

**Wellness Tourism: An Application of Positive Psychological Theory to Overall
Quality of Life**

by

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Abstract

This goal of this dissertation was to ascertain the characteristics of and relationships between wellness, positive psychological well-being, transformative experiences and overall quality of life within a tourism context. In order to accomplish this, three independent articles addressed eight research questions using both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. The first article explored holistic wellness through the qualitative analysis of 1216 TripAdvisor reviews. Utilizing the netnographic method in combination with exploratory inductive framework analysis, four dimensions of wellness were revealed: body, mind, spirit and environment (Dunn 1959). Results from the study were diverse, highlighting both barriers and pathways towards wellness. Findings revealed the possibility of wellness tourism to provide impactful and memorable wellness travel experiences.

Article two explored a priori dimensions of psychological well-being within the yoga tourism context. Deductive thematic analysis was the method used to analyze 12 semi-structured interview transcripts. Findings revealed the existence of seven a priori dimensions of positive psychological well-being and their association with transformative experiences. Evidence from this study indicated that yoga tourism does in fact provide the environment for yoga tourists to experience positive psychological well-being while travelling as well as after their trip has concluded. Results suggest that yoga tourism has the ability to transform the lives of participants on varying levels. Future research exploring the presence of these findings within a larger wellness tourism context is warranted.

Finally, the third article aimed to quantitatively examine the relationships between tourists' positive psychological well-being and overall satisfaction with quality of life (QOL). Quantitative surveys were distributed using the online platform, Amazon Mechanical Turk resulting in 862 useable surveys. This article developed and tested a new model of positive psychological well-being and quality of life measures. Confirmatory factor analysis, structural equation modeling and importance performance analysis were employed in this study. Results partially supported hypotheses suggesting that further research is needed to fully validate the proposed model. Limitations, implications and future research is discussed for each individual study.

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List of Abbreviations

QOL	Quality of Life
WB	Well-being
GW	Global Wellness Institute
PERMA	Positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, accomplishments
SA	Self acceptance
G	Growth
NE	Negative emotions
H	Health
SEM	Structural equation modeling
CFA	Confirmatory factor analysis
IPA	Importance performance analysis
CR	Composite reliability
AVE	Average variance explained
MSV	Maximum shared squared variance
GOF	Goodness-of-fit
GFI	Goodness-of-fit index
RMSEA	Root mean square error of approximation
SRMR	Standardized root mean residual
TLI	Tucker Lewis Index

CFI Comparative fit index
AGFI Adjusted goodness-of-fit index

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The travel and tourism industry has long been considered to provide an opportunity for rejuvenation, relaxation and leisure. Therefore, travelling to escape the ordinary, hectic, high stressed pace of life is nothing new to the field of tourism research. In fact, it has been decades since the development and rapid growth of mass tourism destinations catered towards attracting those visitors looking to relax in the sand, sun, and sea (Knowles & Curtis, 1999). Further to this, travel and tourism has also been considered an avenue for people to pursue and experience higher levels of life satisfaction (Rubenstein, 1980). In fact, it has been argued that there is an “underlying assumption in our society that tourism is a mentally and physically healthy pursuit to follow in our leisure time” (Hobson & Dietrich, 1995, p. 23). Life satisfaction has been investigated through studies that investigated the contribution of traditional forms of travel and tourism to overall quality of life (QOL) (Dolnicar, Yanamandram & Cliff, 2012; Filep, 2014; Filep & Deery, 2010; Neal, Sirgy, & Uysal, 1999; Uysal, Sirgy, Woo & Kim, 2016; Neal, Uysal & Sirgy, 2007). From a wellness tourism perspective, there is ample support for the notion that vacations can enhance an individual’s well being in addition to contributing to their psychological health (Voigt, Howat & Brown, 2010). Voigt et al. (2010) argued that vacations not only play a significant role in lifting one’s mood and providing a time for pleasure, fun and relaxation but that they may also lead to “personal growth, self-development, dramatic life changes or the discovery of one’s true self” (p. 542). Unfortunately, while vacations do have the

ability to lead to these positive effects, the reality of today's travel environment reveals situations that can actually decrease your level of overall health. According to the Global Wellness Institute (GWI), the combination of airport hassle along with the interference of exercise routines, over indulging in food, alcohol and sun exposure often times leave travelers needing another vacation after their vacation (GWI, 2013).

As a result of these ever-present issues with travel, 'wellness tourism', a rapidly growing alternative niche market has begun to re-emerge. Travelling for wellness can be traced back hundred of years. For example, Japanese travellers have sought out hot springs for healing purposes for over 1500 years (GWI, 2013). Additionally, people have been travelling since ancient times to the Dead Sea for its therapeutic properties, while the Romans have journeyed to baths and hot springs for their healthier environments and spiritual practices (GWI, 2013). However, as mentioned earlier, vacations today produce a much different, more taxing result for travellers. Furthermore other overarching issues driving the wellness tourism market include an increasingly chaotic life environment, high stress work conditions and a decrease in social and community structures. Coupled with an increasing longing to simply slow down and focus on the deeper meaning, the growth of wellness tourism addresses a clear need amongst travelers (Douglas, 2001; Pollock & Williams, 2000; Lehto, Brown, Chen, & Morrison, 2006; Smith & Puczko, 2008).

Currently, wellness tourism accounts for \$438.6 billion (14%) of all domestic and international tourism expenditures, and is expected to grow by more than 9% per year, which is almost 50% faster than overall global tourism (GWI, 2015). Further to this, reports reveal that international wellness tourists spend 65% more than the traditional tourist, while domestic wellness tourists spend 150% more than traditional tourists (GWI, 2013). The available evidence

suggests that this niche tourism market is here to stay. Accompanying the rapid growth of this market, academic research has much room for growth and development. Some researchers have argued that wellness tourism can directly impact tourists' well-being (Smith & Kelly, 2006; Smith & Puczko, 2008). In contrast, research linking traditional tourism to well-being reveals some negative impacts associated with travel and particularly physical health (Hunter-Jones, 2003). However, there is no evidence to suggest that wellness tourism has more of a positive impact on well-being than traditional forms of tourism. Therefore, there is insufficient evidence to draw any firm conclusions with regards to the relationship between well-being and different forms of tourism. Consequently, this dissertation aims to understand both the benefits of wellness tourism as well as those of traditional tourism, as they relate to the constructs of positive psychological well-being.

Statement of the Problem

Wellness tourism is a rapidly growing market with much room for future development and potential. As individuals continue to become more aware and concerned with the stressors of daily life, the importance of tending to, and maintaining health and wellness will be a priority for many who have ignored it in the past. On the basis of the evidence currently available, it seems fair to suggest that much of the current research on wellness tourism revolves around surface issues; namely motivations, socio-demographic characteristics and market demand. Severely underserved within the literature is understanding the overall experiences of wellness tourists from a positive psychological perspective, more specifically how wellness tourism effects overall quality of life (QOL). Additionally, an understanding of these wellness tourism experiences as they compare to traditional forms of tourism has not yet been studied. Although wellness tourism

is growing rapidly, is it truly ‘better’ than traditional forms of tourism as it relates to overall well-being? Links made between tourism, positive psychology and QOL will help to expose the importance of well-being as it related to travel, as well as the possible positive effects it may on satisfaction with overall quality of life. These linkages hold the possibility to create a paradigm shift in the way people think about and approach travel in the future.

Purpose of the Study & Study Objectives

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine the underlying positive psychological dimensions of wellness tourism as well as traditional forms of tourism as they relate to overall quality of life. This dissertation is organized within the framework of three publishable academic articles. The purpose and objective of each article is described below:

Article 1: The purpose of this article was to conduct an exploratory content analysis of online travel reviews utilizing a netnographic approach. Specifically, this article explored and revealed the underlying dimensions of the wellness tourism experience as they relate to or detract from overall well-being. Additionally, this article reported on the current characteristics of the wellness travel market.

Article 2: The purpose of this article was to conduct a qualitative study exploring the positive psychological benefits of yoga retreat participants. This study used the PERMA model of well-being to guide its research design. Specifically, this study examined the factors than contribute to motivating patrons to choose a yoga retreat experience. This study uncovered and explored the mechanism by which the yoga retreat experience acts as a functional means to guest well-being & transformation. Lastly, this study investigated the catalysts that initiate transformational experiences on yoga retreats.

Article 3: The purpose of this article was to conduct a confirmatory study to test the a priori factor structure of the PERMA model within the tourism context. Specifically, the aim of this study was to compare and contrast the differences between well-being and QOL as a result of wellness tourism vs. traditional forms of tourism. Using the outcomes revealed, this research will predict which psychological factors play a role in determining higher levels of satisfaction with overall QOL.

Research Questions

To guide the direction of each study, the following research questions were proposed:

Article 1

1. What are the current market characteristics of wellness tourism?
2. What are the underlying dimensions of the wellness tourism experience contribute to/create barriers towards holistic well-being?

Article 2

1. What are the motivating factors that contribute to choosing a yoga retreat experience?
2. What are the mechanisms by which the yoga retreat experience acts as a functional means to guest well-being and transformation?
3. What are the catalysts that initiate transformational experiences while travelling for yoga?

Article 3

1. What positive psychological benefits derived from wellness tourism/regular tourism predict an increased satisfaction with overall quality of life?

2. Does length of stay play a moderating role in determining how wellness tourism contributes to overall quality of life?
3. What differences exist amongst the types of travelers (wellness vs. non) as it relates to positive psychological wellbeing?

Definitions of Terms

Wellness - Wellness refers to a holistic state of health involving the body mind and spirit as well as ones interaction with their environment. Wellness is not static, but a continuously evolving and ongoing phenomenon affecting daily living (Adapted from Dunn, 1959 ; Travis, 1984).

Wellness Tourism –Wellness tourism encompasses all travels, whether primary or secondary in nature taken with the purpose of maintaining and/or improving wellbeing on a physical, psychological or spiritual level (GWI, 2015).

Traditional Tourism – Traditional tourism (in the context of this dissertation) encompasses all travels for either business or leisure reasons that do not include any participation in wellness activities.

Wellness Tourism Company – A wellness tourism company is any business that caters to delivering experiential services to enhance the well-being of travelling tourists on a physical, psychological or spiritual level.

Wellness traveler/tourist – Any tourist who travels with wellness as their sole or secondary purpose for trip and destination choice.

Primary purpose wellness travelers – Primary purpose wellness travelers are those tourists who travel with wellness as their sole purpose for trip and destination choice are refereed

Secondary purpose wellness travelers – Secondary purpose wellness travelers are those tourists who seek to maintain wellness while taking any type of trip (p. ii).

Yoga traveler/tourist – Any tourist who travels with yoga as their sole purpose for trip and destination choice.

Hedonic Well-being – Hedonic well-being is constructed from the idea that increased pleasure and decreased pain lead to increased overall happiness. Hedonic well-being is also referred to as subjective well-being which is a term used to symbolize ‘the good life’. It is suggested that happiness can be achieved through subjective well-being when an individual experiences positive affect and a high satisfaction with life (Carruthers & Hood, 2004).

Eudemonic Well-being – Based on the idea of self-actualization from Maslow’s Hierarchy of needs, eudemonic well-being delineates that happiness can be achieved based on experiences with life meaning, challenges and opportunities for growth.

Quality of life – One’s personal report of life satisfaction, including levels of gratification and contentment with regards to their life experiences (Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011)

Transformational experiences – Experiences described by tourists as immersive, peak or optimal and having a significant and lasting effect on their cognitive, emotional, somatic and unconscious selves.

The PERMA Model of Well-being

Positive Emotion - Positive emotions are an essential part of our well-being. Happy people look back on the past with gladness; look into the future with hope; and they enjoy and cherish the present (Seligman, 2011).

Engagement - When we focus on doing the things we truly enjoy and care about, we can begin to engage completely with the present moment and enter the state of being known as “flow” (Seligman, 2011).

Relationships - Everyone needs someone. We enhance our well-being and share it with others by building strong relationships with the people around us – family, friends, coworkers, neighbors (Seligman, 2011).

Meaning - We are at our best when we dedicate time to something greater than ourselves. This might be religious faith, community work, family, politics, a charity, a professional or creative goal (Seligman, 2011).

Accomplishment - Everyone needs to win sometimes. To achieve well-being and happiness, we must be able to look back on our lives with a sense of accomplishment: ‘I did it and I did it well’ (Seligman, 2011).

Wellness Tourism Domains

Health Wellness Travelers – The health domain of wellness tourism refers to those tourists seeking predominantly physical benefits travelling for activities such as integrative medicine, diagnostics, health check-ups and chronic pain management (GWI, 2013).

Spa and Beauty Wellness Travelers - The spa and beauty domain of wellness tourism refers to those tourists seeking both physical and mental benefits through activities such as massage, body treatments and facials. Spa and beauty tourists are patrons of spas, salons, baths and springs, healthy hotels etc. (GWI, 2013).

Mind-body Wellness Travelers - The mind-body domain of wellness tourism refers to those tourists seeking predominantly mental and spiritual benefits participating in activities such

as yoga, meditation, tai-chi and qigong. Visitors in this category will patronize places such as yoga studios and martial arts studios (GWI, 2013).

Spiritual & Connection Wellness Travelers - The spiritual and connection domain of wellness tourism refers to those tourists predominantly seeking spiritual and emotional benefits from activities done involving prayer, volunteering, time with family and friends as well as time in solace. Spiritual and connection travelers will visit yoga retreats, spiritual retreats and ashrams (GWI, 2013).

Personal Growth Wellness Travelers - The personal growth domain of wellness tourism refers to those tourists predominantly seeking emotional benefits from life coaching, stress reduction seminars, reading, music and arts. These tourists will mostly visit lifestyle and wellness retreats (GWI, 2013).

Eco and Adventure Wellness Travelers - The eco and adventure domain refers to those tourists predominantly seeking environmental benefits from wellness tourism activities such as hiking, biking, taking walks and nature visits. These tourists will visit parks, wildlife sanctuaries and nature preserves (GWI, 2013).

Fitness Wellness Travelers - The fitness domain refers to those tourists predominantly seeking physical and social benefits from wellness tourism activities such as gym visits, fitness classes, stretching and Pilates (GWI, 2013).

Healthy Eating Wellness Travelers - The healthy eating domain refers to those tourists predominantly seeking social and physical benefits from wellness tourism activities such as culinary food tours, weight management clinics and nutritional workshops. These tourists will visit organic and natural restaurants as well as health food stores (GWI, 2013).

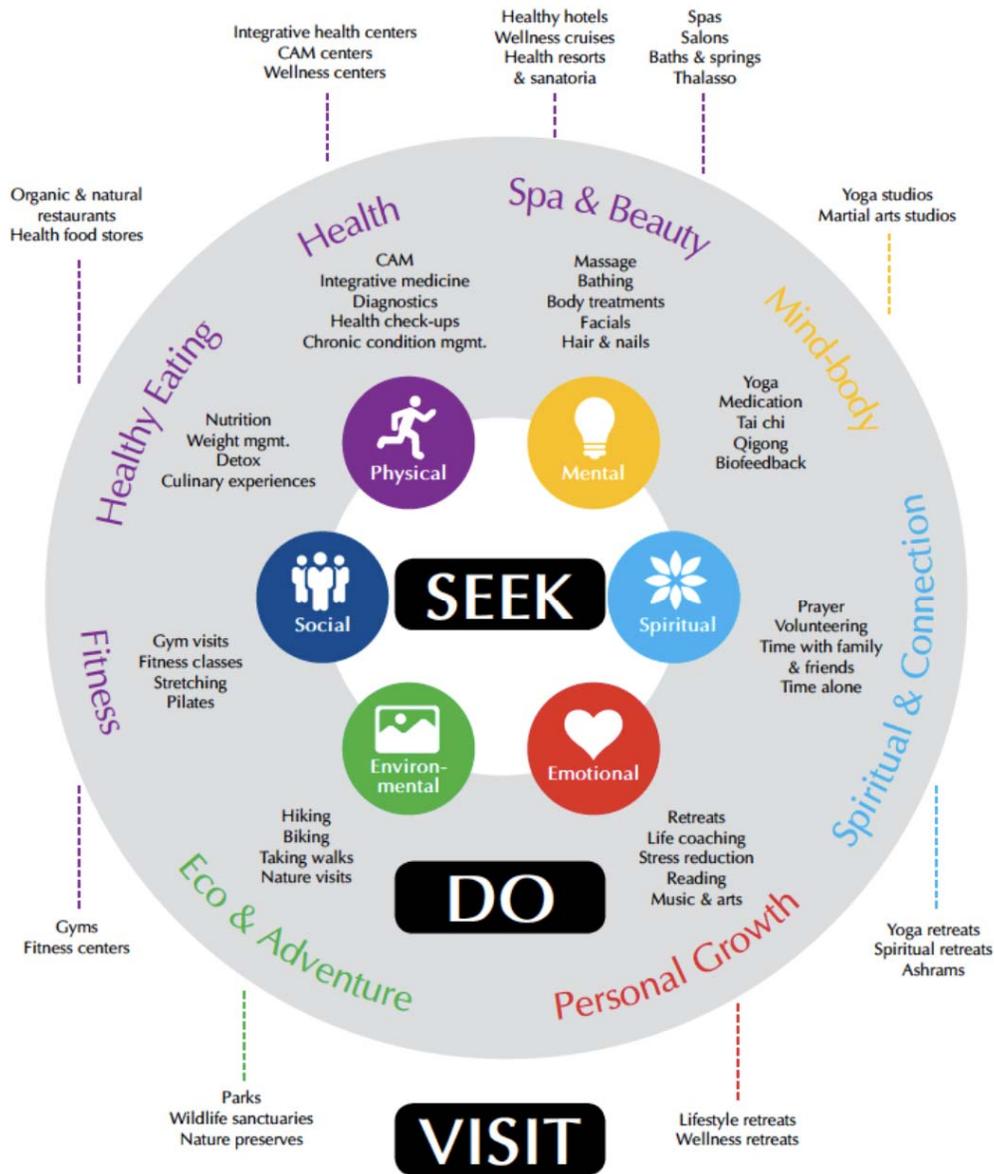


Figure 1.1 'What Wellness Travelers Seek'. Adopted from (GWI, 2013 p. 26.)

Significance of the study

Despite the rapid expansion of wellness tourism, research in this area is still relatively scarce. This dissertation sheds light on an array of positive psychological outcomes resultant from wellness tourism experiences. Additionally, this dissertation provides extensive information

about the characteristics of wellness tourism, the experiences of wellness tourists and the positive psychological outcomes of both wellness tourism and traditional forms of tourism. Links made between wellness tourism, positive psychology and QOL will help to expose the importance of well-being travel and the positive effects it can have on other ones overall quality of life.

Additionally, this dissertation revealed that wellness tourism not only breeds well-being, but that it can also lead to transformational life changing experiences. Results from this dissertation open numerous doors for tourism research to cross-over into more psychological based theories, thus expanding the breadth and depth of our research culture. If disseminated properly, the results from this research hold the possibility to create a paradigm shift in the way people think about and approach travel.

Information pertaining to length of stay, the monetary value of wellness travel, activities of wellness travelers and optimal characteristics of a wellness tourism destination are very important to travel and tourism organizations wishing to break into this rapidly growing market. The results of this dissertation also provide applicable information to travel agents wishing to market and sell this niche tourism market to travel buyers. Longitudinally speaking, this research could be the start to developing wellness travel as a way of life for communities, companies and individuals instead of just another option for a holiday.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter presents a synopsis of the pertinent literature to support the basis of each study included in this dissertation. Information with regards to the research questions, theoretical background and research model will be presented in this chapter. More specifically, literature about wellness tourism, yoga tourism, quality of life and positive psychology theory will be reviewed. The scope and size of the wellness tourism market, along with specifics about the theoretical background of the PERMA model of well-being and transformative experiences in tourism will be reviewed. Please take note that this chapter is an extension of the literature reviews provided for each individual paper, therefore, information discussed is of similar nature and may appear more than once in this dissertation.

