35%) and going alone (14.88%) being the next most mentioned. For the distributions among gender categories see **Table 1**.

Table 1

Company on walking trips in respect to gender category

Company on the walking trip	Female	Male	Total
With my partner/spouse	25,75%	22,92%	25,12%
With other walkers that I met there	2,40%	0,00%	1,86%
With my pet	1,20%	0,00%	0,93%
With the family	8,98%	8,33%	8,84%
With a friend	8,98%	8,33%	8,84%
With a group of friends	17,37%	8,33%	15,35%
With an organized group of walkers	6,59%	8,33%	6,98%
Alone	14,97%	14,58%	14,88%
Other	3,59%	0,00%	2,79%
N/A	10,18%	29,17%	14,42%
Total	**100,00%**	**100,00%**	**100,00%**

Motivations

From the answers that the respondents gave, it seems that the most important motivations for them in order to undertake a walking trip were "their psycho-physical well-being" (27.5), "to be in the nature" (24.8%) and "to explore the territory" (18.7%), while practicing outdoor sports activities (11.4%) seemed to be motivating for some of them, as well. In comparison to the findings of the Terre di Mezzo survey (2022), it can be said that the three most mentioned motivations to

engage in walking tourism are the same, with a small change in the ranking, as exploring the territory is the most mentioned motivation in that case, with psycho-physical well-being and being in nature following. Lastly, the motivations chosen by female and male identifying participants did not diverge significantly with regards to the frequency with which they were chosen.

Figure 2

Motivations of respondents for engaging into walking tourism, distributed by gender identity
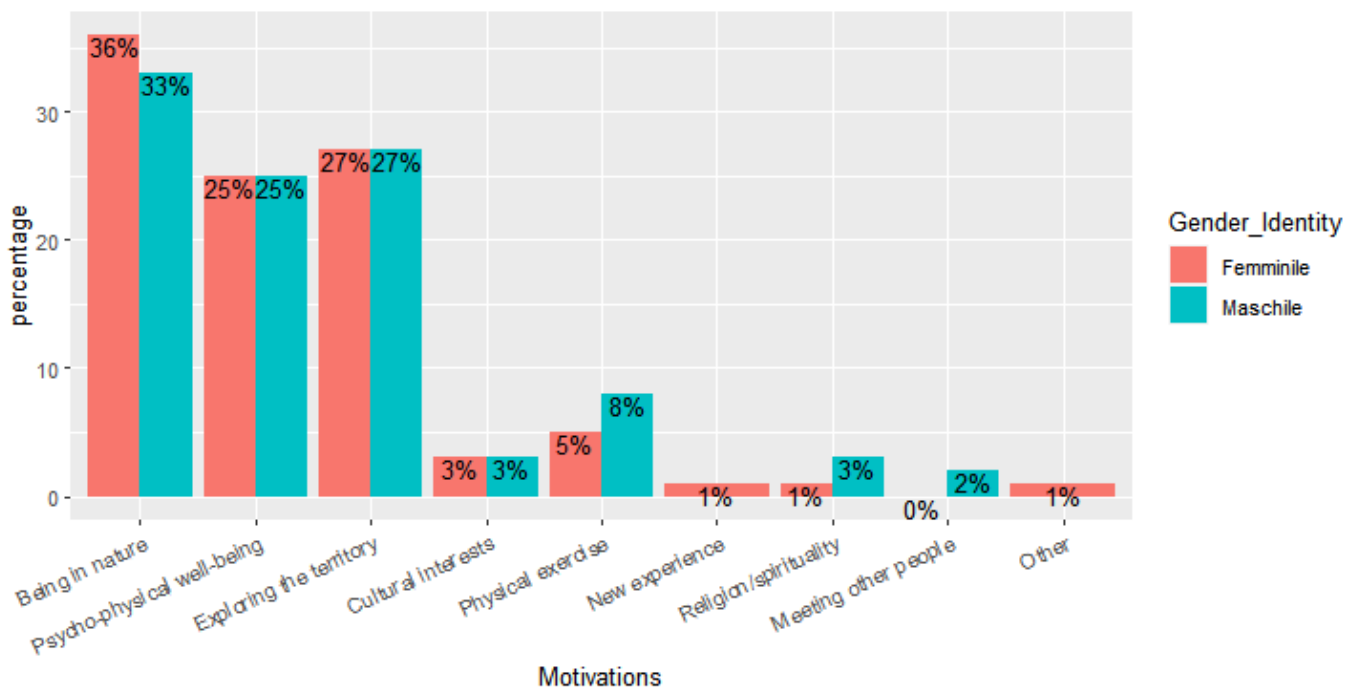
4.1.3 Walking in the context of tourism

From the total amount of participants, 83.7% reported having visited a city or, in general, a place in which they walked around as tourists.

Location

The most visited regions were Puglia, Toscana, Umbria and Trentino-Alto Adige, as seen also in the relevant map. Among the most visited cities/places, Florence, Tuscany, Venice, Roma and Napoli seemed to be commonly preferred.

Company

With regards to the question about the respondents being accompanied or not by other person(s) during their walking tour, many mentioned having as company their spouse (29.3%), while quite a few reported having walked around with their family (15.8%) or a group of friends (13%) or a friend (11.6%. See **Table 2**)

Table 2

Company while walking in a tourist setting distributed by gender category

Company while walking	Female	Male	Total
With my partner/spouse	31,74%	20,83%	29,30%
With other persons I met there	2,40%	2,08%	2,33%
With the family	14,37%	20,83%	15,81%
With a friend	12,57%	8,33%	11,63%
With a group of friends	13,77%	10,42%	13,02%
With an organized tour group	2,40%	0,00%	1,86%
Alone	7,19%	6,25%	6,98%
Other	3,59%	0,00%	2,79%
N/A	11,98%	31,25%	16,28%
Total	**100,00%**	**100,00%**	**100,00%**

Motivations and constraints

With regards to motivations, many people seemed to have engaged to exploring a touristic place on foot for reasons of exploring the place visited (53.5%), freeing the mind (25.3), and improving physical condition (8.9%), with no significant differences with respect to the frequency of motivations among male and female identifying respondents. The most commonly experienced constraints, on the other hand, as reported by the respondents, were limited time (35.7%), the lack

of pedestrian friendly environment (19.4%), while quite a number of respondents reported of not having faced any constraint at all (14.3%). A significant percentage of people reported physical difficulties, of permanent or temporary nature, as a constraint faced (13.9%). As far as differences among participants identifying as men and the ones identifying as women, the only difference noted was relevant to the frequency with which the first reported dealing with no constraints (22.22%) in respect to the latter (12.56%. See **Figure 3**).

Figure 3

Constraints faced by respondents regarding walking in the context of tourism, distributed by gender identity
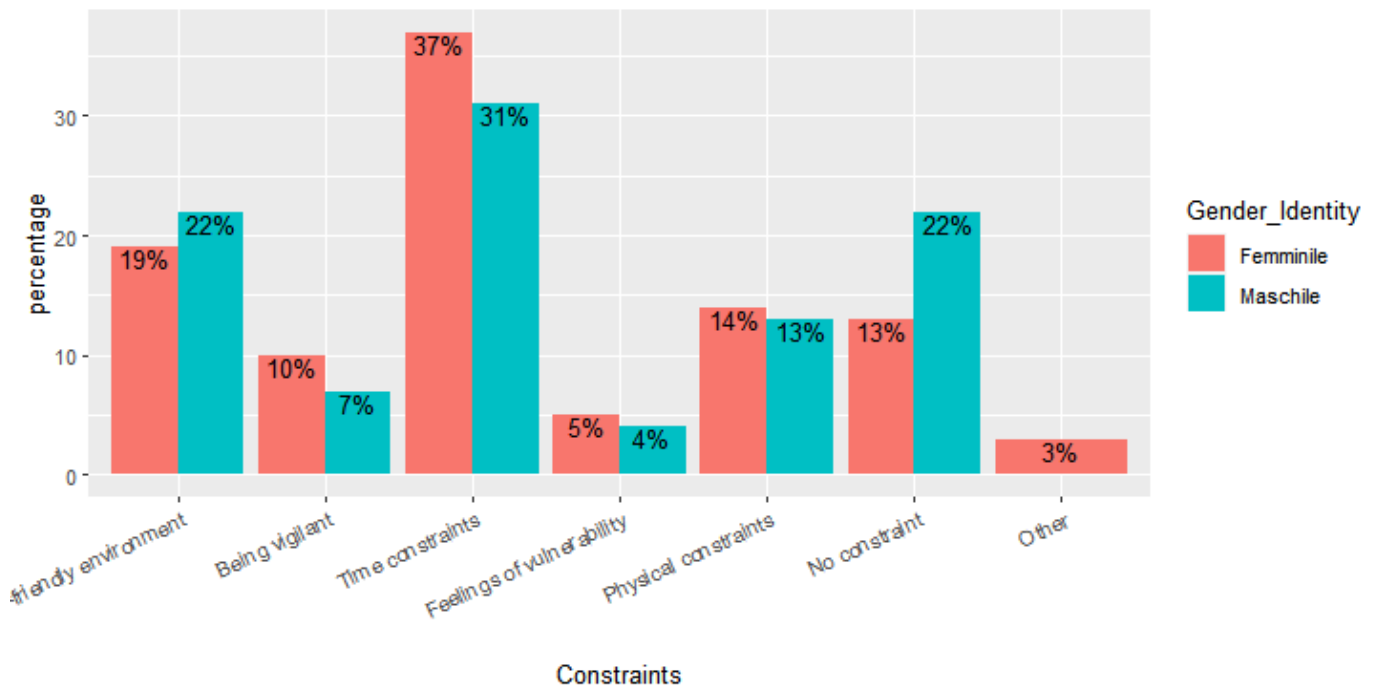
4.1.4 The gender identity variable