Wellness Tourism

Prior to beginning a discussion about wellness tourism, the concept of *wellness* must first be discussed. Dr. Halbert Dunn originally introduced the notion of wellness in 1959. At this time, Dr. Dunn presented a new state of health that not only involved the physical, but also consisted of the mind, the spirit and the environment. Dunn (1959) referred to this state as ‘high-level wellness’. Subsequent to Dunn’s (1959) work, Travis (1984) emphasized wellness from a more dynamic perspective defining it as “a state of being, an attitude and an ongoing process, not

a static state which we reach and never have to consider again... there are degrees of wellness as there are degrees of illness". In 2001, Mueller and Kaufmann expanded this interpretation of wellness to include the harmonization of body, mind and spirit together with "self responsibility, physical fitness/beauty care, healthy nutrition/diet, relaxation/mediation, mental activity/education and environmental sensitivity/social contact" (p. 6). Further to this, Adams (2003) argued that wellness consists of three main principles (1) wellness is multi-dimensional (2) wellness is about balance and (3) wellness is relative, subjective and perceptual. The final principle argued by Adams (2003) presents an interesting perspective suggesting that, due to the personal and subjective nature of wellness, it cannot necessarily be measured on the same scale from person to person. Lastly, from the current industry perspective, the National Wellness Institute defines wellness as "an active process through which people become aware of, and make choices toward, a more successful existence" (National Wellness Institute, 2016). Based on the different definitions and perspectives, it can be concluded that there is some agreement on the fact that wellness is multi-dimensional, dynamic and subjective and can be achieved by the intertwining the best aspects of our body, mind, spirit and environment to lead a healthy lifestyle from to day-to-day.

A relationship between wellness and tourism can be traced back hundreds of years to travellers seeking out healing hot springs or tourists making their way to the Dead Sea to experience its therapeutic properties (GWI, 2013). Traditionally speaking, it can be argued that tourism has the potential to have a profound impact on the physical relaxation and rejuvenation aspect of wellness. However, it is debatable whether or not such an ephemeral phenomenon can make a long term impact on ones holistic state of well-being. Nevertheless, a combination of todays hectic, fast paced, high stressed work and living environments along with recent trends

toward healthier balanced lifestyles have led to the reemergence of an age-old trend that has now been coined as the niche market ‘wellness tourism’.

Definitions of wellness tourism have cultivated some discussion amongst researchers. Varying expressions including “wellness tourism”, “health tourism”, “yoga tourism”, “holistic tourism”, “medical tourism” and “spa tourism” have been used interchangeably across a broad range of research articles describing different ideas. While wellness tourism does have synergy with many of these niche tourism segments, the terms do imply significantly different experiences. Nevertheless, the foregoing discussion implies that wellness tourism is in fact a subset housed under the larger umbrella of health tourism, which also encompasses medical tourism (Chen, Prebensen, & Huan, 2008; GWI, 2013; Medina-Muñoz & Medina-Muñoz, 2013; Voigt, Brown & Howat, 2011). Wellness tourism generally consists of people who are already healthy, and proactively seeking experiences to maintain or improve their well-being (GWI, 2013). On the other hand, medical tourism is largely reactive, consisting of people who are suffering from illness and motivated to travel by a desire to receive treatment of higher quality at a lower cost (GWI, 2013).

Similar to wellness, definitions of wellness tourism are varying. Defined by Olsen (2011), wellness tourism is considered “a holistic mode of travel that integrates a quest for physical health, beauty, or longevity and/or a heightening of consciousness or spiritual awareness and a connection with community, nature or the divine mystery” (p.11). More specifically, Voigt et al. (2011) as “the sum of all the relationships resulting from a journey by people whose motive, in whole or in part, is to maintain or promote their health and well-being, and who stay at least one night at a facility that is specifically designed to enable and enhance people’s physical, psychological, spiritual and/or social well-being” (p. 17). Lastly, and perhaps most

simply, The Global Wellness Tourism Economy Report (GWTE, 2013) defined wellness tourism as “travel associated with the pursuit of maintaining or enhancing one’s personal wellbeing” (GWTE, 2013, p. ii). Regardless of definition, wellness travelers can be categorized into two distinct groups, primary wellness travelers and secondary wellness travelers. Primary wellness travelers referring to those people who travel with the specific purpose of maintaining or enhancing their well-being, and secondary wellness travelers referring to those people who travel for different reasons (business or leisure), but seek to participate in activities to maintain or enhance their well-being while traveling.

Literature linking tourism to health and wellness dates back to 1986 when Lounsbury and Hoopes conducted a pre-test/post-test vacation questionnaire that substantiated significant relationships between vacation satisfaction, relaxation, escapism, marriage and family, food and lodging and level of educational attainment. However, studies specific to wellness tourism have only been found as early as 2001. Within this small body of literature, the majority of studies focused on motivations to travel for wellness (Chen et al., 2008; Hun Kim & Batra, 2009; Lehto et al., 2006; Mak, Wong & Chang, 2009; Medina-Muñoz & Medina-Muñoz, 2013) profiling the characteristics of wellness tourists (Hun Kim, & Batra, 2009; Lehto et al., 2006; Voigt et al., 2011) and market demand analysis (Heung & Kucukusta, 2013; Laing et al., 2010; Mueller & Kaufmann, 2001; Smith & Kelly, 2006). From a motivational perspective, Lehto et al. (2006) explored the factors leading tourists to travel exclusively for yoga, which is a subset of wellness tourism. Conceptualizing this study on the basis of consumer involvement theory, this study found significant motivations ranging from ‘seeking spirituality’ to ‘controlling negative emotions’. In 2011, Voigt et al. explored the benefits amongst three types of wellness travelers: beauty spa, lifestyle resort and spiritual retreat visitors. Using both qualitative and quantitative

data collection methods, the authors developed a ‘benefits of wellness tourism scale’ (BWTS) pointing towards six distinct factors including transcendence, physical health and appearance, escape and relaxation, important others and novelty, reestablishing self esteem and indulgence. More recently, Medina-Muñoz, & Medina-Muñoz (2013) conducted a three part exploratory study of wellness tourists focused on socio-demographic characteristics, wellness tourist motivations and the demand for wellness tourism on the island of Gran Canaria, Spain. Most notable to this study were the significant differences amid tourists with various socio-demographic characteristics in regards to the types of wellness centers and treatments they were patronizing. Additionally, the authors found a significant connection between wellness behaviors at home and wellness behavior exhibited on vacation, thus providing a basis for wellness tourism marketers to glean important insight into this growing market.

In 2010, Voigt, Howat and Brown extended the literature beyond the surface by exploring specific outcomes of the wellness tourism experience. Rooted in the field of ‘positive psychology’, this study explored whether wellness tourism experiences should be classified as hedonic, tracing ones actions back to the pursuit of ‘happiness’ or eudaimonic, actions based on deeper meaning, personal growth and one’s values (Voigt et al., 2010). Using qualitative deductive thematic analysis, the study revealed that beauty spa visitors exhibit purely hedonic outcomes while spiritual retreat visitors display purely eudaimonic outcomes leaving lifestyle resort visitors predominantly eudaimonic with some hedonic outcomes as a by product. The authors of this study made it clear that this research is only the beginning to understanding the complex and diverse connection between tourism and well-being. As individuals continue to become more aware and concerned with the stressors of daily life, the importance of tending to and maintaining health and wellness will be a priority for many who have ignored it in the past.

On the basis of the evidence currently available, it seems fair to suggest that much of the current research on wellness tourism revolves around surface issues; namely motivations, socio-demographic characteristics and market demand. Severely underserved within the literature is understanding the overall experiences of wellness tourists as they relate to overall quality of life and life satisfaction. Therefore, this dissertation builds on the work done by Voigt et al. (2010) as one basis from which to explore the underlying dimensions of the wellness tourism experience.

Wellness Tourism: Size & Scope of the Market

The most recent statistics available for the wellness tourism market are from the 2013 Global Wellness Tourism Economy Report. At this time, wellness tourism represented 6% (\$524.4 million) of all domestic and international trips. Additionally, wellness tourism accounted for 14% or \$438.6 billion of all domestic and international tourism expenditures and was expected to grow 9% annual until the year 2017. Economically speaking, wellness tourism supplies approximately 11.7 million direct jobs resulting in a \$1.3 trillion global economic impact. On average, an international wellness tourist spends 65% more than traditional tourists, while domestic wellness tourists spend 150% more. Wellness tourism is most popular in developed countries on the continents of North America, Europe and wealthier Asian countries. However, wellness tourism is growing in some developing nations across Latin America and Africa with projected growth rates on the rise. It is important to note, that, within the global tourism industry, wellness tourism shares synergy with many other niche tourism markets. This is represented in the figure below adopted by the Global Wellness Institute (2013).

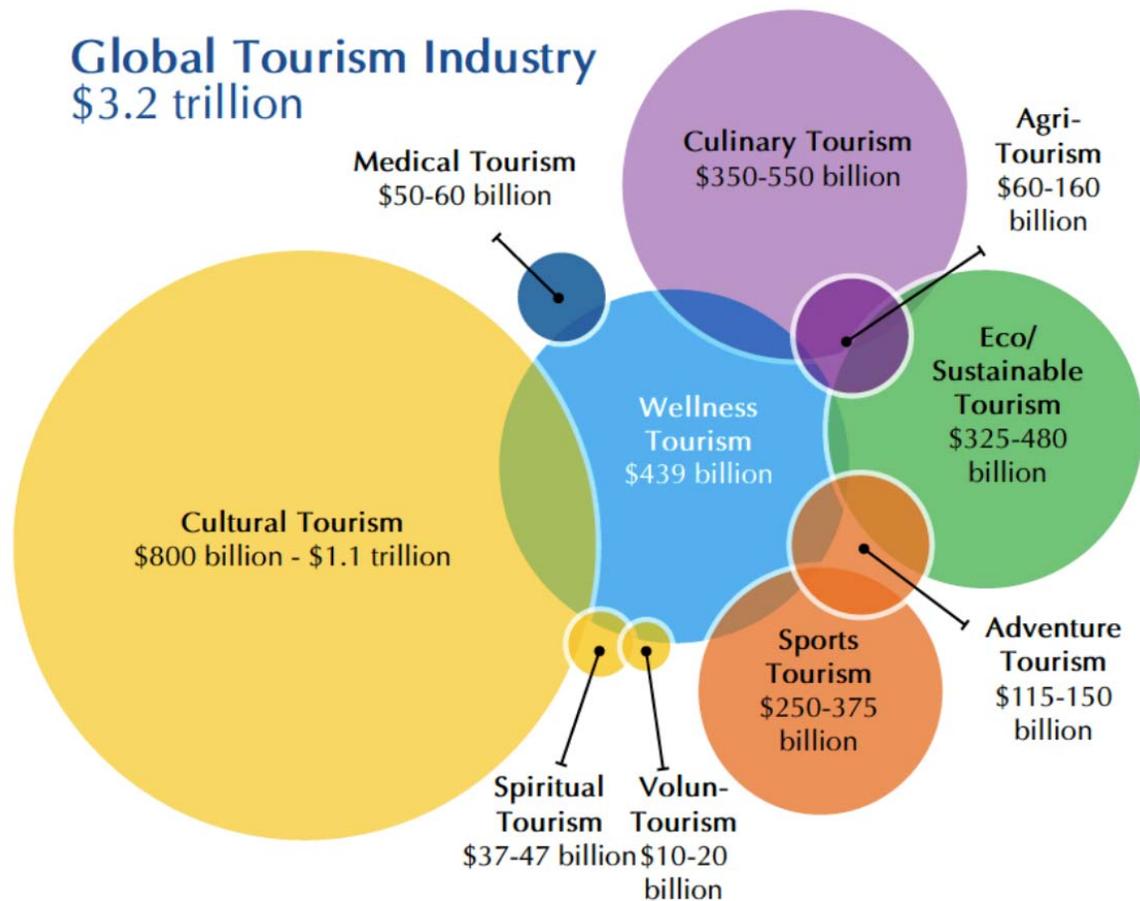


Figure 2.1. Wellness Tourism Synergy with other High Growth Niche Segments

Within the wellness tourism sector, there are many sub-categories of wellness tourism. Of these categories, spa and beauty tourism is the core group accounting for 41% of all wellness tourism expenditures. Other categories include health, mind-body, spiritual and connection, personal growth, eco and adventure, fitness and healthy eating. These are described in more detail in Chapter 1.

Yoga Tourism

Yoga, rooted in the culture of ancient India, is a practice that has been performed for thousands of years. Yoga is one of six central systems of Indian thought known as *darsana*, which means “to see” (Desikachar, 1999). Yoga is translated to mean union of the body, mind and spirit (Desikachar, 1999) and is thought to provide stress relief through pranayama (breathing techniques), asana (physical postures) and meditation. As an activity, the practice of yoga has been rapidly growing in recent years across the western world. For example, according to the Yoga in America Study (2016), yoga has grown from a niche activity to one that now involves 36.7 million Americans (up from 20.4 million in 2012) and supports a \$27 billion industry with forecasts for continued growth (Clarke, Black, Stussman, Barnes, & Nahin, 2015). Yoga practitioners are now beginning to seek more wellness focused vacations, through the holistic pursuit of yoga while on vacation. As a result, a variety of yoga vacations have begun to develop, including yoga retreats, seminars, conferences and festivals. While current statistics report that only 8% of yoga practitioners have attended a yoga retreat in the past, 62% report interest in attending a retreat in the near future. These statistics, along with the growing popularity of the yoga practice, suggest much room for growth and development in this industry. As tourism researchers and practitioners, it is important that we begin to understand this unique travel group and their experiences.

Considered a subset of wellness tourism, yoga tourism can be categorized under the min-body subset of wellness travel. Described as “tourism which focuses on the union of body, mind and spirit, but which is essentially a religious” (Smith & Kelly, 2006, p. 17), yoga tourism encompasses holistic practices and therapies that cater to improving physical fitness, nutrition education, preventative medicinal practices, coping with personal issues and reducing stress

(Lehto, Brown, Chen & Morrison, 2006). According to the Huffington Post (2016), due to its rich history and culture of yoga, India is currently the fastest growing wellness tourism destination with a projected annual growth rate of 22%. Today, yoga practices, retreats and seminars are often offered in conjunction with other wellness travel experiences. The concept of the yoga retreat can be defined as a program where the main theme and purpose for travel is “the yoga practice, around which the total travel experience is planned and developed” (Lehto et. al., 2006, p. 27).

Although there is evidence of substantial growth within the yoga tourism market, very little research has been done in this area, leaving much room for further exploration. On the basis of consumer involvement theory, Lehto et. al. (2006) conducted a study to understand the motivations behind yoga travel. In conclusion, this study found significant motivations to travel for yoga including ‘seeking spirituality’, ‘enhancing mental well-being’, ‘enhancing physical condition’, and ‘controlling negative emotions’ (Lehto et. al., 2006). Based on the evidence currently available, the only other study done specifically on yoga tourism was that of Kumar (2015). This study was conceptual in nature and used secondary data to highlight the potential for yoga tourism as a unique offering of Indian tourism. While there has been very little academic research on yoga tourism, there has been some evaluation of yoga travel within online industry publications. Mind body green, an online wellness website offers motivations to travel for yoga including ‘improving your yoga practice’, gaining a new perspective’, ‘being in the right environment for meditation’, ‘relaxation’, ‘healthy eating’, ‘ridding of bad habits’ and ‘sharing experiences with like minded people’. Additionally, yoga.com shares potential benefits of going on a yoga retreat including ‘immersion’, ‘deep relaxation’, ‘progression in your yoga practice’, ‘examination of the self’, ‘connection with nature’ and ‘re-evaluating ones life’.

Moreover, Wellness Tourism Worldwide reports yoga and meditation topped the list of wellness travel trends for the year 2014. The current scarcity of research in this area is the basis for which paper two was developed.

Quality of Life Research on Tourism

Quality of life research can be dated back to the 1960's when the debate over the meaning of this term began. With over 100 definitions and models of QOL in existence, defining this concept has proven to be a difficult task (Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011). The main debate regarding QOL lies in whether it should be measured objectively or subjectively, uni-dimensionally or multi-dimensionally. Inherent to the objective line of thought is the judgment of an elite person or group who has identified specific standards that must be met in order to lead to ultimate satisfaction with life. Subjectively, individuals are the tool by which QOL is measured (Blishen & Atkinson, 1980). Uni-dimensionally, QOL is determined by a set of survey items developed to measure ones satisfaction with life as a whole. For example one of the items from Diener, Emmons, Larsen & Griffin's (1985) satisfaction with life scale reads "the conditions of my life are excellent". Contrarily, the multi-dimensional perspective measures QOL within numerous different life domains, for example social life, family life and work life (Uysal et. al.,2016). In the current study, QOL is understood from the subjective, uni-dimensional perspective and described broadly as one's personal report of life satisfaction, including levels of gratification and contentment with regards to their life experiences (Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011).

Research on QOL is evident across multiple disciplines including political science, sociology, economics, psychology and more recently tourism. Most recently, the relationship

between travel and quality of life has attracted significant attention from scholars in the field (Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011; Corvo, 2011; Filep & Deery, 2010; Gilbert & Abdullah, 2004; McCabe et. al., 2010). Nawijn, 2011; Neal et. al., 2007; Pols & Kroon, 2007; Smith & Kelly, 2006; Smith & Puczko, 2008). QOL studies in tourism can be identified from two perspectives, that of the host community and that of the tourist. In 2016, Uysal et al, conducted an extensive review of the literature revealing a fairly equal split between the two groups.

From the host community perspective, the majority of research revealed that tourism does have a significant influence on overall QOL (Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011; Kim, Uysal & Sirgy, 2012; Milman & Pizam, 1988; Woo, Kim & Uysal, 2014). As early as 1988, Milman and Pizam found that most residents in Central Florida considered tourism development to improve employment opportunities, income, and standard of living, overall tax revenue, and quality of life. More recently, in 2014, Woo et al examined residents from five different tourism destinations and discovered that, not only does tourism positive impact QOL, but that overall QOL is an effective predictor of support for further tourism development. Although the majority of studies on the host community do reveal significant relationships with QOL, some research did contradict these findings suggesting that tourism has no effect on overall QOL (Allen, Hafer, Long & Perdue, 1993; Carmichael, Peppard & Boudreau, 1996). In 1993, Allen et al found that although residents did see the significant positive effects of recreation on overall QOL, the effect of tourism development on QOL was perceived in a much more negative light. Further to this, Carmichael et al. (1996) revealed that residents perceived a decrease in QOL for three years after the development of casinos in their towns.

This dissertation operationalizes QOL from the perspective of the tourist. Similar to studies on the host community, research on QOL from the tourists' perspective also discovered

that vacations do increase overall QOL satisfaction the majority of the time (Uysal et. al., 2016). For example, in 1999, Neal et al. employed three subjective overall life satisfaction measures to reveal that tourism services (within the leisure domain) contributed to overall life satisfaction. Following this study, in 2007, the authors set out to further examine this model by testing the moderating effect of length of stay. Results indicated that overall life satisfaction is higher for those tourists who stay for longer periods of time (Neal et. al., 2007). More recently, Dolnicar et al., (2012) employed eight life domains (vacations, health, money, family, leisure, people, work and spiritual life) to investigate the contribution of vacations to tourists' quality of life. Results from this study revealed that vacations do in fact contribute to QOL, however, this happens at different levels for different people.

In contrast to these findings, some studies found that vacations do not significantly contribute to QOL (Kroesen & Handy, 2014; Michalko, Kiss, Kovacs & Sulyok, 2009; Milman, 1998; Nawijn et. al., 2010; Tarumi, Hagihara & Morimoto, 1998; Wei & Milman, 2002). For example, in 1998 Tarumi et al. investigated the effect of vacations on the health status of male white collar workers and found no significant relationship between vacations and psychological measures of health. In 2002, Wei and Milman set out to explore the interrelationship between senior travelers' participation in activities, overall satisfaction with travel experiences and their psychological well-being. While this study did find a significant relationship between activity participation and psychological well-being, no significant relationship was found between satisfaction with travel experiences and psychological well-being. Additionally, in 2009, Michalko et al. found that vacation experiences did not affect the overall QOL of Hungarian tourists. More recently, Kroesen & Handy (2014) discovered that, while holidays can increase short-term happiness, they are unable to enduringly raise tourist happiness.

While there have been numerous studies done regarding traveler vacation experience and QOL, there has only been one study that attempted to look at the link between wellness tourism and travelers' quality of life (Chen, 2007). Chen's (2007) study was published in the proceedings of the "*The First Hospitality and Leisure: Business Advances and Applied Research Conference*". Their study revealed that variables relating to intrinsic reward and treating dermatitis were the only two indicators that affected the overall QOL of wellness tourism patrons at resorts in Taiwan. Although the positive relationship between vacations and QOL seems evident, it is unclear as to whether or not QOL can be increased based on the specific type of tourism being experienced by the tourist. Therefore, this dissertation will operationalize QOL within the domains of wellness tourism and non-wellness tourism, in order to determine whether or not differences between these two groups exist.

Positive Psychological Theory

Positive psychology is the study of happiness. It is the scientific study of what makes life worth living. It is the study of how humans prosper in the face of adversity (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). The goal of positive psychology is to understand the complexity of human strength and virtue, determining what can lead to higher levels of overall life satisfaction and happiness. Some scholars credit Martin Seligman with the development of positive psychology, who, in 1998 chose this area as the theme for the American Psychological Association. However, Seligman has been criticized for not giving credit to the origins of positive psychology, "humanistic psychology" (Rich, 2001; Taylor, 2001). Going back to the origins of psychology, William James (1890) maintained that in order to gain a holistic perspective of the human being, one must also take into account the subjective experience of that

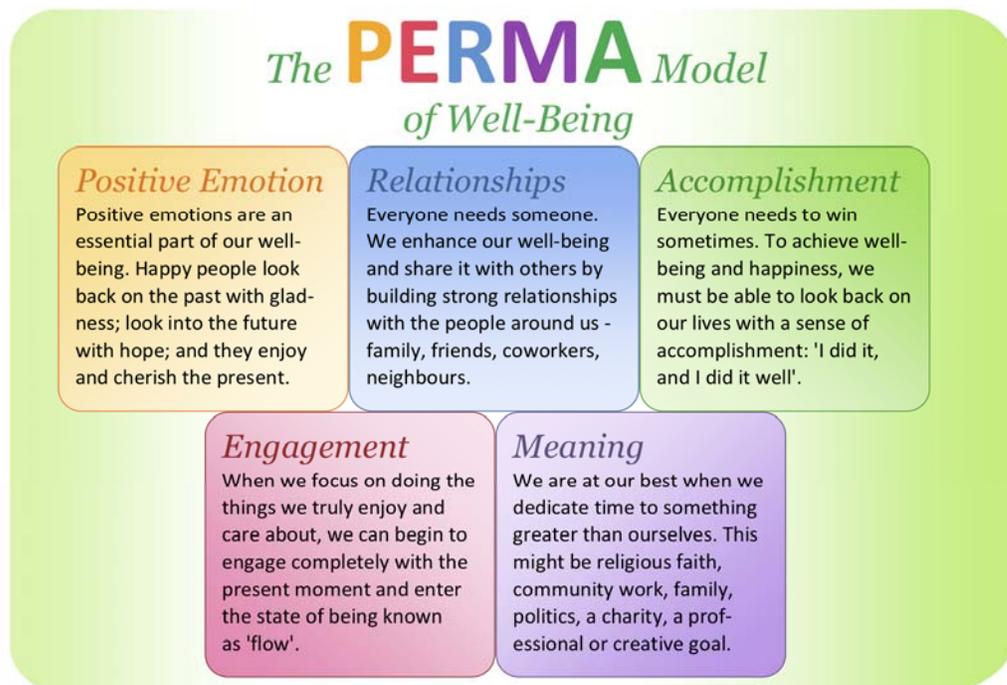
individual. Consequently, James is considered by some to be “America’s first positive psychologist” (Taylor, 2001, p.15). Later down the line, Maslow asserted that humanistic psychology should be driven by the study of healthy, creative individuals in an attempt to understand the lives of self-actualized persons (Moss, 2001). In fact, the term “positive psychology” first appeared in Maslow’s book on Motivation and Personality (1954), the title of which was, “Toward a Positive Psychology” (Maslow, 1954). In his book, he reflects on the notion that psychology had only been focusing on one side of human existence, this side being negative in nature. He wrote:

“The science of psychology has been far more successful on the negative than on the positive side; it has revealed to us much about man’s shortcomings, his illnesses, his sins, but little about his potentialities, his virtues, his achievable aspirations, or his full psychological height. It is as if psychology had voluntarily restricted itself to only half its rightful jurisdiction, and that the darker, meaner half” (Maslow, 1954, p. 354).

In his book, Maslow speaks of the beginnings of what we know today as positive psychology. However, Martin Seligman, along with his colleague Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi are credited as the modern fathers of positive psychology along with its efforts to scientifically explore human potential from the book, *Positive Psychology: An Introduction* (2000) (Seligman & Csikszentmihaly, 2000). In this original framework, Seligman and Csikszentmihaly (2000) describe positive psychology as having three pillars or dimensions, namely positive experience, positive traits, and positive institutions. Additionally, Seligman also denotes that a life well lived consists of the combination of three lives (1) pleasure and gratification (2) embodiment of strengths and virtues and (3) meaning and purpose. Though life experiences can fall into these different categories, fluency between the three are what result in optimal levels of happiness.

The PERMA Model of Well-Being

In 2011, Seligman developed The PERMA Model of well-being as a guide to help individuals find their path to flourishing. This model delineates the key domains, which need to be satisfied in order to achieve the highest level of well-being. Included in this model are the domains of positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning and accomplishment (Figure 1). According to the PERMA model, positive emotions refer to hedonic feelings of happiness while engagement refers to the psychological connection to different areas of life (e.g. work, organizations and other activities). Positive relationships refer to the feeling of being socially assimilated in ones environment, feeling support from a community and other social connections. Meaning refers to the abstract concept of belief in the value of ones life and connectedness to the greater universe. Accomplishment encompasses progress towards goals, thus leading to a sense of achievement in life. Seligman's model delineates that these five dimensions individually contribute to ones overall well-being, life satisfaction and happiness. Utilizing this framework assumes that individuals have the objective capacity to identify these dimensions within their own lives.



From Martin Seligman's *Flourish*, 2011

Figure 2.2. Martin Seligman’s PERMA Model of Well-Being. Adopted from Seligman, 2011

Research about the topic of happiness in tourism is long overdue. For decades tourism researchers have done work on the subjective value of holiday experiences, assuming that holidays bring happiness without actually attempting measurement of this happiness (Filep, 2012). A satisfying travel experience is not just one characterized by pleasure, but also by meaning and value found in travel activities and pursuits. Further to this, research has revealed that while vacationers report higher levels of happiness than non vacationers, these effects are often short lived dissolving shortly after the holiday ends (Nawijn et al., 2010). Happiness research can help to bridge the gap between tourism and health. According to The World Health Organization (WHO), depression will be the single biggest cause of ill health by the year 2020, (Lopez, Mathers, Ezzati, Jamison, & Murray, 2006), making it an opportune time to investigate

how such a strong global force like tourism could positively affect change within this rapidly growing phenomenon. Research on psychological well-being can be divided into two broad philosophical approaches:

1. *The hedonic view.* Hedonism refers to pleasure and comfort focusing on the pursuit of happiness by measuring immediate satisfaction
2. *The eudaimonic view.* Eudemonia focuses on meaning, ones values and personal growth thus having a more long term in depth view of happiness. Supporters of eudemonic well-being see that there is more to happiness than just pure pleasure with a focus on more long term happiness while those that support hedonic well-being place emphasis on present pleasures only.

Although positive psychological theories have been applied in the tourism context (Filep & Deery 2010; McCabe & Johnson, 2013; Nawijn, 2011; Pearce & Packer, 2013), there have been no empirical investigations using the PERMA model in tourism research to date. The majority of tourism happiness research has used subjective well-being theory (SWB) (Diener, 1985) to conceptualize and measure tourist happiness (Corvo, 2010; Gilbert & Abdullah, 2004). This theory supports the hedonic view of well-being, suggesting that happiness = life satisfaction and pleasure. However, Filep (2012) argued that while the theory is useful, it could not fully explain tourist happiness.

An important dimension of SWB is life satisfaction. In SWB, life satisfaction is usually captured through questions about ones overall life appreciation (Hagerty & Veenhoven, 2003), thus neglecting to pay individual attention to specific experiences. Life meaning has been defined as “the sense made of, and significance felt regarding, the nature of one’s being and existence” (Steger, Frazier, Oishi, & Kaler, 2006, p. 81). Measuring the longer term in depth

impact of a wellness tourism experience is the goal of this research, thus making SWB a poor fit. Additionally, it would not be possible to capture the eudemonic reflections of powerful tourist experiences through current SWB approaches (Diener, 2009). It is suggested that methods including narratives of perfect days, in-depth flow interviews, cognitive maps of ideal holidays, or focus groups where tourists can be asked to describe their memorable tourist events can provide a more in depth way to reveal more about tourist happiness than is currently possible through SWB (Filep & Deery, 2010).

While SWB does touch on some constructs that lead to ones overall happiness, its basic premise is somewhat shallow in depth mostly focusing on what makes people feel good, rather than the underlying meaning of an experience. Therefore, SWB can be considered inadequate for the holistic measurement of wellness tourism experiences (Jayawickreme et al., 2008). The PERMA model, which expands beyond the notions of SWB could be one way forward for positive psychological tourism research to gain a deeper understanding into the meaningful experiences of tourists. Unlike subjective well-being theory (Diener, 1994), The PERMA Model merges divergent viewpoints by incorporating both hedonic and eudemonic characteristics of well-being using objective and subjective measurement within one model. In order to measure well-being as a multidimensional construct in the context of wellness tourism, Seligman's (2011) model is proposed as a framework to assess these dimensions amongst wellness tourists.

This dissertation is designed to ascertain how the experiences of wellness tourists affect their overall quality of life. The PERMA model specifies five key life domains, which need to be tended to in order to achieve ones ultimate level of happiness. As mentioned earlier, this model identified both hedonic and eudemonic constructs enabling the model to get a holistic view of the wellness tourism experience. A search for whether or not, and to what extent these domains exist

within a wellness tourism setting is the overall goal this dissertation.

Transformative experiences through tourism

The importance of the ‘experience economy’ has seen rapid growth in recent years as more and more companies in the hospitality and tourism industry are focusing on crafting unforgettable experiences for their customers (Pine and Gilmore, 1998). No longer is it sufficient to simply offer defective free products and quality services, companies in today's environment must go above and beyond to differentiate themselves from competitors. Within the travel environment, it is argued that almost everything a “tourist goes through at a destination is an experience, be it behavioral or perceptual, cognitive or emotional, expressed or implied” (Oh, Fiore & Jeoung, 2007). p. 120).). A consumer experience is the “multidimensional takeaway impression or outcome, based on the consumer’s willingness and capacity to be affected and influenced by physical and/or human interaction dimensions and formed by people’s encounters with products, services, and businesses influencing consumption values (emotive and cognitive), satisfaction, and repeat patronage” (Walls et. al., 2011, p. 18). The root of transformative experiences can be traced back to Mezirow’s (1978) transformational learning theory. Mezirow described transformative learning as “ an enhanced level of awareness of the context of one’s beliefs and feelings and involves profound changes in self, changes in cognitive, emotional, somatic and unconscious dimensions” (Mezirow, 1978, p. 161, 177). Transformative experiences can be framed within the spectrum of ordinary to extraordinary experiences, described as immersive, peak and optimal (Walls et. al., 2011) leading to an outcome of perspective transformation (Mezirow, 2000). Travel and tourism is considered by many as an agent of

change, peace and international understanding that can lead to long-term perspective shifts and behavioral changes (Lean, 2009).

Although travel and tourism has been associated with personal transformation for many years now (Leed, 1991), research on transformative experiences within the wellness tourism context is limited. Within the wider field of travel and tourism, the term has been used to discuss the effects of travel on the destination (Andereck, Valentine, Knopf, & Vogt, 2005; Kim, Uysal, & Sirgy, 2013) as well as the impact of travel upon the traveler (Lean, 2009; Kim, Woo & Uysal, 2015). Additionally, transformational experience has been discussed in regards to environmental awareness (Beaumont, 2001), learning (Coghlan & Gooch, 2011), cross cultural understanding (Lyons, Hanley, Wearing, & Neil, 2012), spirituality (Willson, McIntosh, & Zahra, 2013) and volunteer tourism (Coghlan & Weiler, 2015). Within the wellness tourism literature, transformational experience has been discussed in regards to the benefits of wellness tourism (Voigt et. al., 2011) and retreat center experiences (Fu et. al., 2015). In 2011, Voigt et. al., conducted a quantitative study which revealed six benefits of wellness tourism namely transcendence, physical health and appearance, escapism and relaxation, important others and novelty, reestablishing self esteem and indulgence. More recently, Fu et. al., (2015), performed thematic analysis on a set of tripadvisor reviews about retreats in Thailand. Results from this study revealed four major themes of changes incurred as a result of Thai retreat experiences, bodily change, emotional change, attitudinal change and skill change (Fu et. al., 2015). In addition to these changes, Fu et. al. (2015) set forth a proposed framework to analyze the spectra of these changes (Fig. 2.3. & Table 2.1.) and suggest further inquiry utilizing this framework.

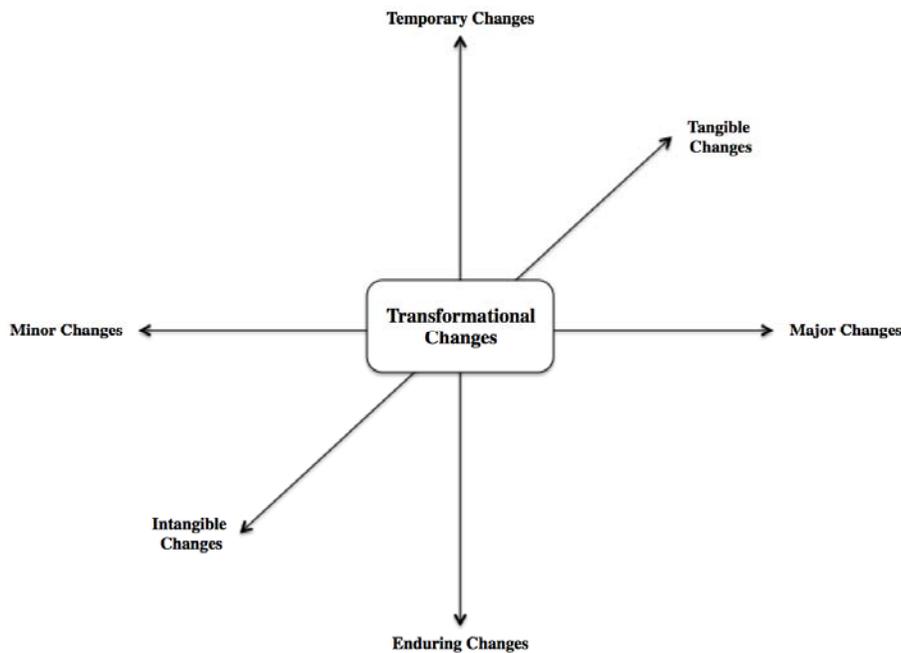


Figure 2.3. Spectra of transformative changes. Adopted by (Fu et. al., 2015).

Table 2.1. Descriptions of Transformational Changes. Adapted from Fu et. al. (2015)

Minor - Major Changes
This spectrum refers to the degree to which the change was considered significant on a scale from small changes to relatively profound changes (Fu et. al., 2015). Minor changes were considered to be small, specific and in reference to a particular moment in time. In opposition, major changes were regarded as more enlightening, affecting beliefs and attitudes without being limited to a specific behavior or skill.
Temporary - Enduring Changes
This spectrum of changes delineates between the degree to which an experience was considered permanent or ephemeral (Fu et. al., 2015). Temporary changes referred to those experiences most often stimulated by the environment and atmosphere a retreat provides, without reference to how long the changes may have lasted. On the other hand, enduring changes were indicated to affect ones lifestyle beyond the retreat experience.
Intangible - Tangible Changes
This spectrum concerns the palpability of changes (Fu et. al., 2015). For example, intangible changes described improvement in areas such as self-acceptance, spirituality and relationships with others. Tangible changes were seen as more concrete, for example accomplishing a concrete goal.

Transformative experiences in hospitality and tourism are extremely complex and multidimensional in nature leaving much room for understanding. While there has been some research done within the wellness tourism context, it is evident that further inquiry is necessary to gain a more complete understanding of these types of experiences. More specifically, academic research on transformative experiences within the context of yoga tourism is not apparent in the literature, but argued to provide the opportunity for reflection and personal transformation through meaningful experiences (Boswijk, Peelen, Olthof & Beddow, 2012). Utilizing the proposed framework developed by Fu et al., (2015), this dissertation aims to expand upon the current state of the literature on this topic with regards to yoga tourism.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter presents a complete description of the methodological procedures, including both qualitative and quantitative techniques used for each of the three papers included in this dissertation. Each individual article is described based on the objectives described in Chapter 1. Article 1 used qualitative data techniques including netnography and inductive framework analysis. Article 2 employed deductive thematic analysis to qualitative interview data. Article 3 applied positive psychological theory within the context of both traditional forms of tourism as well as wellness tourism. Specifically, article 3 used a quantitative survey research design based on the validated PERMA scale developed originally by Seligman (2011). Article 3 utilized both exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis, structural equation modeling (SEM) and importance performance analysis (IPA) as statistical techniques to analyze the data. As such, each individual methodology along with the assumptions are discussed in detail throughout this chapter.

Human Subjects Approval

In order to begin collecting primary data for both articles two and three, certain conditions for conducting human subjects research must be met. Article one did not need human subjects approval to be conducted due to the nature of the data. Based on these requirements, an

expedited research protocol review form was submitted to the Auburn University Institutional Review Board for Research Involving Human Subjects (IRB). Following the regulations put forth by Auburn University IRB, both IRB's approved under the following protocol numbers.

Article 2 was approved for use from 11/15/15 - 11/14/16; Protocol #15-436 EP 1511

Article 3 was approved for use from 3/11/16 – 1/10/17; Protocol #16-045 EP1603

Research Articles

Article 1. An exploratory examination of the wellness tourist experience using netnography

Research Objectives

1. To understand and report on the current market characteristics of wellness travel.
2. Examine the underlying dimensions of the wellness tourism experience as they relate to or detract from overall well-being.

Research Questions

1. What are the current market characteristics of wellness tourism?
2. What are the underlying dimensions of the wellness tourism experience contribute to/create barriers towards holistic well-being?

Study Sample

A list of the top 100 wellness tourism companies was created using the keywords “Top Wellness Retreats in the World” on google.com. Details including the wellness company location, website domain and tripadvisor page were recorded by the primary researcher. Once collected, companies were categorized based on their continent and sub region (United Nations, 2014). The sample for this study was collected using a stratified random sampling method based on geographical location. A total of 20 companies were chosen for this study. The proportional

population of each continent/sub region determined the sample size for each continent/sub region.