At a first stance, results from those who identifies as women seems to differ from those who identifies as men. It is true that the biggest part of both male and female identifying respondents answered that they strongly disagree with their gender identity influencing their decisions on the path chosen, their company on the walking trip, the duration of the trip, overnight stay, the hours during which they walked and the clothing worn (see Annex 2, tables 5 - 7 for a review). However, it should be noted that while female identifying participants' answers are more equally distributed

across the Likert scale, male identifying participants' answers seem to be mainly concentrated on "strongly disagreeing" that their gender identity influences the way they engage in walking tourism.

That being said, it is worth referring to some interesting differences noted among the gender categories. Regarding walking tourism, to the question on gender identity having an impact on going on a walking trip alone or in company, women (54%) and men (79.41%) mainly strongly disagreed. Nonetheless, 13.33% of women mentioned to agree with the above statement, in comparison to 8.82% of men agreeing. Moreover, in the same pattern 10% of women agreed that their gender identity had an effect on the path they chose to walk, while only 5.88% agreed to that statement, even though the majority of both categories strongly opposed to it (58.67% of women, 70.59% of men). In the same direction, 18% of female identifying respondents reported agreeing that their decision on staying overnight or not was influence by their gender identity, when only 5.88% of men relation to that. Regarding the hours during which they chose to walk, 10% of women agreed that the choice was made taking into consideration their gender identity, while few men agreed to that (2.94%). Lastly, it is worth mentioning that the respondents of both gender categories were found strongly disagreeing to their identity affecting the duration of their walking trip (70% female identifying, 85,29% male identifying).

In the same pattern of walking tourism data, the major part of individuals of both gender categories examined in the current thesis, reported that they strongly disagreed on their gender identity affecting decisions on the places they walked, walking around in company or alone, the hours during which they walked as well as clothing (see Annex 2, tables 8-10). In this case, differences among men and women were noticed mainly on the choices made on places visited, walking alone or in company and clothing. In particular, more women (14.29%) than men (9.09%) agreed that they chose places to walk in taking into consideration their gender identity. Moreover, a difference among the number of women (14.97%) and men (3.03%) that agreed to their gender identity influencing the hours of the day during which they strolled around should, also, be highlighted. Lastly, a larger percentage of women (13.61%) in respect to that of men (6.06%) agreed that their choices on clothing was affected by their gender identity.

However, drawing from the results of the Chi-square test, it results that gender identity was not proven to have an influence on the walking experience on its whole. In the following paragraphs, a detailed report of the results of the analysis conducted for both the sectors of walking tourism and walking in the context of tourism.

As mentioned above, chi-square tests were applied in order to check the existence of any relation among gender identity and the choices and practices ($p = 0.0025$, according to the Bonferroni correction for multiple testing). Regarding practices that were adopted while engaging in walking tourism, there was no relation found among the gender identity and the duration of the trip [X^2(4, N=184) = 8.63, p = .07], gender identity and the walking path chosen [X^2(4, N=184) = 3.75, p = .44], gender identity and the hours of the day during which the respondents engaged into walking [X^2(4, N=184) = 10.32, p = .03]. Moreover, gender identity was not found to be related to the choices the walkers made with regards to the clothing worn while walking [X^2(4, N=184) = 2.27, p = .69], going in company or alone [X^2(4, N=184) = 8.16, p = .08], and staying over the night [X^2(4, N=184) = 7.63, p = .11].

Concerning the influence of gender identity on the choices the respondents made while walking around the touristic location, no relations among the above were found to be significant ($p = 0.0025$, according to the Bonferroni correction for multiple testing). Specifically, gender identity does not seem to be related to the choices made about the places where they walked [X^2(4, N=180) = 5.27, p = .26], the decision to go alone or in company [X^2(4, N=180) = 12.07, p = .01]., the clothing worn while walking around [X^2(4, N=180) = 9.49, p = .05]., the hours of the day chosen for exploring [X^2(4, N=180) = 6.6, p = .16].

To conclude, the statistical analysis of the data showed that there were no significant differences found among the different gender categories with regards to the motivations, constraints and practices followed neither in walking tourism nor in walking while being a tourist. However, the juxtaposition of the gender categories indicates a tendency for more female than male identifying participants to be affected by their gender identity with regards to choices on the company, the path walked, the overnight stay, and the hours during which they walked, with regards to walking tourism. Accordingly, a tendency can be observed, as well, for respondents identifying as women in respect to those identifying as men to consider their gender identity as a factor influencing their choices on places visited, time of walking and clothing, as far as walking in the context of tourism is concerned.

4.2 Qualitative Findings

The thematic analysis that was conducted brought in light the reoccurrence of three main themes across the answers that were given to the open questions of the questionnaire. Before the three

themes are analyzed, it should be noted that the majority of the participants that chose to reply to these questions identified as women (report again the number here), so the themes generated are referring to women's experiences and point of view. That being said, the themes under discussion are the following:

- the *constraints* that women face before and during their trips;
- the *safeguarding strategies* they adopt in order to prevent or overpass these constraints;
- and the *restricted "space" that is allotted to women* in tourism.

In particular, it was noticed that the constraints that women face regarding walking in the tourist space, often related to fear for their safety, lead them to adopt safeguarding strategies, both before and while engaging to walking; however, while these strategies are considered to maintain their safety, it seems to be, also, connected to them engaging to walking only under specific conditions. These conditions usually refer to specific practices (e.g., walking with male company), time zones and places that are considered as safe by and for women. In the next pages, the interrelations among these themes, their subcategories as well as the supporting parts of the participants' answers will be analyzed and presented, respectively.

It is worth noting that the answers that the respondents gave were translated form Italian to English for the purposes of the study. Besides that, since the questionnaire was anonymous, the respondents will be mentioned by their gender category (indicated by W for women and M for men) followed by a number indicating the order with which their quotes are presented in the present text (e.g., W13).

4.2.1 Constraints

Constraints are understood as enclosing mainly internal factors (e.g., emotions and thoughts) that inhibit women not only from engaging into walking tourism, but also from spending more time participating in relevant activities, using the services offered during the trip, or achieving a certain level of satisfaction. Such constraints seem to be faced both before (*pre-travel constraints*) and during (*during-travel constraints*) a walking trip. The pre-travel constraints refer to factors that prevent or discourage women from going on a walking trip, which might be of both personal and societal origin and might affect the way that women engage (or not) in walking tourism. During-travel constraints, on the other hand, regard the constraining factors that might occur while engaging to walking and affect the experience per se. Lastly, these constraints were found to be

mainly personal, in the sense that they are relevant to internal processes, such as emotions, perceptions and beliefs; the socio-cultural basis of such constraints, e.g., the norms, roles and responsibilities attributed to women by socio-cultural contexts, is discernible, as well, and considered as integral part of such processes. Statements of the women participating in the survey will be cited below in order for the theme to be properly unfolded.

Personal constraints with a socio-cultural basis

The main personal constraints that were mentioned by women engaging into walking tourism were feelings of fear for their own safety, as well as feelings of vulnerability and vigilance about possible dangers. Fear for safety appeared both as a pre-travel and during-travel constraint. Particularly, women mentioned that the fear for one's safety and, more specifically the fear of receiving violence or being harassed, can be a restrictive factor for undertaking a walking trip, especially when walking alone: *"Traveling alone leads me to assess dangers that maybe, if I were a man, I wouldn't calculate (e.g., assault, harassment)."* (W1, 21-30). Moreover, the fear for one's safety was showed to be persistent even when in company of another woman, rendering granted that two women alone are women in danger: "*I am a cisgender lesbian woman. I, also, go alone with my girlfriend on hikes with no problem, no fear, no worry. I don't go alone with her to sleep in the woods in a tent. I always prefer other people to be there, for two reasons. The first is that I am afraid of violence. The woods, at night, is a space where only the trees might hear me calling for help[…]I feel more peaceful if it's not just me and her.*" (W2, 21-30). In the previous statement, it becomes clear that the fear for safety can have restrictive effects on the choices women make about the organizational aspects of a walking trip, such as the overnight stay. In the same direction, feelings of fear seem to affect choices on the place where the walking trip will take place, based on a categorization of space as safe and unsafe for women walking alone: "*The point is the place where you are, if you are in Italy on a small island (as I did this year), you have nothing to fear, if you are a woman and alone. Instead, there have been situations abroad that walking alone (and sometimes even in couple) you don't feel comfortable because you fear for your safety.*" (W3, 41-50).