Research Instrument

This research was qualitative in nature and conducted online. Therefore the instrument used to collect data was both the primary researcher and the online travel review platform tripadvisor.com. TripAdvisor is an online social travel networking website that allows users to generate content on travel related sectors, interact with other users and book their travel related needs. Founded in the year 2000, TripAdvisor now boasts 350 million unique monthly visitors and more than 290 million reviews covering 5.3 million accommodations, restaurants and attractions across 47 countries around the world (TripAdvisor, 2015).

Data Collection

Travel experiences happen in a singular space and are often times very difficult for researchers to access directly, therefore online user generated content was deemed appropriate for this study. Data was collected online at www.tripadvisor.com from the 20 companies identified through stratified random sampling during the month of December 2015. In order to be included in the sample, reviews must have been written between the months of December 2014-November 2015. These criteria were deemed appropriate due to the familiarity of the primary researcher with the English language, in addition to selecting reviews that cover a one-year time span. User generated content was downloaded by copying text into an excel file along with statistics reported on country of origin, month of travel, star rating and travel group. The data collected totaled 222,815 words or the equivalent of 1216 TripAdvisor reviews.

Data Analysis

The netnographic method in combination with exploratory inductive framework analysis was used to examine user-generated content in order to discover meaning and understanding within peoples experiences while travelling for wellness. The term ‘netnography’ comes from the ‘inter[net]’ and ethnography and was originally coined by Robert Kozinets (1997). Netnography is defined as “a qualitative research methodology that adapts ethnographic research techniques to study the cultures and communities that are emerging through computer-mediated communications” (Kozinets, 2002, p. 62). Ritchie and Spencer’s (1994) framework analysis involves five interconnected steps: (1) familiarization (2) identifying a thematic framework (3) indexing (4) charting and (5) mapping and interpretation. It is designed to be systematic, methodical and efficient in nature. Framework analysis allows the researcher to use a well-defined process where gathered data is sifted, charted and sorted in line with key issues and emergent themes discovered through the data.

Article 2. Transformative experiences among yoga tourists: An exploratory enquiry

Research Objectives

1. Examine the factors that contribute to choosing a yoga retreat experience.
2. Uncover and explore the mechanism by which the yoga retreat experience acts as a functional means to guest well-being & transformation.
3. To investigate the catalysts that initiate transformational experiences.

Research Questions

1. What are the motivating factors that contribute to choosing a yoga retreat experience?

2. What are the mechanisms by which the yoga retreat experience acts as a functional means to guest well-being and transformation?
3. What are the catalysts that initiation transformational experiences while travelling for yoga?

Study Sample

The target sample for this study was individuals who have experience with travelling to yoga retreats. The final sample for this study included 12 yoga retreat participants who had travelled to at least 2 yoga retreats within the past 2 years. The sample included a total of twelve female yoga tourists representing four countries of origin ranging from 25 to 52 years old. Amongst the sample, five participants depended on teaching yoga for the majority of their income, while six did not.

Research Instrument

This study was qualitative in nature, involving in depth semi-structured interviews, therefore, the primary researcher was the research instrument. All interviews were conducted face-to-face by the primary researcher. An interview guide was used to help guide each interview and keep the semi-structured format similar across each participant.

Data Collection

Networks including yoga retreat participants were not available to the researcher, therefore the snowball sampling technique was deemed most appropriate to attain a purposive sample suitable for this study (Noy, 2008). Initial contact was made with a local yoga studio owner in the southeast to request a sampling of yoga retreat participants for interviews. This resulted in five participants. Each participant was asked to identify any other possible yoga tourists who may be interested in doing an interview. These contacts resulted in four more interviews. In addition to

these participants, personal contacts were used to further expand the sample. Participants were no longer recruited for this study once similarities in the responses became apparent and theoretical saturation was reached. The final sample for this study included 12 yoga retreat participants.

Data Analysis

In order to adequately address the aims of this research, this study employed the steps of deductive thematic analysis as described by Braun and Clarke (2006). The deductive approach was chosen for this research based on a priori themes identified prior to conducting the research. Deductive thematic analysis is driven by theory, but still moves beyond simply counting words and phrases to derive latent meaning and relationships among themes. The following six steps were adopted from Braun and Clarke (2006) to guide the current study: (1) Familiarization (2) Generation of initial codes (3) Searching for themes (4) Reviewing themes (5) Defining themes (6) Scholarly report. A detailed account of these steps can be found later in this Chapter.

Article 3. Do vacations really make us happier? Exploring the relationships between tourism, wellness and quality of life using positive psychological theory

Research Objectives

1. To understand the positive psychological benefits of tourism as they relate to overall quality of life.
2. To determine what factors contribute to the overall quality of life of travelers.
3. To understand whether or not length of stay plays a significant role in determining overall quality of life
4. To gather the importance and performance of positive psychological well-being factors as they relate to tourism experiences.

Research Questions

1. What positive psychological benefits derived from wellness/ non-wellness tourism (based on the PERMA model of well being) predict an increased satisfaction with overall quality of life?
2. Do happiness, health and negative emotions play a mediating role between the PERMA model of well being and overall quality of life?
3. Does length of stay play a moderating role in determining how wellness/non-wellness tourism contributes to overall quality of life?
4. What differences exist amongst the types of travelers (wellness vs. non) as it relates to overall quality of life?
5. What are the most important positive psychological benefits from wellness tourism to wellness travelers?
6. Based on importance, how well does wellness tourism satisfy the positive psychological needs of wellness travelers?

Study Sample

The target sample for this study was individuals who have experience travelling for wellness reasons as well as non-wellness business or leisure reasons. Participants for this study were recruited through Amazon Mechanical Turk, an online data collection platform where individuals gain financial compensation for completing human intelligence tasks. The final sample for this study included 862 travelers, 295 primary wellness travelers, 360 secondary wellness travelers and 207 non-wellness travelers.

Research Instrument

The research instrument used for this study was quantitative surveys. Items for the survey were adapted from the PERMA model of well-being (Butler & Kern, 2014; Seligman, 2011) and the satisfaction with life scale (Diener, Emmons, Larson & Griffin, 1985). The final survey instrument consisted of 48 items, including two identifying questions, eight demographic questions, ten questions about travel behavior and 28 5-point likert scale items (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree) to measure the study variables. A copy of the survey items can be found the appendices.

Data Collection

Participants for this study were recruited through Amazon Mechanical Turk, an online data collection platform where individuals gain financial compensation for completing human intelligence tasks. Previous research supports the use of this platform as a valid method for collecting data as the participants recruited through this platform are demographically varied (Wong, Newton & Newton, 2014) and because online panels suffer from lower levels of sample bias compared to traditional mail surveys (Dolnicar, Laesser, & Matus, 2009). In order to participate, Amazon Mechanical Turk workers had to be aged 18 or older and traveled for wellness (primary or secondary), business or leisure. Workers who met these criteria were compensated \$0.60 for completing the online survey. A total of 888 survey responses were collected using the online research software company, Qualtrics. After screening for unengaged responses, twenty-six respondents were removed resulting in eight hundred and sixty two useable responses and a 97% response rate.

Data Analysis

In order to adequately answer the research questions posed, this study employed a series of quantitative methods over five phases: (1) exploratory factor analysis (the pilot study) (2) analysis of descriptive statistics and frequencies (3) confirmatory factor analysis (4) structural equation modeling testing for mediation, moderation and multi-group differences and (5) importance performance analysis.

Statistical Programs Used for Data Analysis

The data collected for both qualitative studies (article 1 and 2) were analyzed using NVivo 11, a qualitative data analysis (QDA) computer software package in order to conduct both inductive and deductive analyses. The program provides functions for text search, word frequency, coding, matrix coding and coding comparison. The data collected for the quantitative study (article 3) were analyzed using the Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences (SPSS 22.0) application to conduct normality, collinearity, exploratory factor analysis and importance/performance analysis. Subsequent to this, the Analysis of Moment Structure (SPSS AMOS 22.0), a structural equation modeling (SEM) program was used to generate a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) as well as a structural equation model (SEM).

Qualitative Methodology

Article 1: An exploratory examination of the wellness tourist experience using netnography

Netnography

Netnography was employed as a research method for article one based on its relationship to online user generated content. Netnography is defined as “a qualitative research methodology that adapts ethnographic research techniques to study the cultures and communities that are emerging through computer-mediated communications” (Kozinets, 2002, p. 62). The term ‘netnography’ comes from the ‘inter[net]’ and ethnography and was originally coined by Robert Kozinets (1997). While traditional qualitative methods used to study travel experiences such as interviews do provide the opportunity for rich description and probative exploration, netnography addresses some of the drawbacks interviews such as respondent inhibition (Elliott & Jankel-Elliott, 2003). It is contended that netnography is the most suitable method to examine travel experiences because reviews are written without the presence of a researcher and therefore not affected by observation (Kozinets, 2002). Tourism researchers have recently begun to adapt the netnography methodology (Baka, 2016; Janta, Brown, Lugosi & Ladkin, 2011; Mkono, Markewell & Wilson, 2013; Rageh, Melewar & Woodside, 2013; Woodside, Cruickshank & Dehuang, 2007) and contend the further use in future tourism studies (Mkono & Markwell, 2014; Mkono, 2012). Netnography involves what Kozinets (2010) refers to as ‘entrée’ into an online community. Entrée involves the identification of online communities that are most appropriate to the topic of study in addition to acquiring as much knowledge about these communities as possible. Kozinets (2010) suggests that online communities are chosen based on relevant research questions, active, substantial and interactive communications, heterogeneous

backgrounds of members, and availability of descriptively rich data. For this study, a non-participant observation netnography was used to avoid any adverse influence of the researcher on the group. Data collection for this study involved direct downloads of computer-mediated online reviews posted on tipdvisor.com from chosen wellness tourism companies. Once data was collected, an inductive framework analysis was adopted in order to delve deeply into the data. Details of this methodology are described below.

Framework Analysis

Framework analysis was originally designed by Ritchie and Spencer (1994) to examine applied social policy research. The process involves five interconnected steps and is designed to be systematic, methodical and efficient. However it is important to note that framework analysis is not meant to be infallible, rather it relies on the innovative and theoretical ability of the researcher to make real leaps in the analytical thinking process. The advantage of using framework analysis lies in using a well-defined systematic procedure; it is possible and even encouraged to reconsider and revise ideas that have emerged throughout the process (Ritchie & Spencer, 1994). During analysis, gathered data is sifted charted and sorted in line with key issues and themes. Framework analysis includes 5 key phases that can be applied inductively as well as deductively. An inductive approach was employed for article 1. A detailed account of each phase is described below:

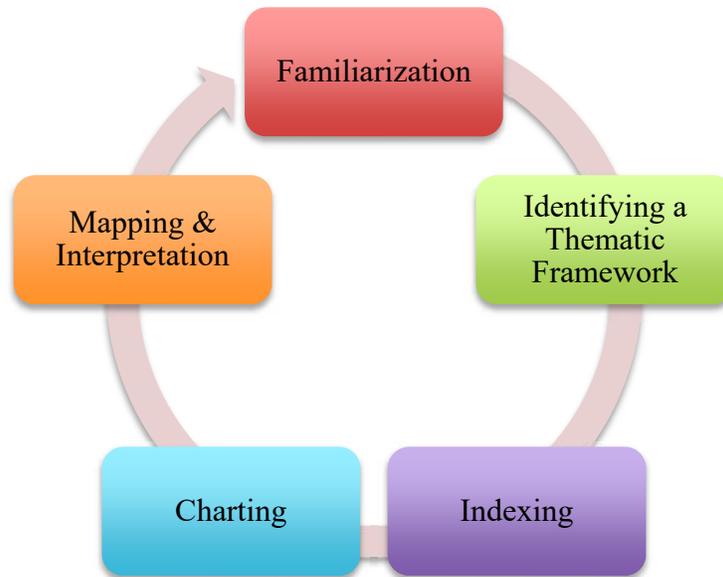


Figure 3.1. Framework Analysis

Familiarization. To begin, I fully immersed myself in the data in order to gain a sense of the range and diversity of issues present. In the case of the online user generated content that was collected from TripAdvisor, this began with reading through the downloaded online reviews. Online user generated reviews were analyzed through the process of inductive abstraction and conceptualization based solely on the raw data (Ritchie & Spencer, 1994). This process involved jotting down key themes and ideas along with substantive issues found.

Identifying a thematic framework. In order to begin identifying a thematic framework, I went back to my notes from familiarization and begin to identify key issues and concepts that needed to be examined further within the data. When building this framework, I paid close attention to try and identify analytical themes (recurrent or patterned issues) arising in the data (Ritchie & Spencer, 1994). Developing a thematic framework is not an automatic process. On the contrary, it involves making decisions about latent meaning and significance, and making connections between important ideas and themes. This process was extremely iterative, and went through changes over time.

Indexing. Indexing is a process by which the thematic framework is applied to the raw data. Data were marked by nodes (interpretive codes) within the NVivo 11 software according to the identified thematic framework. Coded data was easily accessible through the ‘nodes’ tab delimited within NVivo 11, thus making the process visible and easily accessible. Some pieces of text were coded under multiple nodes highlighting patterns of association within the data. This process is, of course, subjective to the analyst, therefore it was important to index in a way that can be followed by another researcher to check for bias and classification issues.

Charting. Charting involves data being lifted from their original context and arranged according to their thematic reference in the form of a codebook. Each chart was organized according to a different theme including the original lifted data, an operationalized definition, as well as a summarized interpretation of the data (reflective notes). The process of charting involved both abstraction and synthesis of the thematic framework (Ritchie & Spender, 1994).

Mapping and Interpretation. Once all the data had been sifted, indexed and charted according to core themes, the mapping and interpretation process began. By reviewing the charts and research notes, comparing and contrasting themes and issues as well as searching for disconfirming evidence, I began to piece together an overall picture of the data. It is important to note that this process was not as easy as searching for an array of similar evidence to support one theme, but that the process involved identifying prominence and dynamics of issues in order to create a well developed and grounded map of the data (Ritchie & Spender, 1994).

Framework analysis was deemed an appropriate method for analysis for article 1 because it is heavily based and grounded in the original accounts and observations from the data. I used this form of content analysis across all 1216 online reviews, thus making the systematic and methodical treatment of the data a positive factor. It is dynamic in that it provides room for

change and revision while remaining true to the systematic nature of the process. The approach was comprehensive allowing complete review of the material collected. Additionally, it helped make comparisons across datasets (in this case, 5 star reviews vs. 4, 3, 2 and 1).

Article 2: Transformative experiences among yoga tourists: An exploratory enquiry

Philosophy and Epistemology of Interviewing

Paradigms drive a number of important decisions including how you will conduct your research, how you will evaluate ethical considerations, how you will go about building relationships with your participants and how your research is disseminated (Bailey, 2007). In its simplest form, a paradigm is “a basic set of beliefs that guide action” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003, p. 245). All paradigms are based on four interrelated belief systems namely ontology, epistemology, methodology and axiology (Bailey, 2007). In order to guide the interviews done for article 2 of this dissertation, an interpretivist paradigm was adopted.

Interpretivism rests on the ontological belief that reality is not objective but instead multidimensional and fluid depending on culture, context and history. In social science research, this also involves the influence of the researcher as part of that reality (Bailey, 2007; Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). Interpretivism focuses on attributing socially significant meanings to the physical environment. In the case of my role as the primary researcher conducting face-to-face interviews with yoga tourists, an interpretivist approach was necessary. My understanding of yoga, and yoga travel from personal experience allowed me to identify qualified participants and also build a certain level of rapport while interviewing them. For example, I had a sharpened ear to notice key themes that came up throughout the interview and was able to insert impromptu questions to glean more insight into the experience of the

participant. Additionally, while interviewing, I took note of possible contextual influences that may have influenced the participants experience and probed based on this information. For example, discussing any prior wellness travel experience the participant had or, whether or not the participant was a full time yoga teacher or just a student of yoga.

Epistemologically speaking, interpretivism states, “what is learned in research does not exist independently of the researcher” (Bailey, 2007, p. 54). In contrast with positivism, the interpretive paradigm does not highlight objectivity. As discussed above, it was my job as the researcher to take into account my experience with yoga before conducting interviews therefore acknowledging my position as a part of the research project. In order to do this, I asked myself the following questions prior to designing and conducting the research – “What are the values, belief systems and characteristics that might influence the design and assessment of the research?” While this question was not asked of participants during the interview, it allowed a more holistic picture of the reality in which the interview would take place to be seen which is very important within this paradigm of thought. Additionally, I took and kept reflexive notes before, during and after each individual interview, which leads to higher levels of trustworthiness in qualitative research. Methodologies used within an interpretive paradigm often take researchers out of their office and into the world of their research participants. While you can physically remove the researcher from their world, you cannot remove their belief systems thus leading to an axiological stance rejecting the view that neutrality is essential to the research process (Bailey, 2007; Phillmore & Goodson, 2004; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003).

Strategies used for conducting the interview

The Interview Script. Prior to conducting any interviews, a semi-structured interview script was written and submitted to IRB for approval (see Appendix A). Once approval was gained, this script was converted into a format that supported bullet points with highlighted keywords and space for reflexive notes (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). This strategy allowed the interviews to have more flow, while still maintaining some structure to ensure that all interviewees were asked the same questions. Creating space for notes, allowed me to jot down important points that needed to be followed up on, as well as key emergent themes to ask about later in the interview and in subsequent interviews.

Opening the Interview. At the beginning of each interview, I thanked each participant for volunteering their time and reminded them of the general purpose of the interview, why they were chosen, and their rights as an interview participant. Following the interview bullet point protocol, I began with broad questions about well-being and travel in order to create a good rapport with the participant before leading into more detailed questions (Galletta, 2013; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). I was careful not to offer any of my experiences during the interview so as not to persuade the interviewee in any particular direction with their thoughts. As suggested by Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) I was also cognizant to allow for moments of silence after the interviewee stopped talking, which often times led to further expansion of their answer. Additionally, I would jot down key words or phrases used by the interviewee and later use these to ask for follow up description and/or clarification (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

Addressing the details. The middle segment of a semi-structured interview is indented to explore the complexity of the topic. In this segment I explored meaningful nuances mentioned in the opening segment and extended my questions to be more focused on meaning making vs.

general information. Prior to introducing specific theoretically driven questions based on the PERMA model, I asked a general question about the benefits experienced while travelling for yoga (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). This allowed the interviewees to first share their own thoughts on this topic rather than being probed with pre-determined themes up front. Further probing helped to clarify the participant's stance on well-being as it related to travelling for yoga. During this phase of the interview, there were some instances when the interviewee would mention something that needed further interpretation, for example a participant said "For me, one of the benefits was definitely mindfulness". In order to ensure that I understood the underlying meaning behind these types of answers, I always made sure to clarify by asking a follow up question such as "When you say mindfulness, what does this look like for you? (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). In this specific case, the follow up question led to more clarification around the top brining up topics such as meditation practices and specific ways in which mindfulness was practiced during day to day activities.

Concluding the interview. This segment of the interview gave me the opportunity to explore any inconsistencies in the interview as well as probe further into any theoretically driven questions. At this point, it was very important to start wrapping up the interview by clarifying anything and asking for additional thoughts and points. At the end of each interview, I asked participants if they had any final thoughts to add about their experience and oftentimes this led to another iteration of what was already said, but in a more succinct way that led to higher levels of trustworthiness within the data. I ended each interview by thanking the participant again and made them aware of the next steps in the process in the case that they will want to read the final report. Exiting the interview with good rapport was very important as I got many follow up messages from participants describing how much they enjoyed sharing their experiences.