This state of fear, vulnerability and vigilance for guaranteeing safety seems to be following women, also, during their walking trip, influencing their experience and conceptualization of walking tourism. Feelings of fear were mentioned mainly in combination to walking alone and in

desolate places: "*I am a woman and have walked paths alone. Often there were desolated suburbs...or countryside for kilometers. At times I was scared. I thought...oh f*ck... These are exactly the images you see on TV when they find mutilated bodies [...]*" (W4, 31-40). Here, it could be noted that there seems to be some influence on how women feel or fear for when engaging to solo walking by the narratives reproduced on media about what happens to "women walking alone in isolated places". Thus, it could be that such feelings are generated or reinforced by societal representations and not exclusively by real life experiences. Furthermore, as mentioned above, vigilance about preserving safety was mentioned, as well, specifically in relation to using the services offered during a walking trip: "*I am very careful about the services offered, but this applies in general. (For) example (trivial? Maybe, for me it is fundamental): The possibility of being able to make use of a safe bathroom along the route and also at the stops (I happened to stop at campsites).*" (W5, 31-40). The constant assessment of safety with regards to the services offered, as mentioned by W5, could be considered both a cause and a result of vigilance; being attentive about the safety of services could result to a state of perpetuated vigilance and vice versa, creating a vicious of the two.

Very interestingly, the individuals identifying as men seemed to acknowledge these feelings of vigilance and distrust deriving from women during walking trips and to even relate them with their own gender identity: "*My gender identity (straight male) caused distrust (to the female walkers) a few times when approaching other walkers (female) I met along the way.*" (M1, 51-60). The words of M1 suggest that feelings of vulnerability and vigilance from women's side can occur by simple encounters with men; this statement has a self-evident socio-cultural basis, as it implies the existence of gender stereotypes and power dynamics among genders, both of which are societal structures. That being said, women's feelings of distrust towards men can be considered as originating from their own experiences around men in other spaces outside of walking tourism, where insecurity was experienced.

4.2.2 Safeguarding strategies

This category is not considered as completely separate from that of constraints. On the contrary, the two themes of safeguarding strategies and constraints are very often overlapping. Safeguarding strategies refer to the measures that women take in order to preserve their safety. The adoption of such strategies means that women are constantly summoned to assess the level of safety of certain

activities, places, time periods and even other individuals. That being said, safeguarding is closely connected to the constraints they face and, usually, occur as a response to them. Similarly to the constraints, a distinction can be made between the safeguarding strategies that are adopted before/during the preparation phase of the walking trip and during the walking trip per se. Certainly, the adoption of safeguarding strategies has an effect on how women experience and engage in walking tourism. Below, the different strategies adopted by the participants will be mentioned and analyzed.

Safeguarding that takes place during the preparation/decision making phase was mostly found to be about *avoiding* engaging into situations that are considered unsafe for women during a walking trip. For example, W6 mentions: "*I decided to do this path with my boyfriend, so my choices were not affected by the fact that I was a woman. Surely, if I had done the path alone, I would have paid more attention to the choices, especially with regard to clothing, I would not have slept in a tent and I would have tried to avoid walking certain parts of the path completely alone and at night.*" In W6's statement, it can be seen that there is a number of decisions on certain aspects of the walking trip (clothing, accommodation, walking hours) that would have been more restricted if she would have taken the walking trip alone. It is worth mentioning that such safeguarding strategies seem to be almost like a reflex for women, in the sense that, even when they do not necessarily realize, they avoid certain situations as inherently unsafe for them: "*I decided to walk in a group for the experience and to share it, but I would not say the gender influenced my decisions. I also take alone walks, but in those cases only for one day and not staying overnight and I think this is due to gender.*" (W7, 31-40). Shorter walking trips that do not include overnight stay are considered as a self-evidently preferable choice for women in order to keep themselves safe.

Other that avoidance as a safeguarding technique, from the above statements it is apparent that company is seen as an indirect safeguarding measure. In particular, as suggested above, women feel safer when in company of a man (usually partner) or in a bigger group of walkers. However, safety does not seem to be guaranteed in the company of a woman: "*I also go alone with my girlfriend on hikes with no problem, no fear, no worry. I don't go alone with her to sleep in the woods in a tent. I always prefer other people to be there, for two reasons. The first is that I am afraid of violence[…] Typically, we go to the mountains with a friend (male), or another couple, sleep outside… and are very attentive to observe the ground (for animal tracks, here mostly wild*

boar), before camping." (W2, 21-30). From W2's words it is suggested that women, even in the company of each other are not safe, a statement that leaves no space for any factor other than gender identity (as well as what it entails) to be considered as the reason why. Fear of violence, from both humans and animals, seems to be overpassed as a constraint by going on walking trips together with *male* friends or another couple. In the latter case, the number of people seems to be guaranteeing safety rather than gender identity. W2 continues by saying that: "*I will conclude by saying that I would like a dog. With a dog, I would go to the mountains alone even without my girlfriend. I like the company.*"; thus, also pets seem to be serving as a better option that going alone in terms of safety.

Lastly, more active, in-situ safeguarding techniques have been mentioned to be adopted in order to preserve one's safety, such as for example carrying a pepper spray when going on a walking trip alone in desolated places: "*[...] I had with me a pepper spray with three meters spraying function for the strays but I often thought...oh...it's windy...if an as*hole has to attack I hope he does it from the right way if not I'll even self-eliminate.*" (W4, 31-40). On the contrary to going on walking trips with company or avoiding certain options, this type of safeguarding strategy seems to be accompanied by a persistent vigilance state that can certainly affect the walking experience for women, in terms of satisfaction.

4.2.3 Restricted space, time and options

The participants often drew a connection among the constraints they face, the safeguarding strategies they adopt and the limited choices they end up having in walking tourism in terms of safe places, time periods of the day, services that can be used, activities they can engage in and practices they can follow in comparison to individuals identifying as men. For example, W8 (31-40) probably on the occasion of previous questions asked in the questionnaire, mentions that: "*In other places and contexts, being a woman has certainly influenced me in choices regarding the hours of traveling, clothing, the place of overnight stay, advising caution and, therefore, limiting my possibilities compared to a man.*". This statement shows that women are confronted with restricted freedoms in the space of walking tourism and that they often feel obliged to stick to this designated time-space sphere for their own good.

Furthermore, other participants referred to the fact that being a woman has particularly discouraged them to walk alone, especially when it comes to walking trips in places far away from

home that last longer than a day. Specifically, W9 (51-60) refers to the fact that she doesn't "*like to walk alone however my gender identity may limit that choice.*", while W10 (31-40) adds: "*I like to walk alone and explore places near home to get a break and I feel pretty safe. However, even though there is a desire to do multi-day walks, one of the factors that holds me back from undertaking them alone is related to my gender identity.*" The limited choices that participants are left with in general when engaging in walking tourism as women were noted, as well: "*[...] making a more abstract reasoning, my identity could influence the choice (e.g., not choosing a hostel or not camping alone.*" (W11, 21-30). Hence, what this theme brings into attention is that the feelings of vulnerability, fear and vigilance that women experience in the space of walking tourism often lead to an extreme curtailment of places, activities, situations and time zones that are considered safe for them. Moreover, the same feelings seem to reinforce them to stay within these designated lines in order to secure their safety.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The current thesis has posed the question of the extent and the ways to which gender identity might affect walking both as a form of tourism and in the context of tourism. Moreover, the motivations and constraints for the above-mentioned sections were examined in relation to the different gender identities. The quantitative data indicate that, even though some differences can be spotted with respect to the motivations, constraints and the practices adopted by different gender categories when choosing walking as a form or a medium for doing tourism, there is no significant relation among the gender identity and the above. However, the qualitative data suggest that walking experience is mediated through gender identity, as the themes of constraints, safeguarding strategies and restricted space, time and options were revealed mainly from what was mentioned by individuals identifying as women with regards to walking tourism in Italy. In the next paragraphs, the interpretations, implications, limitations of the thesis, as well as recommendations for future research or changes in the field of tourism will be discussed.