Deductive Thematic Analysis

In order to effectively address the aims of this research, this study adopted the steps of deductive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis is defined as a “method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (Braun & Clarke, 2006 p. 6). Deductive thematic analysis was chosen for this research based on a priori themes identified from the PERMA model of well-being prior to conducting the research. Although deductive thematic analysis is driven by theory, it still moves beyond simply counting words and phrases to derive latent meaning and relationships among themes. Six steps were adopted from Braun and Clarke (2006) to guide this study. Details of how each step was operationalized can be found below:

Familiarization. The familiarization phase of thematic analysis involves immersing yourself in the data. In this case, I was the research instrument, so the process of immersion began as soon as I began conducting interviews. After all interviews were concluded, each interview was transcribed from audio to text. Once the interviews were transcribed, I began immersing myself in the data by actively reading through each interview searching for meanings and patterns within the data (Braun & Clark, 2006). I did not immediately attach a priori codes to the data. This allowed me to jot down initial overarching themes without being blinded by simply looking for themes identified prior to data collection. These themes were included for further data analysis once the process of coding began. Braun and Clark (2006) argue that it is ideal to read through your entire data set at least once before beginning the coding process.

Generation of initial codes. Subsequent to familiarizing myself with the data, I began generating an initial list of ideas that would be attached to specific quotes within the data. Using NVivo 11, a qualitative text mining software, I began attached these codes to specific quotes

within the data (see figure one for an example of codes applied to a short segment of data). These codes (explicit inferences to what is happening within a specific piece of data) are not to be confused with themes (broad categories inferring latent meaning onto the data). This process of generating initial codes was done systematically for each interview and provided an initial footprint from which the next phase could begin.

Searching for themes. Once all data was initially coded, I had a long list of different codes to sort through. The process of searching for themes involved visually grouping codes under different overarching themes, beginning the process of meaning making. This process was extremely iterative and brought into consideration how different codes fit together to explain an overarching theme (Braun & Clark, 2006). In order to visually represent this process, I created what Braun and Clark (2006) refer to as ‘mind maps’ to aid in the thought process involving the relationships between codes and themes

Reviewing themes. This phase involved reviewing each theme for internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity (Braun & Clark, 2006). At this point, each code/theme combination was reexamined and eventually matched with an a priori theme to create a codebook. Non a priori themes were reviewed and subsequently merged into an existing theme identified by the PERMA model. Further to this, each a priori theme was given an operationalized definition specific to the context of yoga retreat experiences. Each identified theme was reviewed both at the level of the codebook as well as within the original data set. Table 5.1. located in chapter 5 provides an example of select direct quotes, codes and themes.

Defining themes. This phases involved reviewing the operational definitions developed in phase 4 and subsequently refining each theme to determine what aspect of the data it captured. Braun and Clark (2006) argue that it is important in this phase not to try and force themes to

capture too much or be too complex. This was confirmed by going back into the data and reviewing the interpretive codes and representative quotes for coherency and internal consistency with their overarching theme (Braun & Clark, 2006). Resultant from this process was a thematic map connecting codes and themes (See figure 2, paper 2).

Scholarly report. The final phase of thematic analysis occurs while the scholarly report is being created. The task of this phase involved creating a vivid and complex story about the data, with enough simplicity embedded for it to be understood by readers. At this point, selections of the most compelling and representative extracts were chosen to be displayed in the final report. Braun and Clark (2006) suggest that examples should clearly capture the essence of the point you are trying to make without being too complex in nature. Accompanying analytic narrative connecting the findings to previous literature and theoretical underpinnings was also developed during this phase.

Trustworthiness in qualitative research

Trustworthiness refers to the scientific inquiry that is able to “demonstrate truth value, provide the basis for applying it and allow for external judgments to be made about the consistency of its procedures and the neutrality of its findings or decisions” (Erlandson, 1993, p. 29). Tackling criteria to address trustworthiness in qualitative research is akin to positivists’ reliability and validity constructs (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Criteria for trustworthiness are discussed below.

Credibility. Research can be considered credible when the proposed meaning of the data are relevant to participants and conform to the qualitative data. This was achieved through the

development of codebooks, persistent observation of emergent themes and referential adequacy (using contextual information to support data analysis) (Decrop, 2004).

Transferability. The term transferability in qualitative can be compared with generalizability in quantitative research. Qualitative research is often criticized for small samples without the ability to generalize to a larger population. However, it is important to note that generalizing is not the aim or desire of qualitative researchers. Rather, an “analytical transfer of theoretical propositions to other objects is conceivable” and desired (Decrop, 2004, p. 159). Contextualization of details from the study within extant literature led to transferability. Additionally, transferability was confirmed through purposive sampling until a saturation of data as well as thick description was met.

Dependability. Knowledge generated through qualitative research cannot be considered absolute because it is of a continuously changing nature and conducted in multiple different contexts and cultures. Therefore, dependability looks at how well the data gathered actually matches what occurred in the field (Decrop, 2004). In the case of this research, dependability began with a detailed research plan, followed by an audit trail documenting all steps taken in data analysis process. These detailed accounts help to increase the dependability of the data.

Confirmability. Confirmation is one of the essential foundations of social science research. In order to find some objectivity in the data analysis process, a search for a variety of explanations in the data adds confirmability to the research thus increasing overall trustworthiness (Decrop, 2004). In the case of this research, searches for disconfirming evidence as well as a review of reflexivity journals was conducted to address this criterion.

Quantitative Methodology

Article 3: Do vacations really make us happier? Exploring the relationships between tourism, wellness and quality of life using positive psychological theory

Assumptions of Multivariate Analysis

Normality. In order to determine the appropriateness of data for multivariate analysis, tests for normality must be conducted. Without meeting this assumption, your data is likely to result in inflated chi-square statistics which would ultimately affect model fit. Normality of the dataset was determined on the basis of skewness and kurtosis statistics. Skewness was determined in the data if a variable had an absolute value greater than 3. Kurtosis was determined in the data if values were above the acceptable range of 10. Rules for these tests were adopted from Kline (2005).

Multicollinearity. Multicollinearity is a statistical phenomenon in which two or more variables are highly correlated. Pearson's r statistics were used to determine the level of correlation between variables. Adopting the rules set forth by Kline (2005), a Pearson's r statistic greater than 0.850 was deemed to be indicative of issues with multicollinearity. Latent variables in SEM are allocated a metric of 1 with standardized regression weights (+/- 1). Violating the assumptions of multivariate analysis in regards to multicollinearity can inflate those statistics thus causing parameter estimates to no longer be the best linear unbiased estimates. Tests for multicollinearity were conducted at each phase of the research and are reported in article 3.

Principle Components Analysis vs. Exploratory Factor Analysis

Prior to conducting analysis, consideration of the differences between principal components analysis (PCA) and exploratory factor analysis (EFA) had to be made. Although principal components analysis is the default method of extraction in SPSS, there is major disagreement amongst statistical theorists with regards to its use. While some argue in favor of a true factor analysis method (Bentler & Kano, 1990; Floyd & Widaman, 1995; Ford, MacCallum & Tait, 1986; Gorsuch, 1990; Loehlin, 1990; MacCallum & Tucker, 1991; Mulaik, 1990; Snook & Gorsuch, 1989; Widaman, 1990, 1993), others claim little to no difference exists between the two, or that PCA is superior (Arrindell & van der Ende, 1985; Guadagnoli and Velicer, 1988; Schoenmann, 1990; Steiger, 1990; Velicer & Jackson, 1990). Ford et al., (1986) point out that the process of PCA does not account for the underlying structure caused by latent variables, but calculates components based on all of the variance of the manifest variables which subsequently appears in the solution. Contrarily, a true factor analysis aims to uncover those latent variables that cause manifest variables to covary, revealing only shared variance in the solution (Osborne & Costello, 2005) PCA however, does not discriminate between the two (shared and individual variance). According to Gorsuch (1997), uncorrelated factors with moderate communalities can produce inflated values of variance when using PCA. However, because factor analysis only explores shared variance, the risk for inflation is lowered (Osborne & Costello, 2005). Floyd and Widaman (1995) suggest EFA as the preferred method of analysis for scales which hold a priori assumptions. In line with this argument, this dissertation used exploratory factor analysis for the pilot test and confirmatory factor analysis for the main study.

Exploratory Factor Analysis

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) is a multivariate statistical method used to reveal the underlying structure of a set of measured variables. This approach to factor analysis seeks to explain the most variance possible, grouping measured variables together to explain latent constructs or factors. Initial scales chosen for this study were adapted from empirically validated positive psychological assessment tools. Although each scale had been previously validated, the scales had not been tested within a tourism context, therefore EFA was deemed appropriate in order to ascertain the extent to which the variables selected for each scale measured the intended constructs. The process of conducting an EFA is both qualitative and quantitative in nature. Qualitatively, it is the job of the researcher to deduct meaning from the factor loadings generated, and subsequently give each factor a name or general theme. Quantitatively, the numerical relationships between variables and factors establish the overall strength of each item and each factor. Ideally, exploratory factor analysis is examined based on the issue of parsimony – finding the fewest number of factors to explain the largest amount of variation. When conducting an EFA, the following considerations must be made:

Sample size. Sample size for the pilot study conducted for preliminary analyses was chosen based on suggestions from Hatcher (1996) and Foster (2001). These authors recommend a minimum sample size of 100.

Factorability. Factorability assumes that there is some collinearity between the variables in order for comprehensible factors to be identified. Factorability was examined through inter-item correlations. While some collinearity amongst variables is good, correlations above 0.850 indicate issues with multicollinearity (Kline, 2005). In addition to looking at the correlation matrix, Bartlett's test of sphericity and Kaiser-Meyer Olkin (KMO) were analyzed. Bartlett's test

of sphericity establishes if the sizes of correlations are adequate for achieving a stable solution (Douglas, 2008). This test produces a chi square statistic, level of significance and degrees of freedom. A significant Chi-square test suggests that the data is suitable for factoring. The KMO test is founded on connection between partial correlations and the sum of squared correlations (Worthington & Whittaker, 2006). This statistic ranges from 0 – 1, with values nearing 1 indicating that the factor analysis should generate distinctive and reliable factors (Field, 2009). A KMO of .60 is recommended in order to move forward with factor analysis (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001).

Factor extraction method. There are several factor analysis extraction methods to choose from in SPSS, namely unweighted least squares, generalized least squares, maximum likelihood, principal axis factoring, alpha factoring, and image factoring. However, the two most widely used of these are maximum likelihood and principle axis factoring (Osborne & Costello, 2005). Fabrigar, Wegener, MacCallum and Strahan (1999) suggest maximum likelihood as the best choice if the assumption of multivariate normality is not violated. They argue “it allows for the computation of a wide range of indexes of the goodness of fit of the model and permits statistical significance testing of factor loadings and correlations among factors and the computation of confidence intervals” (p. 277). However, if the assumption of multivariate normality of violated, the authors recommend using principle axis factoring (Fabrigar et al., 1999). Additionally, principle axis factoring is more suitable for smaller sample sizes. Due to the smaller sample size of the pilot study, principle axis factoring along with maximum likelihood was chosen.

Rotation method. The main goal of rotation is to simplify and clarify the data structure. Rotation methods can be either orthogonal or oblique. Orthogonal rotations produce factors that

are uncorrelated, while oblique rotations allow the factors to correlate. The scales used in this dissertation are concerned with life satisfaction and happiness measures, therefore some correlation among factors is to be expected. Using orthogonal rotation would result in a loss of potential valuable information if the factors were in fact correlated. Therefore, an oblique method, Proxam with Kaiser normalization, was chosen.

Criteria for factor retention

In exploratory factor analysis, there is no absolute or simple way to determine the number of factors to maintain. However, several criterion should be taken into consideration with regards to factor retention:

Theoretical background. What does the a priori research suggest about the number of factors to be expected?

Eigen values. Factors with eigen values greater than 1 should be retained for analysis.

Total variance explained. Ideally, the factor structure should account for 50-75% of the total variance explained by the least number of factors.

Interpretability of factors. Are the factors easily interpretable? For example, can you easily name and describe each set of items as being representative of their factor?

Number of items per factor. Each factor should retain at least two items. However, if there are only two items, they need to have high loadings. Three or more items per factor is ideal.

Factor correlations. If factor correlations are too high e.g. (above .70), you may want to attempt merging highly correlated factors (e.g. forcing the factor structure into less factors).

Criteria for item deletion and/or retention.

In general, the aim is to find the simplest factor structure – the least amount of factors that explain the most amount of variables. Within this structure, you want your factors to have relatively high loadings (above .50) with relatively low cross-loadings (below .30). However, the process of choosing items for retention or deletion is somewhat of an art form, involving the subjective opinions of the researcher. The following criteria can be considered as a guide:

Communalities. Communalities indicate the variance explained in each item by their factors. Communalities of .4 or above were deemed acceptable for this research.

Factor Loadings. Factor loadings indicate how strongly each item loads onto its main factor. Ideally, each variable should load above .50 or .60, but a minimum of .40 is acceptable.

Cross Loadings. Cross loadings indicate how strongly each items loads onto each factor. There should be at least .15 difference between the target factor loading and any cross loadings. Additionally, cross loadings above .32 should be considered for deletion.

Relevance of item to a factor. Assessing the relevance of each item requires qualitative techniques. For example, an item may be loading strongly onto a factor, but does not make a seemingly significant contribution (based on its face validity). In these cases, rewording of items should be considered.

Reliability. Evaluating the Cronbach's alpha for the items included in each factor is useful information during a factor analysis. Specifically, looking at the "Alpha if item removed" is a useful tool to tell whether or not the removal of any specific items would improve reliability a specific factor.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis & Structural Equation Modeling

Scale Reliability. Reliability is defined as the extent to which a scale consistently measures scores across multiple samples and testing conditions (Anastasi, 1988). Reliability can be tested by looking at the strength and significance of the correlation between all the scale items (Robinson, Shaver & Wrightsman, 1991). This test speaks to the internal consistency of the instrument therefore examining the uniformity of the responses to the item set. Most commonly used to assess the internal consistency of a data set in factor analysis is the coefficient alpha with Cronbach's Alpha. A different reliability coefficient frequently used in conjunction with SEM models is construct reliability (CR). CR is computed from the squared sum of factor loadings for each construct and the sum of the error variance terms for a construct (Hair et. al., 2010). According to Hair et al (2010), values of 0.7 or higher for either reliability estimates suggest good reliability. An alpha estimate of 1 suggests that all the items in the scale measure with true reliability and with little or no measurement error exhibiting a very high degree of internal consistency. Therefore, it is favorable as coefficients approach 1 and unfavorable the close they are to 0. An estimate of at least .80 is desirable, however, researchers and statisticians have varying opinions on the acceptability of a Cronbach's alpha score. Some researchers say a Cronbach's Alpha between .30 and .70 is acceptable for items to remain in the test instrument (Henryson, 1971), while others argue that items must obtain an alpha score of at least .70 to remain in the instrument (George & Mallery, 2003). For the purposes of this research, values between .70 and .80 will be considered as good, .90 excellent and .60 acceptable for inclusion. Values falling below .60 are considered unsatisfactory and would be evaluated for deletion (George & Mallery, 2003).

Scale Validity. Broadly speaking validity evaluates the inferences made from a measure (Zumbo, 2005). More specifically, validity is defined as “the underlying soundness of the instrument signaling sufficiency that the instrument does indeed measure what it is purported to measure” (Murray, 2009 pp. 71). The process of establishing validity is very important when using SEM because this method incorporates multiple statistical methods including regression, path analysis and factor analysis (Zumbo, 2005). Two methods of validity were used for this dissertation (article 3), construct and content. Content validity is defined as “the degree to which elements of an assessment instrument are relevant to and representative of the targeted construct for a particular assessment purpose” (Haynes et al., 1995, p. 238). Items were evaluated for instructions to participants, response format and representativeness of the latent construct. Construct validity is defined as “the extent to which observed variables in the scale actually measure the latent constructs they have been hypothesized to represent” (Douglas, 2008, p. 111). One of the main objectives of CFA and SEM is to evaluate the construct validity of a proposed measurement theory (Hair et. a., 2010).

Convergent Validity. Convergent validity refers to the fact that items that represent a latent factor should share a high proportion of variance (Hair et. al., 2010). One way to assess convergent validity in CFA and SEM is to evaluate factor loadings. Hair et al. (2010) suggest factor loadings of at least .50, and ideally .70 to meet convergent validity standards. Another way to evaluate convergent validity is by calculating average variance extracted (AVE). This is calculated as “the mean variance extracted for the items loading on a construct” (Hair et. al., 2010, p. 687). An AVE of 0.5 or higher is considered to represent good convergent validity.

Discriminant Validity. Discriminant validity is the “extent to which a construct is truly distinct from other constructs” (Hair et. al., 2010, p. 687). It also means that individual

variables measured should only represent one construct. The most rigorous way to test for discriminant validity issues is to compare the AVE values for any two latent factors with the square of the correlation estimate between these two constructs. The AVE should be greater than the squared correlation estimate. The rationality for this test suggests that the latent factor should explain more of the variance in its own variables than it shares with another latent factor (Hair et. al., 2010). This test was used in article 3.

Pilot Study: A test of Competing Scales

Positive psychological theory is fairly new in the field of tourism research. Although there has been a steady increase in research addressing the psychological benefits that may lead to tourist happiness, an extensive review of the literature revealed that tourist happiness has been predominantly understood through the lens of subjective well-being (SWB) (Corvo, 2011; Gilbert & Abdullah, 2004), thus overlooking the eudemonic nature of powerful tourism experiences (Filep, 2014). Subjective well-being measures encompass predominantly hedonic components such as joy, elation, contentment and ecstasy (Diener, 2000). On the other hand, positive psychological measures are more eudemonically focused capturing factors more closely related to meaning and engagement (Seligman, 2011). Although positive psychological measures have not been used widely in tourism research, Filep (2014) recently argued the need for more eudemonic measurements of tourist happiness. Therefore, this study set out to pilot test two competing scales in order to find the most suitable scale to use for this research.

The PERMA Model of Well-Being. Developed by Seligman (2011) The PERMA model of well-being delineates the key domains which need to be satisfied in order to achieve the ultimate form of well-being. Included in this model are the domains of positive emotion,

engagement, relationships, meaning and accomplishment. This scale was developed beginning with an initial item bank including 199 items and was tested over multiple samples. After a series of psychometric tests, 15 PERMA items were chosen. In addition to these items, 8 additional items (1 overall well being item, 3 negative emotion items, 3 physical health items and 1 loneliness item) were added to the measure, thus creating the final 23 item measure. Subsequent to its development, the measure has been used in a variety of different samples and translated into multiple languages. The final 23-item measure demonstrated good psychometric properties across multiple samples (Table 3.1.). Although this scale had been tested multiple times, it had not yet been used in the context of tourism or wellness tourism. Therefore, it was deemed necessary to do a pilot study prior to conducting the main study.

Table 3.1. Psychometric Properties of the PERMA model of Well-being (Butler & Kern, 2014).

Tests with the final 23-item PERMA measure						
Factors	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max	alpha
Positive Emotion	6081	6.44	2.02	0	10	0.89
Engagement	6081	6.98	1.75	0	10	0.72
Relationship	6081	6.71	2.18	0	10	0.84
Meaning	6081	6.83	2.21	0	10	0.91
Accomplishment	6081	6.83	1.79	0	10	0.78
Overall well-being	6081	6.75	1.67	0.38	10	0.94
Negative motion	6081	4.14	1.97	0	10	0.75
Physical health	6081	7.05	2.08	0	10	0.92

PERMA Plus. An extensive review of the literature revealed that the PERMA model of well-being may not be the most adequate scale to identify positive psychological factors of tourism. For example, some previous studies found personal growth targeting areas such as self-esteem and self-acceptance to be significant motivators for wellness tourists (Voigt et. al., 2011). These factors however, are not included in the original PERMA model. Subsequent to this, a

review of empirically validated positive psychological assessment tools resulted in the assembly of the PERMA PLUS scale, which included these two new variables. Additionally, the factors included in the PERMA model were measured using different scales. Although each scale had been validated individually, they had never before been tested together in the context of tourism or wellness tourism. Items used for this scale are represented in table's 3.3. and 3.4.