First of all, the classification of motivations of the respondents with regards to walking tourism was found to be in accordance with what literature denotes. Particularly, the survey of Terre di Mezzo (2022) on the walking paths of Italy suggested as main motivations to engage in walking tourism the following: exploring the territory to be walked (52.4%), psycho-physical well-being (51.2%), and being in nature (45.1%). Moreover, the same survey indicated that the main benefits that respondents enjoyed by going on a walking trip were following the same line, as 86% of them mentioned psychological well-being, 66% physical well-being and 65% acquiring knowledge on a place and its history.

What motivated respondents to choose walking as a means while being tourists, seemed to move in the same direction with the motivations for walking tourism: exploring the place, freeing the mind and improving physical health. Regarding the constraints most commonly confronted by the respondents, they seem to be more relevant to practical aspects of being a tourist (limited time, lack of a walking friendly environment) and less to more internal processes, such as feeling vulnerable or being in a state of vigilance.

Regarding the gender identity variable and walking tourism, even if the data generated from the quantitative and qualitative analysis seem to differ, as the latter indicate that walking tourism experience can be quite gendered, in some points they do converge. In particular, as far as walking tourism is concerned, the tendency that was noted for female identifying respondents to agree that

their gender identity has influenced their choices on the company, the path walked, the overnight stay, and the hours during which they walked, seems to be in accordance with the safeguarding strategies that were reported. Essentially, as mentioned in the **Findings** section, female identifying participants mentioned going on walking trips with male company or more people as a safeguarding strategy that reassures their safety. Other than that, in the subtheme of avoiding certain practices as a safeguarding strategy, the choices made for a walking trip that were modified by women seem to coincide with those for which differences were found among the gender categories (path, overnight stay and hours during which they walked). Thus, the tendency for women being more influenced by gender identity when making these choices, as suggested by the quantitative data, could be considered illuminated by the qualitative part of the analysis.

As far as the qualitative part of the data is concerned, the themes that were revealed by women's answers, were very important in terms of giving a picture of how walking and tourism are experienced in Italy. However, these themes are not completely new to the relevant literature as they have occurred in previous research, as well. First of all, constraints in the tourist experience have been discussed before and conceptualized as factors that have a restrictive effect on individual's freedom or desire to participate in leisure or the satisfaction that they enjoy by participating (Wilson & Little, 2008a). One of the most known categorizations of constraints has been the one made by Crawford & Godbey (1987) among structural, intrapersonal and interpersonal constraints. Structural constraints refer to the practical factors that stand between preferences and participation regarding leisure (such as limited funds or time), intrapersonal constraints refer to more internal processes, such as psychological states (e.g., feelings of fear, self-confidence, etc.), while interpersonal constraints derive from social encounters with friends, family, partners, etc. With regards to the interaction among these "categories" of constraints -apart from the fact that they often overlap and they should not be considered necessarily as separate units-, it seems that intrapersonal constraints are the ones met first, and if overpassed, interpersonal constraints can emerge as intervening among the desire to engage into tourism and actual participation in it. Only in the case that interpersonal constraints are overcome, structural constraints might be faced (Crawford & Godbey, 1987).

The data generated by the current thesis, as well as the themes occurred by the analysis, seem to coincide quite a lot with the ones described by Wilson & Little (2008a. See section **1.4.2 Walking while not male**). Interestingly, the constraints occurred as a theme from the data used

here, mainly when the respondents had in mind themselves traveling solo (e.g., "*Traveling alone leads me to […]*", "*[..] walking alone (and sometimes even in couple) you don't feel comfortable because you fear for your safety*", etc.). Personal constraints seemed to be the most prominent to the participants of the survey conducted here, and the limitations per se experienced were quite common to the ones mentioned by Wilson & Little (2008b). In particular, fears about traveling alone, before and during a trip, sometimes even preventing female identifying individuals to engage in solo travelling/walking, were brought up in both cases together with fears for one's security and physical integrity. However, in Wilson & Little's (2008a) article, feelings of loneliness, fatigue and stress emerging from their solo status were, also, brought up.

Moreover, the sociocultural nature of the constraints in the current data was not very prominent and mainly referred to media representations about what happens to women traveling alone, while in the article of Wilson & Little (2008a) sociocultural influence seems to take the form of society's expectations and norms (including those held by family, friends, partners, etc.) about women's roles and responsibilities according to their age/life stage, as well as perceptions about women traveling alone. However, it is possible that the design (open-ended question for the collection of qualitative data) of the current thesis might have been limiting for profound discourses as such to occur. Nevertheless, the conceptualization of socio-cultural constraints seems to resemble a lot to the interpersonal constraints, according to the categorization of Crawford & Godbey (1987). Overall, it could be said that the common theme of constraints emerging in research from the words of tourists identifying as female, almost proves the very existence of such constraints -despite their abstract nature; Furthermore, it indicates gender identity as their origin, as such constraints are experienced by individuals due to the fact that they identify as women, and even more, the latter seem to perceive them as originating by this element of their identity.

With regards to fear for one's safety as a constraint for women engaging in walking tourism, Valentine (1989) has provided a very insightful explanation of its generation and reinforcement in her article about geography of fear. In essence, Valentine claims that fear for safety and feeling at risk in public space is ingrained in women from a young age by messages of family, society and media. In particular, are socialized in public space with the constant warning of avoiding certain places in certain times of the day as dangerous, which creates in their minds the false notion that danger for violence is limited in public space, while data has shown that they are mainly at risk by someone they know and at home. Nevertheless, Valentine introduced that, besides the images

created by media, family and society about public space, feeling at risk at certain places is for a major part based on experience, as well; negative experiences in public space lead to the creation of an association among the experience per se and the type of place where they have happened (often degraded and/or desolated places). Thus, the notion that "dangerous places" and "dangerous time" do exist is reinforced in women's minds, who find themselves confined in a "safety" sphere, the boundaries of which they avoid to cross to preserve their safety (Valentine, 1989).

More particularly, in the case of tourism, fear for safety is exaggerated in a way, as the place visited is usually completely new to the tourists. According to Valentine (1989), the perception of women on safety is strictly dependent from their knowledge not only of the location itself, but also of the social context and the cues included in it. This means that, when in an unfamiliar environment that does not allow predictions about safety, women project preconceived images about the respective type of place, according to their individual map of places they fear for their safety, a map created by their own experiences and external information. In that context, statements such as the following prove exactly this point: "*The point is the place where you are, if you are in Italy on a small island (as I did this year), you have nothing to fear, if you are a woman and alone. Instead, there have been situations abroad that walking alone (and sometimes even in couple) you don't feel comfortable because you fear for your safety.*"

As mentioned before, feelings of fear, vulnerability and being at risk led the participants to adopt safeguarding strategies in order to reassure their safety, sacrificing often the satisfaction they enjoy by engaging in walking tourism. The main safeguarding strategies included avoiding "unsafe" spatio-temporal options or choices regarding the walking trip (e.g., clothing and overnight stay), as well as going on a walking trip in the company of a group or male identifying individuals. Similar findings were demonstrated in the articles of Wilson and Little (2008b) where geography of women's fear was explored with respect to solo female traveling. These strategies could be considered as interlinked, as many referred to the fact that being in the company of more people or their male partner offered them safety, in a way that they would not have to think or experience constraints as the ones mentioned above. However, when this precondition was not held true, many mentioned that they would have avoided making certain decisions, especially regarding time and space.

Valentine (1989) makes an interesting comment on the latter observation supporting that feelings of fear and vulnerability inhibit women's independent mobility in public space, by taking

away their confidence to move around alone and, thus, rendering them dependent from male company, so that they can enjoy "freedom" in their movements. However, relying on male company for safe mobility, women end up using a very limited space, at very specific points in time, without even realizing, as perfectly captured in W6's words: "*I decided to do this path with my boyfriend, so my choices were not affected by the fact that I was a woman.*". At the same time, male identifying individuals use space unrestrictedly, appropriating it and, hence, leaving a restricted spatial part where women feel safe to move alone. This creates a never-ending cycle of women feeling unsafe in public space, while male spatial dominance is reinforced. At this point it is worth highlighting the adoption of safeguarding strategies that show that women try to go on trips alone and independent despite the perceptions created to them, such as carrying a pepper spray with them when going on a solo walking trip. Nonetheless, women often seem to not realize that they are indeed adopting such strategies, especially when it comes to avoidance of making "unsafe" choices; they rather take for granted that certain destinations, activities or times should be avoided (Valentine, 1989).

As explained before, engaging in such defensive tactics individuals identifying as women are forced into a constrained occupation of space. This has been conceptualized as "relative freedom" by Wilson & Little (2008a), in the sense that access and the opportunity to enjoy leisure for women seems to always be relative to gender and social structures that indicate how they should move in space "as women"; thus, they can only enjoy a "relative escape" from everyday life. This means that women are deprived from the experience of tourism space as an "heterotopia", defined by Foucault as a space outside of the everyday life that allows for self-development, interaction and resistance to prevailing discourses (Wearing & Wearing, 1996). For Valentine (1989), the designated space that women occupy is "a spatial expression of patriarchy", a way in which patriarchy is perpetuated through the geography of fear that has been both imposed and experienced by women, creating a vicious cycle among feeling at risk (often due to fear of male violence), avoiding leaving the safety sphere, being dependent on male company to experience freedom in choices and appropriation of public space by individuals identifying as men, which leaves limited space for women to occupy and feel safe in.

Overall, the data of the current thesis have shed light to some important aspects of the walking tourism experience in Italy with respect to gender, by collecting both quantitative and qualitative data, reaching, thus, diverse aspects of the walking tourism setting. Walking tourism as a

flourishing form of tourism in the country seems to allow space for both gender categories included in the current survey, male and female. However, space seems to be experienced as more restricted by female identifying individuals, due to constraints related to their gender identity, with the most important of them fear for safety. Such constraints were shown to lead to the adoption of safeguarding strategies that mainly involve the avoidance of "dangerous" practices, that often lead to a designated space in walking tourism for women to enjoy. Thus, walking tourism space in Italy, as experienced by the participants of the discussed survey, can be considered gendered, as an extension of public space. However, safeguarding strategies are also an indicator that women are actively negotiating access and participation to walking tourism, despite the constraints confronted, as also proven by their eager participation in it. Hence, it could be stated that it is more their level of satisfaction that is taken away due to their status as women in a gendered space, than participation itself.

The above discourse is made not with the intention of victimizing individuals identifying as women, but with the aim of ameliorating their walking experience in tourism. However, this should not be necessarily introduced by the tourism industry, as tourism experience can easily lose its authenticity, if managed too closely (Wilson & Little, 2008a). A wiser strategy would be to develop a system that would allow female identifying individuals to get both informed and supported with regards to the challenges and constraints that could be faced during a walking trip. This could be developed in a local level, by creating easily accessible structures, that women know they can refer to before or during their trip. The upper goal of such a system would be to eliminate the reasons that could hold women back from going on a trip or reduce the level of enjoyment. The locality of such structures would help to create trust to the walkers, as local insights on what could be challenging in the respective local space would be provided.

The findings of the current study could, also, illuminate the ways that awareness of gender should be integrated in local development practices in Italy. In particular, the findings discussed here highlight how walking tourism, a form of tourism closely connected to the paradigm of local development (see section **0.2 Walking (in)to change**), takes places in loci where social dynamics are informed by socio-cultural structures, such as gender. This has practical implications on what local development stands for, as the social aspect of the possibility to participate or have access to the happenings, seems to be restricted for female identifying individuals. Such issues should be resolved in two levels: national and regional. On a national level, research on regional policies on

tourism should be conducted and the ways they are generated (by whom and for whom) as they are often found to be "masculine" in their direction (Nyseth, 2016). For example, often efforts of gender mainstreaming in tourism are made through policies, which are generated by male identifying individuals, and view women as "in need" for support. Thus, the regional policies on tourism should be initiated equally by men, women and other gender categories, so bigger representation of interests can be achieved. Besides that, as far as Italy is concerned, since the "cammini" are distributed across all the different regions of the country, regional walking tourism networks and resource centers for the walking paths of each region should be created or reinforced, so as there is specialized and well-informed support offered for those who need it. Attention should be paid, though, to avoid the solidification of gender differences adopting an intersectional approach that takes into consideration the interlinkages among gender, race, disabilities etc.

Nonetheless, the current thesis is relatively limited in its capacity to generalize its findings to walking tourist space across Italy. First of all, the sample is not so much representative of the population, as a non-probability sampling process rather than a random one was followed. This means that the current findings represent a particular sample of people being interested into walking tourism in Italy, having access to Internet and being able to handle social media (as they were approached through Facebook). Besides that, the number of female and male identifying participants was not balanced in the current study, with the number of female ones outreaching the male; this might have restricted the reliability of the quantitative data generated. Additional research with a more representative and balanced to gender sample should be conducted for cross validation of the results. With regards to the qualitative part, it is possible that women outnumbering men might have generated one-sided results; hence, a study focusing on the experience of men with regards to walking tourism could shed some light to what holds true. Additionally, due to the lack of qualitative data on walking in the context of tourism, as only a small percentage of the participants answered to the relevant question, the results cannot provide a general image of walking in tourist settings in Italy. Hence, it would be fruitful to examine more in depth this unexplored area, by introducing face-to-face, in-depth interviews or focus groups that would allow for better understanding.

It is recognized that the current thesis and the survey were designed so that the experiences of Western individuals with a certain point of view, influenced by certain class and race structures, were analyzed. Since female identifying individuals do not comprise a homogeneous group, future

research should integrate more actively a post-colonial approach so that the intersection of the geography of fear with race and class is profoundly comprehended. In the same line, as in the current thesis individuals having access to walking tourism were asked to respond to the survey, complementary research should be conducted so as the constraints of those not engaging in walking trips could be revealed. On the other side of the same discourse, the ways that female identifying individuals manage to "hack" their way in the gendered tourism space should be looked upon, so another narrative could be produced, that of the female resisting strategies.

Bibliography

Agovino, M., Casaccia, M., Garofalo, A., & Marchesano, K. (2017). Tourism and disability in Italy. Limits and opportunities. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, *23*(2017), 58–67. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2017.05.001

Almahmood, M., Scharnhorst, E., Carstensen, T. A., Jørgensen, G., & Schulze, O. (2017). Mapping the gendered city: investigating the socio-cultural influence on the practice of walking and the meaning of walkscapes among young Saudi adults in Riyadh. *Journal of Urban Design*, *22*(2), 229–248. https://doi.org/10.1080/13574809.2016.1273742

Andreola, F., & Azzurra, M. (2021). Sex & the City. Fra autodeterminazione di genere e governo della città. *Tracce Urbane*, *9*(Jugno), 117–144. https://doi.org/10.13133/2532-6562/17369

Baltar, F., & Brunet, I. (2012). Social research 2.0: Virtual snowball sampling method using Facebook. *Internet Research*, *22*(1), 57–74. https://doi.org/10.1108/10662241211199960

Beebeejaun, Y. (2009). Making safer places: Gender and the right to the city. *Security Journal*, *22*(3), 219–229. https://doi.org/10.1057/sj.2009.4

Berdychevsky, L., Gibson, H., & Poria, Y. (2013). Women's Sexual Behavior In Tourism: Loosening The Bridle. *Annals of Tourism Research*, *42*, 65–85. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2013.01.006

Bettcher, T. M. (2017). Trans Feminism: Recent Philosophical Developments. *Philosophy Compass*, *12*(11). https://doi.org/10.1111/phc3.12438

Bhutta, C. B. (2012). Not by the Book: Facebook as a Sampling Frame. *Sociological Methods and Research*, *40*(1), 57–88. https://doi.org/10.1177/0049124112440795

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Qualitative Research in Psychology Using thematic analysis in psychology Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *3*(2), 77–101.

http://www.tandfonline.com/action/journalInformation?journalCode=uqrp20%5Cnhttp://www.tandfonline.com/action/journalInformation?journalCode=uqrp20

Brohman, J. (1996). New directions in tourism for Third World development. *Annals of Tourism Research*, *23*(1), 48–70. https://doi.org/10.1016/0160-7383(95)00043-7

Brown, L., de Coteau, D., & Lavrushkina, N. (2020). Taking a walk: The female tourist experience. *Tourist Studies*, *20*(3), 354–370. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468797620930036

Brown, L., & Osman, H. (2017). The female tourist experience in Egypt as an Islamic destination.

Annals of Tourism Research, *63*, 12–22. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2016.12.005

Butler, J. (1993). *Bodies that matter*. Routledge.

Čapo, J. (2016). The Security-scape and the (In)Visibility of Refugees: Managing Refugee Flow through Croatia. *Migration and Ethnic Themes*, *31*(3), 387–406. https://doi.org/10.11567/met.31.3.3

Coffey, W. J., & Polese, M. (1985). Local Development: Conceptual Bases and Policy Implications. *Regional Studies*, *19*(2), 85–93. https://doi.org/10.1080/09595238500185101

Crawford, D. W., & Godbey, G. (1987). Reconceptualizing barriers to family leisure. *Leisure Sciences*, *9*(2), 119–127. https://doi.org/10.1080/01490408709512151

Darwin Holmes, A. G. (2020). Researcher Positionality - A Consideration of Its Influence and Place in Qualitative Research - A New Researcher Guide. *Shanlax International Journal of Education*, *8*(4), 1–10. https://doi.org/10.34293/education.v8i4.3232

Davies, N. (2016). Who walks, where and why? Practitioners' observations and perspectives on recreational walkers at UK tourist destinations. *Annals of Leisure Research*, *13*, 1–31.