Pilot Study Data Collection

Data for the pilot study was collected using the online panel distribution service, Amazon Mechanical Turk. A total of 250 responses were collected, measuring both the responses from wellness tourists and non-wellness tourists. A sample of 144 was collected for the original PERMA scale, 62% of the sample representing wellness tourists and 38% of the sample representing non-wellness tourists. A sample of 106 was collected for the PERMA PLUS scale, 57% of the sample representing wellness tourists and 43% of the sample representing non-wellness tourists. Due to the low numbers collected for the pilot study, tests for each scale were done combining the entire sample (wellness and non-wellness tourists). In the main study, the data was tested based on splitting the sample in order to determine if any differences exist between the two groups.

Multivariate assumptions. In order to determine the appropriateness of each data set for multivariate analysis, tests for normality and multicollinearity were conducted. Data from both scales were deemed to be normally distributed with no skewness (<3), kurtosis (<10) or multicollinearity ($<.850$) violations (Kline, 2005).

Exploratory Factor Analysis. An initial exploratory factor analysis (EFA) conducted in SPSS v. 22 used the principle axis factoring extraction method and promax with kaiser

normalization rotation method. The results of the EFA for the PERMA scale yielded 5 components with a KMO of 0.874, total variance explained of 69.94% and an overall Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.89. One variable suffered from low factor loadings (.495) and cross loading issues, however, this variable was retained for further analysis due to the fact that the full scale had been previously validated. Additionally, deleting this item did not change the alpha score significantly.

EFA results for PERMA PLUS revealed 8 offending items that were subsequently removed due to cross-loadings, poor commonality statistics (below .400) and low factor loadings (below 0.400) reducing the scale from 35 to 27 items. The results of the EFA for the PERMA PLUS scale yielded 7 components with a KMO of 0.814, total variance explained of 71.48% and an overall Cronbach's Alpha score of .88.

Table 3.2. Exploratory Factor Analysis PERMA

		PERMA					
	Label	Factor Loading	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	Alpha
Component 1							0.886
M1	My life is more purposeful and meaningful	0.845	8.64	2.094	-1.694	3.347	
M2	My life is more valuable and worthwhile	0.525	9.15	1.791	-1.943	5.455	
M3	I have more sense of direction for my life	0.592	8.78	2.028	-1.150	1.464	
A1	I spend more time making progress towards accomplishing my goals	0.887	7.89	2.227	-.662	.086	
A2	I achieve important goals more often	0.81	8.08	1.977	-.633	-.004	
A3	I am able to handle my responsibilities more often	0.433	7.74	2.001	-1.088	1.323	
Component 2							0.899
H1	Overall, how would you say your health is?	0.904	8.08	1.529	-0.879	0.677	
H2	How satisfied are you with your current physical health?	0.86	8.22	1.537	-1.961	7.655	
H3	Compared to others of your same age and sex, how is your health?	0.832	7.84	1.651	-0.916	0.798	
Component 3							0.861
P1	I am more joyful	0.803	9.16	1.674	-1.637	4.403	
P2	I am more positive	0.605	8.41	1.655	-1.405	1.450	
P3	I am happier	0.762	9.42	1.772	-2.086	6.427	
E1	Become absorbed in what I am doing	0.421	9.00	1.892	-1.367	1.634	
E2	Feel excited and interested in things	0.675	9.25	1.932	-1.983	5.187	
E3	Lose track of time while doing something I enjoy	0.633	7.67	1.974	-1.281	1.695	
Component 4							0.737
N1	How often do you feel anxious?	-0.542	4.86	3.215	0.424	-1.129	
N2	How often do you feel angry?	-0.981	2.58	1.985	1.532	1.908	
N3	How often do you feel sad?	-0.803	2.88	2.287	0.1435	1.589	
Component 5							0.825
R1	I have more support in my relationships with others	0.421	8.10	2.402	-.730	-.459	
R2	I have more loving relationships with others	0.735	8.68	2.040	-1.289	1.669	
R3	I am more satisfied with my personal relationships	0.897	8.96	2.212	-1.614	2.616	

Table 3.3. Exploratory Factor Analysis PERMA PLUS

PERMA PLUS							
	Label	Factor Loading	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	Alpha
Component 1							0.898
M1	My life serves a higher purpose.	.902	3.717	1.1106	-.819	.122	
M2	In choosing what to do, I always take into account whether it will benefit other people.	.645	3.669	1.0751	-.660	-.010	
M3	I have a responsibility to make the world a better place.	.656	3.538	1.2203	-.554	-.641	
M4	My life has a lasting meaning.	.824	3.736	1.2290	-.828	-.260	
M5	What I do matters to society.	.763	3.557	1.1471	-.566	-.339	
M6	I have spent a lot of time thinking about what life means and how I fit into its big picture.	.838	3.632	1.1818	-.764	-.085	
Component 2							0.868
P1	Life is too short to postpone the pleasures it can provide.		3.858	1.0550	-.902	.389	
P2	I go out of my way to feel euphoric.	.785	3.283	1.1609	-.276	-.624	
P3	In choosing what to do, I always take into account whether it will be pleasurable.	.766	3.792	.9534	-.511	-.289	
P4	I agree with this statement: "Life is short – eat dessert first."	.589	3.538	1.1561	-.715	-.132	
P5	I love to do things that excite my senses.	.785	3.943	.9936	-.894	.363	
P6	For me, the good life is the pleasurable life.	.809	3.858	1.0460	-.983	.767	
Component 3							0.787
R1	Maintaining close relationships has been difficult and frustrating for me	.918	2.377	1.3270	.419	-1.190	
R3	I have not experiences many warm and trusting relationships with others.	.831	2.349	1.3455	.532	-1.032	
A3	I think achievement is overrated.	.653	2.613	1.3350	.425	-.986	
S3	In many ways, I feel disappointed about my achievements in life.	.579	3.519	2.3512	1.663	4.197	

G3	I gave up trying to make big improvements or changes in my life a long time ago.	.700	3.311	1.8841	.383	-1.038
Component 4						0.878
A1	I aim to be the best at what I do.	.795	4.019	.9854	-1.134	1.171
A2	Achieving something of lasting importance is the highest goal in life.	.841	3.858	.9802	-.638	.013
A4	I am driven to succeed.	.806	3.877	.9532	-.557	-.254
A5	I have overcome setbacks to conquer an important challenge.	.431	4.085	.8742	-.952	.915
Component 5						0.659
S1	I like most parts of my personality	.623	6.906	3.0815	.781	-.627
S2	When I look at the story of my life, I am pleased with how things have turned out so far.	.821	6.453	3.3385	.721	-.642
E6	I am rarely distracted by what is going on around me.	.561	3.425	1.1377	-.225	-.760
Component 6						0.605
E4	I am always very absorbed in what I do.	.594	3.726	1.0098	-.895	.505
E5	In choosing what to do, I always take into account whether I can lose myself in it.	.533	3.519	1.1061	-.500	-.483
Component 7						0.38
E1	Regardless of what I am doing, time passes very quickly.	.569	4.113	.9393	-1.073	1.062
G1	For me, life has been a continuous process of learning, changing and growth.	.564	5.830	1.3127	-1.482	2.176

Table 3.4. Deleted Items Exploratory Factor Analysis PERMA PLUS

Deleted Items						
G2	I think it is important to have new experiences that challenge how I think about myself and the world.	0.366	5.632	1.3685	-1.192	1.346
E2	I seek out situations that challenge my skills and abilities.	0.388	3.604	1.1354	-.560	-.345
E3	Whether at work or play, I am usually “in a zone” and not conscious of myself.	.441/.443	2.972	1.2758	-.058	-1.075
R2	People would describe me as a giving person, willing to share my time with others.	0.227	3.962	.9945	-.989	.788
A6	Setbacks don't discourage me.	0.338	3.840	1.0155	-.783	.251
A7	I am a hard worker.	.448/4.61	4.198	.8774	-1.176	1.381
A8	I am diligent.	0.34	4.170	.8335	-1.034	1.367

Deciding between scales. Based on the above statistics, and after much deliberation, the original PERMA scale was chosen to be tested in the main study. The final statistics produced for each scale were fairly similar, however, numerous items had to be deleted from the PERMA PLUS scale in order to arrive at an acceptable EFA. Due to the high factor loadings, overall reliability score and the fact that the PERMA scale had been previously tested and rooted in literature, this scale was chosen for the mains study analysis. Each factor in this scale only had 3 items, therefore, all items in the original scale were retained for the final study.

Structural Equation Modeling

Structural equation modeling (SEM) is a series of multivariate statistical methods that define the multifaceted relationships between one or more independent variables and one or more dependent variables. It can be considered as a hybrid of factor analysis, multiple regression analysis and path analysis. The structural model hypothesizes relationships between theoretical constructs and implies a structure for the covariances among manifest or observed variables

(Hox & Bechger, 1998). The first step in identifying a structural model is to test the proposed confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) model. Douglas (2008) suggests, “the use of SEM procedures to test the proposed CFA model is actually a test of measurement theory” (p. 120). Dissimilar to EFA, measurement theory requires the researcher to specify how the observed variables are expected to behave in relation to the latent constructs (Hair et al., 2010). This, of course, is based on the theoretical underpinnings of the model as well as the EFA conducted previously. This dissertation follows six main stages to the structural equation modeling as suggested by Hair et al., (2010). Stages 1-4 are discussed in relation to the CFA, while stages 5-6 are discussed in relation to SEM.

Defining individual constructs. Constructs were defined based on the pre-existing PERMA model of well-being developed and subsequently tested by Seligman (2011) and (Butler & Kern, 2014). Because this model had never been tested within the tourism field before, definitions for these constructs were reviewed in the pre-testing phase for clarity and connection to the research setting. During this pre-test phase, expert reviewers aided in establishing content validity and internal consistency of the scale by conducting an exploratory factor analysis.

Developing and specifying the measurement model. Factor analysis assumes that the covariances between a set of manifest variables can be accounted for within a smaller grouping of latent constructs. Unlike EFA, in SEM, the confirmatory factor model is inflicted on the data. In this case, the purpose of the CFA is to obtain the estimations of the parameters in the model including factor loadings, variances and covariances of the factors and the residual error variances of the observed variables (Hox & Bechger, 1998). CFA allows us to test a structure exactly and test whether or not it is plausible on the basis of both internal and external consistencies of unidimensionality.

Designing a study to produce empirical results. Once the basic model has been specified, issues related to research design and model estimation must be addressed. First, prior to collecting data for empirical analysis, an appropriate sample size must be determined. For the purposes of this dissertation, recommendations between 5 and 10 cases per parameter were adopted (Bentler & Chou, 1987). Once data has been collected, the issue of missing values had to be addressed. Less than 5% of the data were missing. A replace with median approach was used to replace missing data in the sample. Subsequent to this, the estimation method of maximum likelihood was chosen as this is the most popular method.

Assess measurement model validity. In order to assess the model fit of the CFA and SEM with the hypothesized theory, the path estimates, standardized residuals, and modification indices were analyzed. Hair et. al (2010) recommends that factor loading estimates have a value of at least .50 and be statistically significant to be retained. Otherwise, items should be considered for deletion. Additionally, factor estimates that fall outside the absolute value of 1.0 and standardized residuals greater than 2.58 should also be considered for deletion. At this stage, goodness-of-fit for the overall model must be assessed. Goodness-of-fit (GOF) is an indication of how well the hypothesized model represents the empirical data, that is how well the specified model replicates the observed covariance matrix among indicator items (Hair et. al., 2010). Goodness-of-fit measures have been created to represent three general groups: absolute measures, incremental measures and parsimony fit measures. Guidelines for assessing goodness of fit indices are reported below (Table 3.5).

Table 3.5. Goodness of fit statistics for Evaluating CFA & SEM Models. (Hair et. al., 2010)

Goodness of Fit	Threshold	Interpretation
Absolute Fit Indices		
Chi-Square (X ²)	Low chi-square with insignificant p-values expected. Sig p-values expected when sample size is > 250.	The chi-square statistic is inflated tremendously as sample size gets larger, therefore, this GOF statistic should be interpreted with caution and not used as the sole GOF measure.
Goodness-of-fit index (GFI)	> 0.90	The possible range of GFI is 0 to 1, with values closer to 1 representing good fit. Values at .90 or above are typically considered good.
Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)	< 0.08	RMSEA estimates how well a model fits a population, not just the sample used for estimation. Values < 0.08 are acceptable, however lower values reflect better fit.
Standardized root mean residual (SRMR)	< 0.08	A rule of thumb is that an SRMR over 0.1 suggests a problem with fit. SRMR is useful for comparing fit across models.
Incremental Fit Indices		
Tucker Lewis index (TLI) and Comparative fit index (CFI)	> 0.90	Values close to 1 are considered good. TLI is a comparison of the normed chi-square values for the null and specified model. CFI is an incremental fit index that is an improved version of the normed fit index (NFI).
Parsimony fit indices		
Adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI)	> 0.80	AGFI attempts to take into account differing degrees of model complexity.

Absolute fit indices are an exact measure of how well the model specified by the researcher reproduces the observed data.

Incremental fit indices assess how well an estimated model fits relative to some alternative baseline model.

Parsimony fit indices are designed specifically to provide information about which model among a set of competing models is best, considering its fit relative to its complexity.

Specifying the structural model. Specifying the structural model involves a mathematical process where the paths identified in the hypothesized model are defined (Reisinger & Mavondo, 2007). Definitions of these paths rests on whether or not a relationship has been specified. Parameters that need to be estimated include directional effects, variances, and covariances (Weston & Gore, 2006). Directional effects are represented by one directional line (→) and hypothesize a direct relationship between two variables. These effects can be represented

between latent and observed variables as well as between numerous latent variables. Researchers will usually set the variance of the latent variable or the factor loadings of an observed variable to 1.0. Each endogenous variable within the model should be given a residual error (E) term. However, for latent variables that are endogenous, a residual term is not called error, it is called a disturbance, and therefore the “error term” here would be a circle with a D written in it.

Assessing the structural model validity. The process of establishing structural model validity follows the general guidelines outlined in table 3.5. However, good model fit in solitude is inadequate to support a proposed structural theory (Hair et. al., 2010). Individual parameter estimates must also be examined. A theoretical model is considered valid to the extent that the parameter estimates are statistically significant in the predicted direction and nontrivial. Statistically significant parameter estimates are greater than zero in the positive direction and less than 0 in the negative direction (Hair et. al., 2010). Nontrivial estimates can be checked using the completely standardized loading estimates (Hair et. al., 2010).

Importance Performance Analysis

Introduced in 1977 by Martilla and James, Importance Performance Analysis (IPA) distinguished which product or service attributes a company should concentrate on in order to enhance customer satisfaction (Matzler, Bailom et al., 2004). IPA is a popular method of evaluating a company’s competitive position in the market, identifying opportunities for improvement, and for managing strategic planning efforts (Hawes and Rao, 1985; Martilla & James, 1977; Myers, 2001). In this study, an IPA is conducted in order to identify how well the positive psychological benefits sought by wellness travelers performed based on their importance ranking. The results of an IPA generates a two dimensional, four quadrant matrix grouping these

benefits based on their means of performance and importance (Fig 2). The vertical axis of the IP grid represents the wellness travelers' perceived importance of the benefit variables while the horizontal axis illustrates the performance of these benefits during the wellness travel experience. Each variable is positioned in one of the four quadrants of the IP grid. Quadrant A includes variables considered important by wellness travelers that performed poorly. The variables in Quadrant B are representative of benefits that were rated of high importance as well as high performance. Quadrant C contains variables low in both importance and performance, while Quadrant D includes variables that were of low importance but high performance.

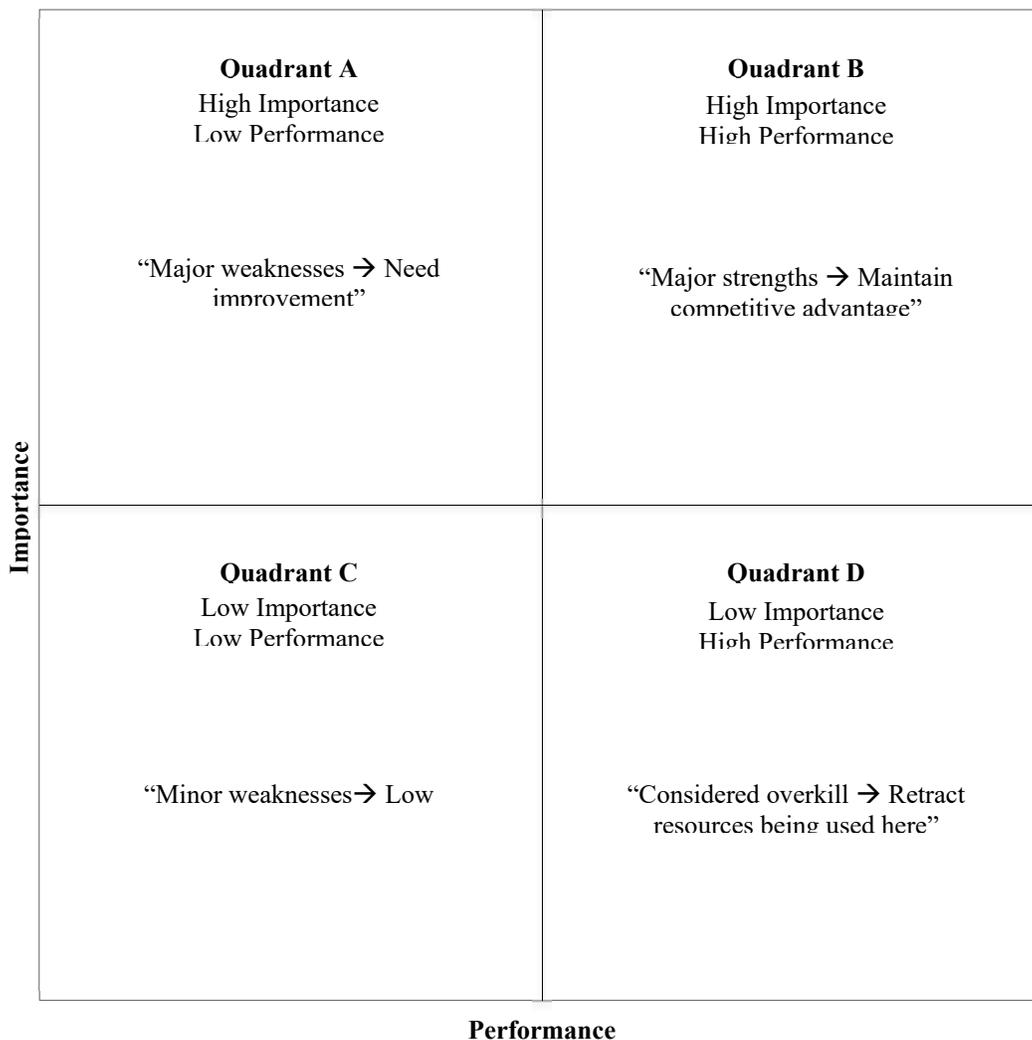


Figure 3.2. Importance Performance Analysis Quadrants

Based on cell location, positive psychological benefits of travel are deemed as major or minor strengths and weaknesses (Fig 2.) Variables located Quadrant A (low performance, high importance) are considered major weaknesses and need a lot of attention from businesses to become a competitive advantage. Variables located in Quadrant B (high performance and importance) suggest major strengths, and opportunities to continue maintaining and developing competitive advantage. Variables in Quadrant C (low performance and importance) are considered minor weaknesses. Variables in this quadrant should be considered low priority for businesses. Quadrant D (high performance, low importance) signifies that any resources devoted to these variables would be considered overkill and should be focused in other areas. These variables are considered minor strengths.

CHAPTER 4

ARTICLE 1: AN EXPLORATORY EXAMINATION OF THE WELLNESS TOURIST EXPERIENCE USING A NETNOGRAPHIC APPROACH

Abstract

Interest in wellness tourism has seen rapid growth in recent years from both researchers and industry representatives. However, it has been noted that research related to understanding the wellness traveler experience is lacking. Therefore, this research examined wellness tourism experiences as described by user generated content published on Tripadvisor.com. Using netnography analysis in conjunction with framework analysis, thematic qualitative coding of travel reviews were undertaken. Netnography has not been widely used in tourism research. This study attempted to gain a meaningful degree of understanding of the wellness tourism experience. In line with Dunn's (1959) definition of holistic well-being the results identified four dimensions of the wellness tourism experience: body, mind, spirit and environment. Though consumer reviews varied, there was consensus amongst within the data that all four dimensions either provided a pathway or a barrier towards well-being. Implications and recommendations for future research are discussed with regards to wellness tourism.

Introduction

The prominence of wellness tourism has recently reemerged across the global travel market, and by extension, has garnered growth and recognition as a crucial topic in academic

research. While the term '*wellness tourism*' is relatively new in the western world, the idea of offering activities and facilities conducive to healthy living can be traced back hundreds of years. For example, according to the Global Wellness Institute, Japanese travellers have sought out hot springs for healing purposes for over 1500 years (GWI, 2013). Additionally, people have been travelling since ancient times to natural baths and hot springs for their healthier environments and spiritual practices (GWI, 2013). However, as a result of today's hectic, fast paced, high stressed work and living environments, more and more people are seeking a journey to enhance their well-being, whether mentally physically and/or spiritually. Coupled with an increasing longing to simply slow down and focus on the deeper meaning of life, the growth of wellness tourism addresses a clear need amongst travelers (Douglas, 2001; Pollock, Williams, Gartner & Lime, 2000; Lehto, Brown, Chen, & Morrison, 2006; Smith & Puczko, 2008). Health and wellness services are now being offered through a variety of both active and passive activities across hotel and resort brands, wellness retreat centers and specialized travel packages (Ringer, 2008; Smith & Kelly, 2006). All the while, consumers are becoming more health conscious and are taking a serious interest in pursuing health and wellness benefits while on vacation.

With no signs of these issues decreasing, the wellness tourism market is expected to grow exponentially within the next decade to account for 16% of the global tourism market by 2017 (GWI, 2013). Additionally, GWI (2013) reports that wellness tourists spend, on average, 130% more than a traditional tourist. The available evidence seems to suggest that wellness tourism can directly impact tourists' well-being (Smith & Kelly, 2006; Smith & Puczko, 2008), however there is insufficient research to draw any firm conclusions. Understanding well-being as a subset of the tourism experience is a complex phenomenon, leaving much room for further investigation within academic research. It has been recognized that a more in depth look at the experiences of

wellness travelers is necessary to aid in the understanding and future development of this growing market (Chen et al., 2008; Laing et al., 2010). Therefore, the focus of this exploratory research was to understand tourists' experiences while travelling primarily for wellness reasons. In order to guide this investigation, two research questions were set forth.

1. What are the current market characteristics of wellness tourism?
2. What underlying dimensions of the wellness tourism experience contribute to/create barriers towards holistic well-being?

Literature Review

Wellness Tourism

Prior to beginning a discussion about wellness tourism, health and wellness benefits of general travel must first be discussed. Literature linking tourism to health and wellness dates back to 1986 when Lounsbury and Hoopes conducted a pre-test/post-test vacation questionnaire that substantiated significant relationships between vacation satisfaction, relaxation, escapism, marriage and family, food and lodging and level of educational attainment. Within the tourism literature, Neal et al (1999, 2007), were some of the first to specify a theoretical framework linking travel benefits to overall quality of life. Based on the bottom up spillover theory, their scientific inquiry employed three subjective overall life satisfaction measures to reveal that tourism services (within the leisure domain) contributed to overall life satisfaction. Moreover, previous studies have corroborated the evidence that vacation experiences contribute to overall life satisfaction and perceived wellness (Lounsbury & Hoopes 1986; Neal, Sirgy & Uysal 1999; Neal, Uysal & Sirgy 2007; Sirgy et al. 2011). For example, Sirgy et al. (2011) tested 264 adults

in South Africa and established vacation satisfaction and experience lead to higher overall life satisfaction. Further to this, Sonnentag and Fritz (2007) discovered that vacation recovery experiences have the ability to positively effect perceived wellness. While studies linking general travel to health and wellness are evident, studies providing evidence specific to wellness tourism is not evident in the literature. Therefore, this study serves as an exploratory attempt to understand the wellness tourism experience in relationship to the general concept of wellness.

The concept of ‘wellness’ was first established in 1959 by Dr. Halbert Dunn when he introduced a holistic state of health involving body, mind and spirit as well as ones immediate environment or surroundings (Dunn, 1959). Following Dunn’s (1959) work, Travis (1984) defined wellness from a more dynamic perspective as involving a state of being, as well as an attitude and a continuous process. Travis believed that wellness was not a static state, but one that must be constantly evaluated, dependent on the current state of our lives. In 2001, Mueller and Kaufmann expanded this interpretation of wellness to include the harmonization of body, mind and spirit together with “self responsibility, physical fitness/beauty care, healthy nutrition/diet, relaxation/mediation, mental activity/education and environmental sensitivity/social contact” (p. 6). Further to this, Adams (2003) argued that wellness consists of three main principles (1) wellness is multi-dimensional (2) wellness is about balance and (3) wellness is relative, subjective and perceptual. The final principle argued by Adams (2003) presents an interesting perspective suggesting that, due to the personal and subjective nature of wellness, it cannot necessarily be measured on the same scale from person to person. Lastly, from the current industry perspective, the National Wellness Institute defines wellness as “an active process through which people become aware of, and make choices toward, a more successful existence” (National Wellness Institute, 2016). Based on the different definitions and

perspectives, it can be concluded that there is some agreement on the fact that wellness is multi-dimensional, dynamic and subjective and can be achieved by the intertwining the best aspects of our body, mind, spirit and environment to lead a healthy lifestyle from to day-to-day.

As it pertains to travelling solely for the purpose of wellness, there have been myriads of expressions used by practitioners and academicians alike such as “wellness tourism”, “health tourism”, “yoga tourism”, “holistic tourism”, “medical tourism” and “spa tourism”. These expressions have been used interchangeably across a broad range of articles all describing different ideas. While wellness tourism is related to many of these niche tourism segments, the terms do imply significantly different experiences. Wellness tourism generally consists of people who are already healthy, and proactively seeking experiences to maintain or improve their well-being (GWI, 2013). On the other hand, medical tourism is largely reactive, consisting of people who are suffering from illness and motivated to travel by a desire to receive treatment of higher quality at a lower cost (GWI, 2013). Nevertheless, the foregoing discussion implies that wellness tourism is in fact a subset housed under the larger umbrella of health tourism, which also encompasses medical tourism (Chen, Prebensen, & Huan, 2008; GWI, 2013; Medina-Muñoz & Medina-Muñoz, 2013; Voigt, Brown & Howat, 2011).

From a definitional standpoint, wellness tourism has been generally defined as “travel associated with the pursuit of maintaining or enhancing one’s personal wellbeing” (GWI, 2013, p. ii). More specifically, Voigt et al. (2011) propound the view that wellness tourism is defined as “the sum of all the relationships resulting from a journey by people whose motive, in whole or in part, is to maintain or promote their health and well-being, and who stay at least one night at a facility that is specifically designed to enable and enhance people’s physical, psychological,

spiritual and/or social well-being” (p. 17). For the purposes of this study, the latter definition has been adopted.

Within the small body of literature on wellness tourism, the majority of studies focused on motivations to travel for wellness (Chen et al., 2008; Hun Kim & Batra, 2009; Lehto et al., 2006; Mak, Wong & Chang, 2009; Medina-Muñoz & Medina-Muñoz, 2013) while profiling the characteristics of wellness tourists (Hun Kim, & Batra, 2009; Lehto et al., 2006; Voigt et al., 2011) and market demand analysis (Heung & Kucukusta, 2013; Laing et al., 2010; Mueller & Kaufmann, 2001; Smith & Kelly, 2006) did not fall far behind. In 2006, Lehto et al. delved into the motivational factors leading tourists to travel exclusively for yoga, which is a subset of wellness tourism. Conceptualizing their study on the basis of consumer involvement theory, Lehto et al. (2006) found significant motivations ranging from ‘seeking spirituality’ to ‘controlling negative emotions’. Voigt et al. (2011) explored the benefits amongst three types of wellness travelers namely beauty spa, lifestyle resort and spiritual retreat visitors. Using both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods, the authors developed a ‘benefits of wellness tourism scale’ (BWTS) pointing towards six distinct factors including transcendence, physical health and appearance, escape and relaxation, important others and novelty, reestablishing self esteem and indulgence. More recently, Medina-Muñoz, & Medina-Muñoz (2013) conducted a three part exploratory study of wellness tourists focused on identifying their socio-demographic characteristics, motivations and the demand for wellness tourism on the island of Gran Canaria, Spain. Most notable to their study were the significant differences amongst tourists with various socio-demographic characteristics in regards to the types of wellness centers and treatments they were patronizing. Additionally, the authors found a significant connection between wellness behaviors at home and wellness behavior exhibited on

vacation, thus providing a basis for wellness tourism marketers to glean important insight into this growing market.

In 2010, Voigt, Howat and Brown extended the literature beyond the surface by exploring specific outcomes of the wellness tourism experience. Rooted in the field of ‘positive psychology’, their study explored whether wellness tourism experiences should be classified as hedonic, tracing ones actions back to the pursuit of ‘happiness’ or eudaimonic, actions based on deeper meaning, personal growth and one’s values (Voigt et al., 2010). Using qualitative deductive thematic analysis, the study revealed that beauty spa visitors exhibit purely hedonic outcomes while spiritual retreat visitors display purely eudaimonic outcomes leaving lifestyle resort visitors predominantly eudaimonic with some hedonic outcomes as a by product. The authors of this study made it clear that this research is only the beginning to understanding the complex and diverse connection between tourism and well-being. As individuals continue to become more aware and concerned with the stressors of daily life, the importance of tending to and maintaining health and wellness will be a priority for many who have ignored it in the past. On the basis of the evidence currently available, it seems fair to suggest that much of the current research on wellness tourism revolves around surface issues; namely motivations, socio-demographic characteristics and market demand. Severely underserved within the literature is understanding the overall experiences of wellness tourists. Therefore, this study will build on the work done by Voigt et al. (2010) as one basis from which to explore the underlying dimensions of the wellness tourism experience.

Online Reviews and Tourism

The tourism industry has long since been acknowledged as a domain filled with information and communication dependent on technology for the day-to-day management of an operation (Poon, 1993; Sheldon, 1997). However, only recently has a new term been characterized to encompass the second stage of development of the World Wide Web: Web 2.0. Web 2.0 is the term used for all technologies and websites that focus on the user as the focal point of content creation, as opposed to focusing on the company as the originator of content (O'Reilly, 2005). According to Papathanassis and Knolle (2011), Web 2.0 is already influencing the tourism industry by way of diminishing the control of tourism enterprises and relinquishing the control to consumers. With the consumer as the focal point for information creation, a major part of Web 2.0 has been the distribution of opinions online, commonly referred to as electronic word of mouth (eWOM) or user generated content (UGC). Within the tourism industry, UGC is created on numerous different platforms including social networking sites, blogs, travel forums and official destination/company websites. In contrast to WOM, it has been argued that eWOM has the power to generate communities in the virtual world whose influence extends far beyond those who produce and interact online, thus creating a new type of reality influencing consumers around the globe (Litvin, Goldsmith & Pan, 2008).

Due to the intangible nature of tourism experiences, this widespread online phenomenon has caught on across academic platforms attracting both academicians and practitioners alike. Travel related UGC has been considerably studied in relation to destination image (Choi, Lehto & Morrison, 2007; Jani & Hwang, 2011; Lim, Chung & Weaver, 2012; María Munar, 2011; Miguens, Baggio & Costa, 2008; Stepchenkova & Zhan 2013), post consumption behavior (Bosangit, Dulnuan & Mena, 2012; Ye, Law, Gu, & Chen, 2011), trustworthiness of online

reviews (Amaral, Tiago & Tiago, 2014; Ayeh, Au & Law, 2013), wildlife tourism (Cong, Wu, Morrison, Shu & Wang, 2014), organizational reputation (Baka, 2016), online rating behavior (Zhang, Zhang, & Yang 2016), implications of online reviews (Gretzel & Yoo, 2008; Wilson, Murphy & Fierro, 2012) and travel planning behavior (Cox, Burgess, Sellitto & Buultjens, 2009; Xiang, & Gretzel, 2010). Previous research has revealed that consumers are more inclined to trust peer reviews rather than company marketing materials due to the transparent nature of UGC (Kardon, 2007; Park, Lee & Han, 2007). Echoing Belhassen and Caton (2006), Mkono (2011) supports the notion that online reviews can be considered authentic due to the fact that reviews are provided voluntarily, thus representing tourists self-interpretive meanings about their personal experiences.

A number of tourism related websites include interactive features for their consumers. Within the tourism domain, online travel review sites are the most widespread Web 2.0 communities. The largest, and most globally recognized of these is Tripadvisor. Tripadvisor is an online social travel networking website that allows users to generate content on travel related sectors, interact with other users and book their travel related needs. Founded in the year 2000, Tripadvisor now boasts 350 million unique monthly visitors and more than 290 million reviews covering 5.3 million accommodations, restaurants and attractions across 47 countries around the world (Tripadvisor, 2015). For the purposes of this study, Tripadvisor was used for data collection.

Although research on UGC in travel is extensive, there remains much room for growth in this area as it relates to wellness tourism experiences. As mentioned previously, the complex nature of well-being lends itself to exploratory academic research and is therefore the focus of this study.

Methodology

Netnography

This study employs netnography to examine the experiences of wellness travelers as reported on Tripadvisor.com. Netnography is defined as “a qualitative research methodology that adapts ethnographic research techniques to study the cultures and communities that are emerging through computer-mediated communications” (Kozinets, 2002, p. 62). The term ‘netnography’ comes from the ‘inter[net]’ and ethnography and was originally coined by Robert Kozinets (1997). In the late 1990’s and early 2000’s Kozinets (1997, 1998, 2001, 2002) was one of the first researchers to begin using netnography in the study of consumer marketing and behavior.

Travel experiences happen in a singular space and are often times very difficult for researchers to access directly. Traditional qualitative methods used to study travel experiences (e.g. interviews), can often lead to respondent inhibition, which can be a major drawback to collecting unbiased data. The non-intrusive nature of netnography addresses this drawback, while still gaining access to rich description (Elliott & Jankel-Elliott, 2003). It is contended that netnography is the most suitable method to examine travel experiences because reviews are written without the presence of a researcher and therefore not affected by observation (Kozinets, 2002). Tourism researchers have recently begun to adapt the netnography methodology (Baka, 2016; Janta, Brown, Lugosi & Ladkin, 2011; Mkono, Markewell & Wilson, 2013; Rageh, Melewar & Woodside, 2013; Woodside, Cruickshank & Dehuang, 2007) and argue for further use of this method in other tourism studies (Mkono & Markwell, 2014; Mkono, 2012). A detailed overview of the netnographic methods adapted for this study are discussed in detail below.

Entrée & Data Collection

Entrée involves the identification of online communities that are most appropriate to the topic of study in addition to acquiring as much knowledge about these communities as possible. Kozinets (2010) suggests that online communities are chosen based on relevant research questions, active, substantial and interactive communications, heterogeneous backgrounds of members, and availability of descriptively rich data. For this study, a non-participant observation netnography was used to avoid any adverse influence of the researcher on the group. Data collection for this study involved direct downloads of computer-mediated online reviews posted on Tripadvisor.com from chosen wellness tourism companies.

The population of wellness tourism providers was selected beginning with an online Google search of website lists using the key phrase “*Top Wellness Retreats in the World*”. The search was conducted on October 15th, 2015 and resulted in a total of fourteen lists, uncovering one hundred unique wellness tourism providers. Details including the wellness company location, website domain and Tripadvisor page were recorded by the primary researcher. Once collected, companies were categorized based on their continent and sub region (United Nations, 2014). The sample for this study was collected using a stratified random sampling method based on geographical location. A total of twenty companies were chosen for this study. The proportional population of each continent/sub region represented within the list of one hundred companies determined the sample size for each continent/sub region.

Each company identified using the stratified random sampling technique was located on Tripadvisor.com during the month of December 2015. In order to be included for analysis, the review had to be written in English and have been published between the months of December 2014 and November 2015. These criteria were deemed appropriate due to the familiarity of the

primary researcher with the English language, in addition to selecting reviews that covered a one-year time span in order to include a diverse range of reviews representative of each calendar month. User generated content was downloaded into an excel file along with data reported on country of origin, month of travel, star rating and travel group. The data collected comprised 1216 reviews totaling 222,815 words. Typically, there were between sixty and seventy reviews per company, with the lowest number of reviews being thirty seven and the highest number of reviews being 198.

Framework Analysis & Interpretation

Analysis and interpretation for this study followed the steps for framework analysis as recommended by Ritchie and Spencer (1994). Specifically, inductive exploratory framework analysis was used to examine user-generated content in order to discover meaning and understanding within people's experiences while travelling for wellness. Ritchie and Spencer's (1994) framework analysis involves five interconnected steps: (1) familiarization (2) identifying a thematic framework (3) indexing (4) charting and (5) mapping and interpretation. It is designed to be systematic, methodical and efficient in nature. Framework analysis allows the researcher to use a well-defined process where gathered data is sifted, charted and sorted in line with key issues and emergent themes discovered through the data.

Preliminary reading of reviews written across all twenty companies ranging from five star (highest rating) to one star (lowest rating) identified that data saturation had been reached. Data saturation was determined based on repetition of keywords and phrases as well as preliminary identification of codes and themes within the review contents for each star category. Although companies had been chosen a priori, it was important to reach a point of saturation to ensure that

more data did not need to be collected. Past research has shown that when data reach saturation, no new content or codes are likely to be produced, therefore allowing the researcher to stop the data collection process (Chen, 2007).

Analysis for this study began with familiarization. This included reading through the reviews within each star category while taking notes on key themes and substantive issues in order to become immersed in the data, as this is needed to move forward with the coding process. The text were content analyzed using NVivo 11, a text mining software that supports the analysis of qualitative data. Analysis continued by sorting the data according to star rating (5 star being the highest, 1 star being the lowest). In this form, data were uploaded to NVivo 11 for text mining. To begin identifying a preliminary thematic framework, a list of the top 100 most frequent keywords for each star was obtained. In order to discover the most rich and meaningful description in the data, words that did not significantly contribute to understanding the data were removed. Examples included “you”, “also”, “like”, “and”, “is” and “the”. Additionally, variations of the same word were resolved, e.g. “spa” and “spas”, “photograph” and “photo”.

In combination with the notes from familiarization, these keywords were used to identify a preliminary emergent thematic framework. Throughout the process of familiarization, a total of twenty-one codes were identified with corresponding keywords attached to each code based on the context of the keyword within the raw data (Table 4.1.). These codes and keywords served as the preliminary emergent thematic framework, which was then used to begin the process of indexing.