Delclòs-Alió, X., Rodríguez, D. A., Medina, C., Miranda, J. J., Ávila-Palencia, I., Targa, F., Moran, M. R., Sarmiento, O. L., & Quistberg, D. A. (2021). Walking for transportation in large Latin American cities: walking-only trips and total walking events and their sociodemographic correlates. *Transport Reviews*, *0*(0), 1–22. https://doi.org/10.1080/01441647.2021.1966552

Delphy, C. (1993). Rethinking Sex and Gender. *Women's Studies International Forum*, *16*(1), 1–9. https://doi.org/10.1044/leader.IN1.23022018.4

England, K. V. L. (1994). Getting personal: Reflexivity, positionality, and feminist research. *Professional Geographer*, *46*(1), 80–89. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0033-0124.1994.00080.x

Farkic, J., Peric, D., Lesjak, M., & Petelin, M. (2015). Urban walking: Perspectives of locals and tourists. *Geographica Pannonica*, *19*(4), 212–222. https://doi.org/10.5937/GeoPan1504212F

Fistola, R., & La Rocca, R. A. (2018). Slow mobility and cultural tourism. Walking on historical paths. In *Smart Planning: Sustainability and Mobility in the Age of Change, Green Energy and Technology.* (pp. 301–322). https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-77682-8_18

Fricker, R. D. (2012). Sampling Methods for Web and E-mail Surveys. *The SAGE Handbook of Online Research Methods*, 195–216. https://doi.org/10.4135/9780857020055.n11

Giddy, J. K., & Hoogendoorn, G. (2018). Ethical concerns around inner city walking tours. *Urban*

Geography, *39*(9), 1293–1299. https://doi.org/10.1080/02723638.2018.1446884

Giovenco, S., De Cantis, S., Parroco, A. M., & Fernández Morales, A. (2018). Walking Tourism in Urban Destinations: Some Preliminary Results from a Survey in Malaga with GPD-based Technologies. *10th International Conference on Islands Tourism*, 21–31.

Glapka, E. (2018). 'If you look at me like at a piece of meat, then that's a problem'–women in the center of the male gaze. Feminist Poststructuralist Discourse Analysis as a tool of critique. *Critical Discourse Studies*, *15*(1), 87–103. https://doi.org/10.1080/17405904.2017.1390480

Gross, E., Günther, I., & Schipper, Y. (2018). Women are walking and waiting for water: The time value of public water supply. *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, *66*(3), 489–517. https://doi.org/10.1086/696531

Hannam, K., Butler, G., Witte, A., & Zuev, D. (2021). Tourist's mobilities: Walking, cycling, driving and waiting. *Tourist Studies*, *21*(1), 57–69. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468797621992931

Jick, T. D. (2016). Mixing Qualitative and Quantitative Methods : Triangulation in Action Authors (s): Todd D . Jick Source : Administrative Science Quarterly , Vol . 24 , No . 4 , Qualitative Methodology (Dec ., Published by : Sage Publications , Inc . on behalf of the J. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *24*(4), 602–611.

Johnson, J. L., & Repta, R. (2012). Sex and gender. In *ASHA Leader*. https://doi.org/10.1044/leader.IN1.23022018.4

Kanellopoulou, D. (2018). Walking the public: re(visiting) Athens's historical centre. *International Journal of Tourism Cities*, *4*(3), 298–315. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJTC-12-2017-0084

Kato, K., & Progano, R. N. (2017). Spiritual (walking) tourism as a foundation for sustainable destination development: Kumano-kodo pilgrimage, Wakayama, Japan. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, *24*(2017), 243–251. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2017.07.017

Kavaliauskaite, N. (2018). *(His) -story about the Dutch Golden Age (His) -story about the Dutch Golden Age*.

Koyama, E. (2003). Transfeminist Manifesto. *Catching a Wave: Reclaiming Feminism for the Twenty-First Century*, 244–259.

Männistö-Funk, T. (2021). The gender of walking: Female pedestrians in street photographs 1890-1989. *Urban History*, *48*(2), 227–247. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0963926819000981

Marshall, G. (2005). The purpose, design and administration of a questionnaire for data collection. *Radiography*, *11*(2), 131–136. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.radi.2004.09.002

Massey, D. (1994). *Space, place, and gender*.

McNamara, K. E., & Prideaux, B. (2010). A typology of solo independent women travellers. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, *12*(3), 253–264. https://doi.org/10.1002/jtr.751

Michael, M. (2000). These Boots are Made for Walking...: Mundane Technology, the Body and Human-Environment Relations. *Body & Society*, *6*(3–4), 107–126.

Middleton, J. (2010). Sense and the city: Exploring the embodied geographies of urban walking. *Social and Cultural Geography*, *11*(6), 575–596. https://doi.org/10.1080/14649365.2010.497913

Middleton, J. (2018). The socialities of everyday urban walking and the 'right to the city.' *Urban Studies*, *55*(2), 296–315. https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098016649325

Munson, E. (2002). Walking on the periphery: Gender and the discourse of modernization. *Journal of Social History*, *36*(1). https://doi.org/10.1353/jsh.2002.0100

Nyseth, T. (2016). Place reinvention at the Northern rim. In *Place Reinvention* (pp. 1-14). Routledge.

OECD. (2001). *Best Practices in Local Development, Local Economic and Employment Development (LEED)*. *OECD Publishing*, 1–128.

Olsen, W. (2004). Triangulation in social research. *Developments in Sociology*, 1–30.

Paechter, C. (2016). Masculine femininities/feminine masculinities : power, identities and gender. *Gender and Education*, *18*(3), 253–263.

Pieterse, J. N. (2000). After Post-Development. *Third World Quarterly*, *21*(2), 175–191.

Pollard, T. M., & Wagnild, J. M. (2017). Gender differences in walking (for leisure, transport and in total) across adult life: a systematic review. *BMC public health*, *17*(1), 1-11.

Rabbiosi, C. (2021). Performing a walking holiday: Routing, immersing and co-dwelling. *Tourist Studies*, *00*(0), 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468797621998177

Ram, Y., & Hall, C. M. (2018). Walking tourism in cities: introducing the special issue. *International Journal of Tourism Cities*, *4*(3), 281–284. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJTC-09-2018-098

Sandelowski, M. (2000). Focus on research methods: Combining qualitative and quantitative sampling, data collection, and analysis techniques in mixed-method studies. *Research in*

Nursing and Health, *23*(3), 246–255. https://doi.org/10.1002/1098-240x(200006)23:3<246::aid-nur9>3.0.co;2-h

Scriven, R. (2021). A 'new' walking pilgrimage: performance and meaning on the North Wales Pilgrim's Way. *Landscape Research*, *46*(1), 64–76. https://doi.org/10.1080/01426397.2020.1829574

Sidaway, J. D. (2007a). Enclave space: A new metageography of development? *Area*, *39*(3), 331–339. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-4762.2007.00757.x

Sidaway, J. D. (2007b). Spaces of postdevelopment. *Progress in Human Geography*, *31*(3), 345–361. https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132507077405

Simeoni, F., & De Crescenzo, V. (2019). Walking Tourism : Opportunities and Threats for Sustainable Development . the Case of the 'Va' Sentiero' Project. *22nd International Conference*, 541–554.

Springgay, S., & Truman, S. E. (2018). Walking Methodologies in a More-than-Human World: WalkingLab. In *Walking Methodologies in a more-than-human World: WalkingLab*.

Springgay, Stephanie, & Truman, S. E. (2019a). Walking in / as Publics : Editors Introduction. *Journal of Public Pedagogies*, *4*, 1–12.

Stryker, S., & Bettcher, T. M. (2016). Trans/Feminisms. *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly*, *3*(1–2), 5–14. https://doi.org/10.1215/23289252-3334127

Tonelli, L. (2014). *Un approccio di genere al turismo: Viaggiatrici, turiste, imprenditrici*.

Truman, S. E., & Springgay, S. (2019). Queer Walking Tours and the affective contours of place. *Cultural Geographies*, *26*(4), 527–534. https://doi.org/10.1177/1474474019842888

Ujang, N., & Muslim, Z. (2014). Walkability and Attachment to Tourism Places in the City of Kuala Lumpur,Malaysia. *Athens Journal of Tourism*, *2*(1), 53–65. https://doi.org/10.30958/ajt.2-1-4

UNWTO. (2019). *Walking Tourism - Promoting Regional Development*.

Valentine, G. (1989). The geography of women' s fear. *Area*, *21*(4), 385–390.

Walkowitz, J. (1998). Going Public : Shopping , Street Harassment , and Streetwalking in Late Victorian London Author (s): Judith R . Walkowitz Published by : University of California Press Stable. *Representations*, *62*(Spring, 1998), 1–30. URL : http://www.jstor.org/stable/2902937

Wearing, S. L., & Foley, C. (2017). Understanding the tourist experience of cities. *Annals of*

Tourism Research, *65*, 97–107. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2017.05.007

Wilson, E., & Little, D. E. (2008a). A "Relative Escape"? The Impact of Constraints on Women
Who Travel Solo. *Tourism Review International*, *9*(2), 155–175.
https://doi.org/10.3727/154427205774791672

Wilson, E., & Little, D. E. (2008b). The solo female travel experience: Exploring the "geography
of women's fear." *Current Issues in Tourism*, *11*(2), 167–186.
https://doi.org/10.2167/cit342.0

Yuill, O. (2012). Feminism as a theoretical perspective for research in midwifery. *British
Journal of Midwifery*, *20*(1), 36–40. https://doi.org/10.12968/bjom.2012.20.1.36

Webliography

Council of Ministers 2020, *Decreto del presidente del consiglio dei ministri 3 novembre
2020*, viewed 1 February 2022, http://www.salute.gov.it.

Mari, L. (2021, April 16). Covid, Draghi: "Dal 26 aprile torna la zona gialla. Riaprono scuole e
attività all'aperto. Ma per non tornare indietro bisogna rispettare le regole". *La Repubblica*.
Retrieved from https://www.repubblica.it/

Pellegrinando (2015). *Disabili in cammino*. http://www.pellegrinando.it/partire/santiago-per-tutti-
2/

RStudio Team. (2022). *RStudio: Integrated Development Environment for R*. Boston, MA.
Retrieved from http://www.rstudio.com/

Statista Research Department (2022, May 12). *Tourism in Italian cities - statistics & facts*.
Statista. https://www.statista.com/topics/5972/tourism-in-italian-cities/#dossierKeyfigures

Terre di Mezzo Editore (2021). Italia, Paese di Cammini. https://www.terre.it/cammini-percorsi/i-
dati-dei-cammini/italia-paese-di-cammini-ecco-tutti-i-numeri-del-2020/

Terre di Mezzo Editore (2022). Italia, Paese di Cammini. https://www.terre.it/cammini-percorsi/i-
dati-dei-cammini/italia-paese-di-cammini-ecco-tutti-i-numeri-del-2021/

Figure 1

Age range of participants
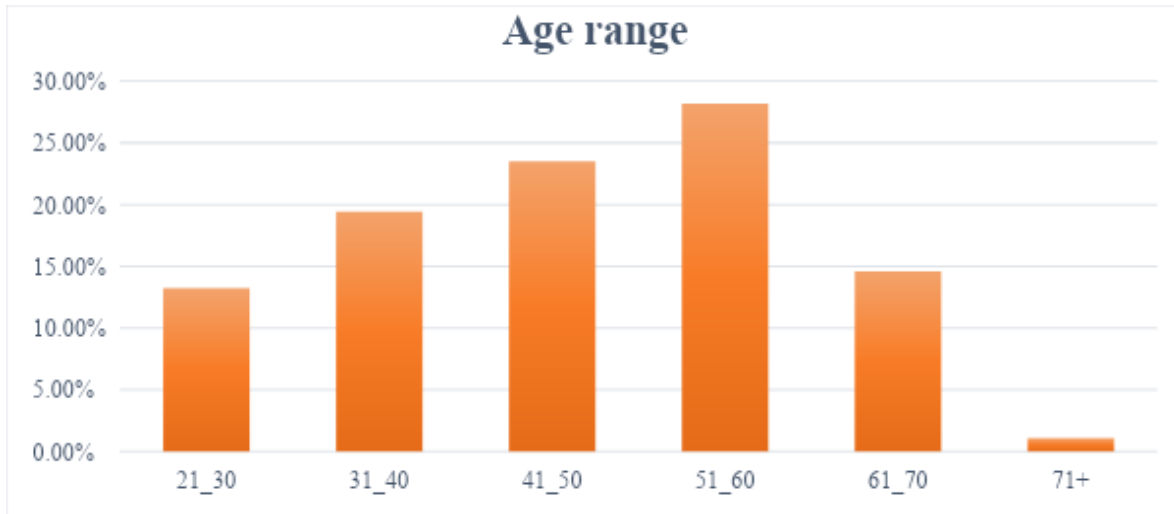
Figure 2

Walking trip destinations
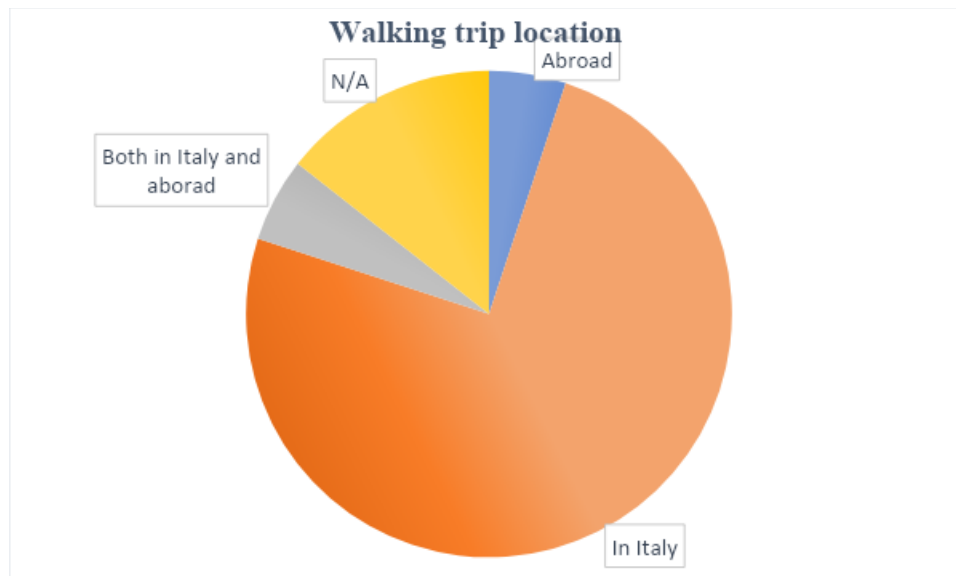
Table 1

Educational level of participants

Grade of education	
Licenza media	6,98%
Diploma	30,70%
Laurea triennale	16,28%
Laurea magistrale	20,47%
Post laurea	24,19%
Preferirei non dirlo	1,40%
Total	**100,00%**

Table 2

Region of origin of the participants

Regions	
Basilicata	0,47%
Campania	1,86%
Emilia Romagna	7,44%
Friuli Venezia Giulia	0,93%
Lazio	5,58%
Liguria	1,86%
Lombardia	38,60%
Marche	0,47%
Piemonte	7,44%
Puglia	4,65%
Sardegna	4,19%
Sicilia	0,93%
Toscana	5,12%
Trentino Alto Adige	3,72%
Umbria	0,93%
Valle d' Aosta	0,47%
Veneto	9,30%
N/A	6,05%
Total	**100,00%**

Table 3

Frequency of engagement in walking trips

Walking trip frequency	Female	Male	Total
Once a year	5,99%	2,08%	5,12%
Approx. 2-3 times a year	19,16%	33,33%	22,33%
Once a month	13,77%	22,92%	15,81%

More than once a month	32,93%	14,58%	28,84%
Once a week	28,14%	27,08%	27,91%
Total	**100,00%**	**100,00%**	**100,00%**

Table 4

Frequency with which walking paths of Italy were chosen

Walking paths	
Cammini di San Francesco	5,58%
Cammino dei Briganti	1,86%
Cammino di Oropa	0,93%
Cammino Materano Via Peuceta	6,51%
Cammino nelle Terre mutate	0,47%
Via_degli_Dei	4,19%
Via_Francigena	9,77%
Via_Romea_Germanica	0,47%
other	17,67%
Total	100,00%

Table 5

"I decided to travel alone/in company taking into account my gender identity."

Influence of gender identity on company	**Female**	**Male**	**Total**
Strongly agree	11,98%	6,25%	10,70%
Agree	5,39%	0,00%	4,19%
Neither agree nor disagree	10,18%	4,17%	8,84%
Disagree	48,50%	56,25%	50,23%
Strongly disagree	13,77%	4,17%	11,63%
N/A	10,18%	29,17%	14,42%
Total	**100,00%**	**100,00%**	**100,00%**

Table 6

"The gender identity I identify with has influenced the choice of the hours of the day during which I would walk."

Influence of gender identity on the choice of walking hours	Female	Male	Total
Strongly agree	8,04%	2,03%	6,64%
Agree	2,20%	2,53%	2,28%
Neither agree nor disagree	6,50%	12,36%	7,87%
Disagree	49,52%	55,86%	50,99%
Strongly disagree	20,91%	2,29%	16,57%
N/A	12,83%	24,93%	15,65%
Total	100,00%	100,00%	100,00%

Table 7

"My gender identity has influenced the choice of the trail/path that I followed."

Influence of gender identity on walking path chosen	Female	Male	Total
Strongly agree	8,98%	4,17%	7,91%
Agree	2,99%	0,00%	2,33%
Neither agree nor disagree	7,19%	8,33%	7,44%
Disagree	52,69%	50,00%	52,09%
Strongly disagree	17,96%	8,33%	15,81%
N/A	10,18%	29,17%	14,42%
Total	100,00%	100,00%	100,00%

Table 8

"My gender identity influenced the choice of places I would explore on foot."

Influence of gender identity on places visited	Female	Male	Total
Strongly agree	12,57%	6,25%	11,16%
Agree	2,40%	0,00%	1,86%
Neither agree nor disagree	5,99%	4,17%	5,58%
Disagree	52,10%	54,17%	52,56%
Strongly disagree	14,97%	4,17%	12,56%
N/A	11,98%	31,25%	16,28%
Total	**100,00%**	**100,00%**	**100,00%**

Table 9

"The gender identity I identify with has influenced my decision to walk alone or with others."

Influence of gender identity on company	Female	Male	Total
Strongly agree	11,38%	8,33%	10,70%
Agree	5,39%	2,08%	4,65%
Neither agree nor disagree	8,98%	2,08%	7,44%
Disagree	42,51%	54,17%	45,12%
Strongly disagree	19,76%	2,08%	15,81%
N/A	11,98%	31,25%	16,28%
Total	**100,00%**	**100,00%**	**100,00%**

Table 10

"My gender identity influenced my decision on the way I would get dressed."

Influence of gender identity on clothing	Female	Male	Total
Strongly agree	13,12%	2,55%	10,66%
Agree	2,41%	4,80%	2,97%
Neither agree nor disagree	6,74%	11,27%	7,80%
Disagree	47,33%	48,58%	47,62%
Strongly disagree	17,81%	3,07%	14,38%
N/A	12,58%	29,73%	16,58%
Total	**100,00%**	**100,00%**	**100,00%**

Annex 3

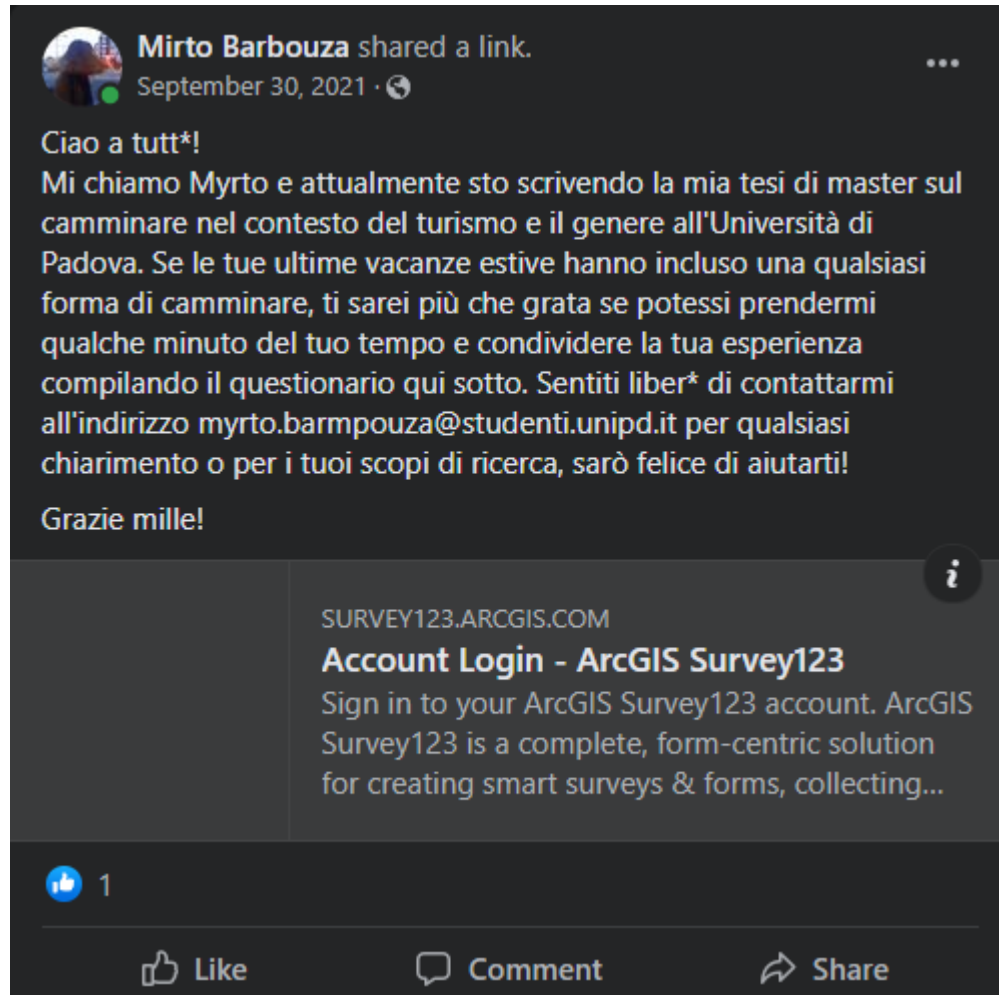| Facebook groups	Link
Cammini Italiani	https://www.facebook.com/groups/311572157182152 1
camminando sulla Via Francigena	https://www.facebook.com/groups/144970545516291/
Donne in cammino Toscana	https://www.facebook.com/groups/602741873535411/
Quelli sempre InCammino	https://www.facebook.com/groups/sempreincammino/
Donne in Cammino Emilia Romagna	https://www.facebook.com/groups/397725821008610/
Correre e camminare in compagnia a Milano e dintorni	https://www.facebook.com/groups/1004438763073459/
Cammino Irpino Aqua Augusta	https://www.facebook.com/groups/www.socialistidipace.altervis ta.org/
Ragazze in gamba	https://www.facebook.com/groups/ragazzeingamba/
CAMMINI ITALIANI IN RETE	https://www.facebook.com/groups/841497145963900/
Cammini d'Italia | Community	https://www.facebook.com/groups/593032504480733/
Camminare In Toscana	https://www.facebook.com/groups/leviedelchianti/
Cammino Inglese	https://www.facebook.com/groups/132037250732267/
Cammino con la F.I.C.S.	https://www.facebook.com/groups/880180266109285/
Cammino degli Dei	https://www.facebook.com/groups/63165103477370/
Donne in cammino Veneto	https://www.facebook.com/groups/donneincamminoveneto/
Cammino Materano Community	https://www.facebook.com/groups/camminomaterano/
Cerco compagni di cammino	https://www.facebook.com/groups/729367630900676
Donne in cammino Lazio	https://www.facebook.com/groups/2125252374233006/

Donne in cammino Roma	https://www.facebook.com/groups/donneincamminoroma/
Community - Cammino del Salento	https://www.facebook.com/groups/camminodelsalento/
iocammino..escursioni, trekking, bike, cammini	https://www.facebook.com/groups/721448162104592/
Trekking ed escursioni in Puglia e dintorni	https://www.facebook.com/groups/Trekking.escursioni.puglia/

Annex 4

Facebook post for online survey distribution on Facebook groups relevant to walking tourism in Italy.

Mirto Barbouza shared a link.
September 30, 2021 · 🌐

Ciao a tutt*!
Mi chiamo Myrto e attualmente sto scrivendo la mia tesi di master sul camminare nel contesto del turismo e il genere all'Università di Padova. Se le tue ultime vacanze estive hanno incluso una qualsiasi forma di camminare, ti sarei più che grata se potessi prendermi qualche minuto del tuo tempo e condividere la tua esperienza compilando il questionario qui sotto. Sentiti liber* di contattarmi all'indirizzo myrto.barmpouza@studenti.unipd.it per qualsiasi chiarimento o per i tuoi scopi di ricerca, sarò felice di aiutarti!

Grazie mille!

SURVEY123.ARCGIS.COM
Account Login - ArcGIS Survey123
Sign in to your ArcGIS Survey123 account. ArcGIS Survey123 is a complete, form-centric solution for creating smart surveys & forms, collecting...

👍 1

👍 Like   💬 Comment   ➤ Share