Table 4.1. Preliminary emergent thematic framework

Interpretive Code	Free Codes: Keywords & phrases used to describe the interpretive code
Rejuvenate	wonderfully relaxing, disconnect, peaceful retreat, relax, unwind, recharge, reflect, beautifully secluded
Immersion	take advantage, immerse yourself in the culture, sounds of nature, supportive, spiritual
Wellness	wellness treatments, open mind, spiritual wellness, life changing, simpler things in life, awareness, classes, holistic health, environment, yoga, revitalize
Culinary	healthy detox, clean organic, excellent cuisine, raw food, proportionately controlled, delicious local, diverse, vegetarian, surprisingly good, creative, grown, innovative, plentiful, pricey, simple, lifestyle, modifications, preparation class, totally different, gourmet, whole
Activities	knowledgeable staff, practice daily, emotional balance, gentle classes, lectures, nutritional psychology, holistic spa treatments, offered every day, hikers, programs, chanting, mindfulness, therapeutic
Staff	beyond effort, knowledgeable, great lengths, memorable, delightful staff, anticipated every need, attentive, exceptional, impeccable service, detailed and personalized
Community	lovely people, amazing people, felt everywhere, view on life, fellows guests, walks of life, changing, sense of community, unforgettable experience, interesting people
Growth	changing lives, life transforming, progress, mind-blowing, awareness, investment, illuminate the mind, revitalize health, nurture your mind, new beginning, life changing, perspective, challenges, inspiring
Spiritual	group meditation, spiritual development, astrology reading, challenging, blessed, healing properties, energy, wonderful, asana
Services	relaxation, non obtrusive, range, de-stress, pampering, beautiful experience, body treatment, therapeutic, nurtured in my body and mind
Grounds	beautiful scenery, pool, private, serene, white sand, lovely gardens, magical, island, beach, perfect
Price	inclusive, expensive, drinks, food, service, pay, however, price
Rooms	comfortable, beautiful, ocean views, clean, private, large, suite, stay
Improvement	rooms, experience, service, churches, hikes, food, price, one improvement
Overcrowding	private, pool, crowded, people, luxury, busy, family, guests, neighbors, noisy, relaxing, adults
Internet	wifi, work, complain, available, called, advance, email, unusable, reliable
Organization	program, staff, group, great, classes, discipline, reception, participants, situation
Escape	away, place, enjoy, wellness, everything, beautiful, holistic, jungle, location, relax, calming, decelerate, clock, discovering, embrace, enchant, gardens, hectic, moment, noise
Detox	detox, toxins, food, body, activities, diet, excellent, prepare, program, staff, weight, achieving, calorie, cleanse, difficult, energy, holistic, intensive, macrobiotic, lifestyle
Disturbance	construction, property, hammering, bulldozers, beach, major, complain, discount, disturb
Kids	pool, children, family, spa, private, adults, allowed, disappointment, noisy

Using these themes and keywords as a starting point, indexing of the data began. NVivo 11's *text search* function was used to explore key words and themes throughout the data. For example, the keywords "food", "delicious" "healthy", "restaurant" etc. were entered into the text search function to identify raw data that matched with the interpretive code "culinary". Based on

the surrounding text of the keyword or phrase, the preliminary emergent thematic framework was applied to the raw data in order to begin the process of extracting meaning (indexing). Some pieces of text were indexed under multiple themes highlighting patterns of association within the data. For example, the quote *“This wellness farm is the place to escape from the noise and tension of the city.”* was assigned an index under both interpretive codes “rejuvenate” and “escape”. Once this process was complete, the text was scanned a second time for any data that had not yet been indexed in order to prevent missing any important information.

After the process of indexing was complete, sample quotes were lifted from their original context in the data and organized according to their interpretive code (charting). This process was completed five times for data corresponding to each star rating (1-5). Each interpretive code was given an operationalized definition to ensure consistency amongst the quotes being lifted from the data. Subsequently, each interpretive code was reviewed for its distinctiveness in comparison to other codes. At this time, it was noted that some codes sharing similar meaning needed to be re-coded to become one interpretive code. For example, interpretive codes “escape” and “rejuvenation” were originally two separate codes that were merged together to become one code “revitalization”. After looking more deeply into the data for each of these codes, it was decided that the aim to escape led to the experience of rejuvenation, thus providing one homogenous experience for the wellness traveler. Once this process was complete, the researcher went through each interpretive code and double-checked the raw data assigned to this code. In this way, the researcher was able to ensure that the raw data assigned to each interpretive code matched the operationalized definition, thus increasing the overall trustworthiness of the analysis. Further to this, interpretive codes were explored for homogeneity in order to assign an overarching theme related to holistic well-being. For example, interpretive codes representing

the facilities of a resort (grounds, rooms etc.) were grouped together under the theme “environment”. Themes were identified based on the raw data, but do fall in line with Dunn’s (1959) holistic concept of well-being. At the end of this process, the coding spectrum included 4 themes, 14 interpretive codes and 2174 free codes representing 5 different star categories of data (Table 4.2.).

Table 4.2. The coding spectrum

Interpretive Code	Operational Definition of Interpretive Code	Star Rating					Total	Total Percent %
		5	4	3	2	1		
The Body: Experiences that contribute to the physical structure or makeup of a person.							33.2	
Culinary	Reviews that address food quality and/or food service.	332	49	26	10	8	425	19.5
Activities	Reviews that address activities that require physical participation of the guests (e.g. yoga, hiking etc.)	106	17	13	3	5	144	6.6
Wellness Services	Reviews addressing those services that guests participate in passively (e.g. spa treatments).	108	14	9	5		136	6.3
Detox	Reviews addressing experiences where the body was rid of unhealthy toxins or substances.	5	12				17	0.8
The Mind: Experiences that contribute to the element of a person that enables them to be aware and conscious of thought.							17.9	
Growth	Reviews addressing the feeling of progress and/or change with regards to well-being as defined by Dunn (1959).	187	28				215	9.9
Revitalization	Reviews addressing experiences that provided the ability to escape restore and refresh.	94	62	19			175	8.0
The Spirit: Experiences that are non-physical in nature and relate to ones emotions.							11.5	
Spiritual Healing	Reviews addressing any experiences in relation to or affecting of the human spirit or soul.	45	29				74	3.4
Community	Reviews addressing shared experiences among guests and/or staff.	79	28	12			119	5.5
Immersion	Reviews addressing experiences relating to high levels of engagement or interest in an activity or setting.	26	31				57	2.6
The Environment: Experiences related to the surroundings in which the tourists are operating, including surrounding human activity.							37.4	
Staff	Reviews that address staff service before, during or after a visit to the wellness resort.	216	82	45	23	19	385	17.7

Grounds	Reviews addressing the location, public grounds and atmosphere of the wellness resort.	76	47	20	2	4	149	6.9
Price	Reviews addressing the price of the wellness resort.	26	55	28	16	7	132	6.1
Rooms	Reviews addressing the physical makeup and/or atmosphere of the rooms at the wellness resort.	64	31	11	4	4	114	5.2
Crowding	Reviews addressing an experience described as having too many people.		26	3	3		32	1.5
Total Interpretive Codes							2174	100

Once all charts were complete, the final step of framework analysis (mapping & interpretation) took place. First, a search for the most meaningful and representative sample quotes was conducted for each interpretive code, within each star-rating category. In addition to this, a search for disconfirming evidence within each interpretive was also conducted. Disconfirming evidence is the targeted search for data that does not support the existing themes and beliefs evidenced amongst the majority of the data. Searching for both confirmation and disconfirmation within each theme resulted in the organization of a synoptic chart that aided in the derivation of latent interpretive meaning (Figure 1). The steps above were completed several times in a vigorous attempt to exhaust all possible meaning within the data. Confirming evidence resulted in the development of pathways while disconfirming evidence resulted in the development of barriers.

Findings

Wellness tourism market characteristics

Wellness tourism companies represented four continents and sixteen countries (Table 4.3.). Twenty five percent of the companies were based in the United States, with an equal

percentage spread across other nations. As mentioned previously, these geographic regions are representative of the larger population of companies (n=100).

Table 4.3. Wellness tourism company locations

Company Location (n=20)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
North America (n = 11)		
Mexico	1	5
Nicaragua	1	5
Dominica	1	5
Turks & Caicos	1	5
Costa Rica	1	5
United States of America	5	25
The Bahamas	1	5
Asia (n = 6)		
The Philippines	1	5
Thailand	1	5
Oman	1	5
Turkey	1	5
Bali	1	5
India	1	5
Europe (n = 2)		
Germany	1	5
Spain	1	5
Australia (n = 1)		
New Zealand	1	5
Total	20	100

Review writers travelled in numerous different groups including couples (46%), with family (17%), friends (16%) and for business (3%). Approximately 18% of all reviewers traveled solo. The most popular time to travel for wellness was Summer (29%) and Spring (28%). Writers represented a multitude of geographic regions representing numerous countries. The top 10 countries are reported in Table 3 representing 87% of the sample. The majority of reviews originated from The USA (48%), England (10%), Australia (9%), New Zealand (6%) and Canada (4%).

Table 4.4. Demographics of Tripadvisor reviews

Travel Group	Frequency	Percent (%)
Couple	420	45.8
Solo	170	18.5
Family	155	16.9
Friends	149	16.2
Business	24	2.6
Total	918	100
Season (<i>n=1210</i>)	Frequency	Percent
Summer (June-Aug)	356	29.4
Spring (March-May)	344	28.4
Fall (Sept-Nov)	273	22.6
Winter (Dec-Feb)	237	19.6
Total	1210	100.0
Origin of Review	Frequency	Percent (%)
United States of America	470	47.7
England	96	9.7
Australia	92	9.3
New Zealand	63	6.4
Canada	41	4.2
India	28	2.8
Singapore	20	2.0
Dubai	16	1.6
China	14	1.4
Philippines	13	1.3
Others	132	13.4
Total	985	100.0

It is important to note, because of the limitations of collecting user generated content from AAdvisor.com, limited demographic information was available as every reviewer did not report for each category listed here.

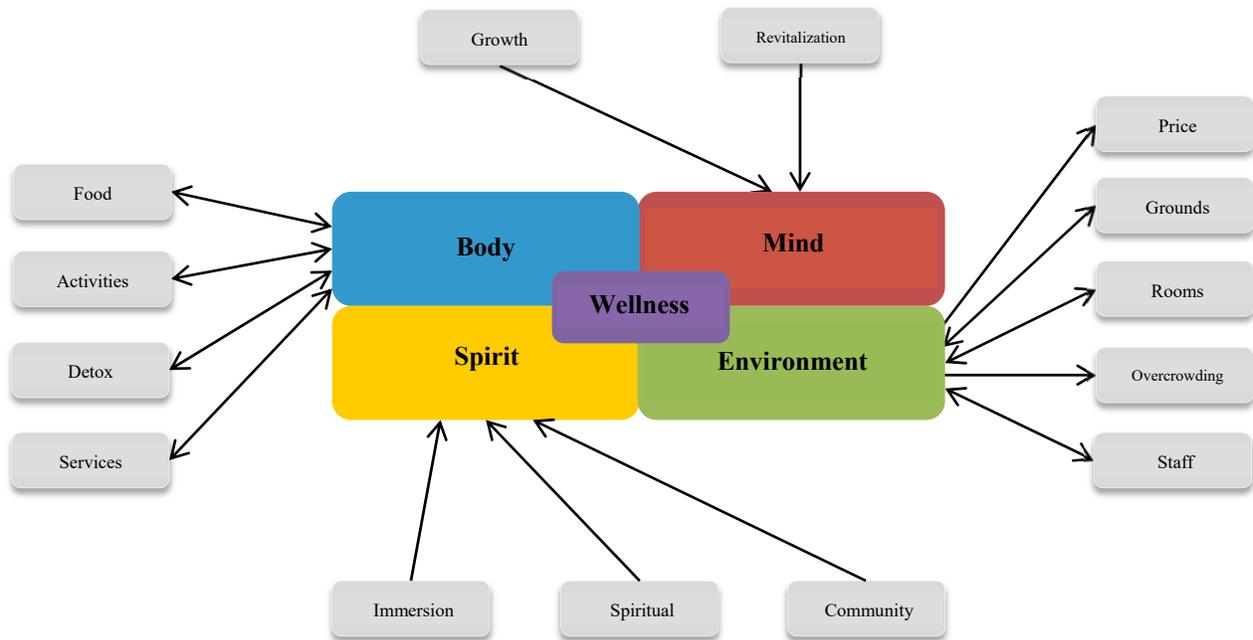
However, the entire sample reported their star rating for the wellness company they reviewed. The proportion of excellent reviews (72%) and very good reviews (18%) accounted for the majority of reviewers while only 4% of reviewers reported experiences as poor or terrible.

Table 4.5. Star ratings of wellness tourism companies

Star Rating (<i>n</i>=1216)	Frequency	Percent (%)
Excellent (5)	874	71.9
Very Good (4)	223	18.3
Average (3)	70	5.8
Poor (2)	27	2.2
Terrible (1)	22	1.8
Total	1216	100.0

Dimensions of the wellness tourism experience

Analyses of the findings relating to the experience of wellness tourists are discussed in the following section. In alignment with Dunn's (1959) holistic concept of wellness, the content analysis has identified four dimensions of wellness, namely, body, mind, spirit and environment under which interpretive codes from this study have been clustered (Figure 1). Additionally, codes have been identified as providing a pathway towards wellness and/or a barrier to wellness, with some codes representing both sides. In general, pathways were represented by five, four and three star reviews, while barriers were represented across all stars. Poor and terrible reviews were mainly disappointed with aspects relating to the environment. Details of these results are reported below based on these four dimensions of wellness.



Pathways towards wellness are represented by an arrow (\rightarrow) pointing from the interpretive code towards a theme. Barriers towards wellness is represented by an arrow (\leftarrow) pointing from the theme towards an interpretive code. Interpretive codes representing both pathways & barriers are represented by a double arrow (\leftrightarrow)

Figure 4.1. Dimensions of the wellness tourism experience

The Body

A major theme emergent amongst wellness traveler reviews is the dimension of the physical body as it relates to well-being. For the purposes of this study, reviews related to the body are characterized as any activity or experience that contributed to the physical structure or makeup of a person, thus allowing wellness travelers to get through their daily activities without fatigue. Barriers to well-being of the body were detected as those activities or experiences that could have detracted from physical wellness. Wellness traveler reviewers referenced many experiences that contributed to this dimension including food, activities, services and detoxing.

Food: Pathway & Barrier

Representing the highest number of interpretive codes, gastronomic experiences were an important topic of discussion for wellness travelers. Findings illustrated that, for the most part,

food was fresh, local and well prepared, providing guests with the energy they sought out for both a productive and relaxing stay. Many guests commented on how “*surprisingly good*” the food was, even though it was often times vegetarian or vegan in nature. Based on wellness travelers reviews, it was obvious that guests appreciated when wellness resorts made it a point to display their relationships with local farmers, connecting the food to the surrounding community. The textual analysis of customer reviews revealed culinary experiences as providing a pathway towards wellness leaving guests feeling nourished and healthy during their stay:

"The food here is amazing. I never knew vegetarian cuisine could taste so good. There is a wide variety of dishes, including salads, soups, and pasta made of veggies, with clever combinations of vegetables, legumes, and herbs. I ended up eating most of my meals from their detox menu. I was surprised to find that I did not feel weak or lethargic, but had more energy than usual." (5 star review)

Further elaboration linking food to the body is expressed below:

"The food is like fuel to the body, full of flavor & bursting with freshness. I watched the staff picking fresh herbs from the garden." (5 star review)

While the majority of the findings related to food were positive in nature, there were some reviews that mentioned culinary experiences actually detracting from their wellness tourism experience, thus creating a barrier to well-being. Wellness travelers illustrated that, while the freshness of the food was appreciated, a lack of variety led to some guests feeling bored with the food, as well as gaining weight from having to compensate for a meatless diet. Additionally, there was reference to the small quantities of food given, leading visitors to hunger throughout their day:

"The menu is macrobiotic so you can't expect to gorge on meat and baked potatoes but the serving portions are small. We are not big people but we were often left hungry in the evening. Three apples were provided in our room when we arrived but were not replenished without asking." (3 star review)

Furthermore, it was evident that some guests did not appreciate specific dietary restrictions that were enforced at times:

"You will also see a diet imposed on you even if you don't want it or follow any other recommended diet."(2 star review)

Activities: Pathway & Barrier

All of the wellness centers included in this study offered some type of physical activity geared towards health and wellness for their guests. Examples of activities mentioned in the online reviews include yoga, hiking, biking, horseback riding, surfing, pilates and gym workouts. Reviews commented favorably on the knowledgeable staff, the diversity of activities and the ability of teachers to teach towards any skill level. This was illustrated in the following review:

"Our guide kept an easy and enjoyable pace that was perfect for my girlfriend who had never done trail riding before. We loved the ride and the attention to detail that was always maintained. Our bikes were in excellent shape and the guide was superlative in his knowledge of the area and answering questions."(5 star review)

Within the reviews about activities, there is strong evidence to suggest that yoga was an important aspect of well-being to many travelers. Comments about teaching styles, class settings, routines and the spiritual component of yoga were seen as an indication of this:

"The yoga was also one of the highlights. The yoga deck is paradise for anyone who practices. It is open and the view is amazing. The teacher Amanda was fantastic. She worked towards the skill set of the group and mixed between beginners and advanced. She was very keen in sharing her passion for yoga, Vinyasa yoga in particular." (4 star review)

In addition to positive reviews, findings illustrated that while activities were sometimes physically invigorating, not all teachers maintained the same skill level, and some visitors felt overwhelmed by the amount of activities offered, leaving no time for relaxation:

"I found Canyon Ranch was not the best choice for a "rest & relaxation" vacation. There are SO MANY choices of how to spend your time. We found that we felt guilty for

wanting to sleep in or lay by the pool, because we would miss something like an early morning hike or an exercise class. For us, it was too overwhelming.”(3 star review)

Services: Pathway & Barrier

Different than activities, but still connected to the body is the interpretive code, services. Services that had an impact on physical wellness referred to any passive wellness treatments experienced by the guest, for example, massages, hot baths and facials. The physical nature of receiving these services was seen as an indication of its relationship to the physical body. Wellness traveler reviews reflected on the competencies of the staff in addition to the feeling of being physically renewed after a treatment:

“I opted for the 7 day relax and renew package which was perfect for me. If you are looking for a very laid back program, then this is the one for you - different types of massages evenly spaced out, such as essential oil, Thai massage, hand and leg massage etc. I left each session feeling like I was floating on air. The therapists are highly knowledgeable and very experienced.” (5 star review)

While the majority of guests had positive experiences with the services offered, there were some complaints that revealed services rendered as barriers to well-being. It is obvious from the following review that the levels of service and lack of attention to detail detracted from guests well-being:

“The Spa...we were machines, in and out. The masseuse made zero effort to connect on a personal level. It was all about - rub left leg 5 times, proceed to rub right leg 5 times.”(2 star review)

Detoxing: Pathway & Barrier

Detoxing refers to the act of ridding the body of unhealthy toxins or substances through dietary modifications. Wellness tourists who did participate in detox programs, reflected on the fact that while the detox was often difficult, with the help of the right specialist, the rewards were worth it:

“During the detox a whole host of problems that hadn't reared their heads in years came back to the fore - I was told that this was normal during the process, and it felt about right. It was unpleasant, sure, but I had the prevailing feeling that it was cathartic.” (5 star review)

On the other hand, some reviewers diverged from this viewpoint and felt that they were not fully prepared for the effect that detoxing would have on them, or the time it would take to recover from detoxing, thus ruining their wellness vacation:

“We regrettably were only at San Benito for 2 nights, where I was pretty much chained to bed from all the nasty toxins being released from my body that I didn't have the chance to explore or partake in any of the activities that the farm offered.”(4 star review)

The Mind

Mindfulness is central to the concept of holistic well-being and in turn the wellness tourism experience (Dunn, 1959). In this study, mindfulness is described as experiences related to the element of a person that enables them to be aware and conscious of thought. Emergent from the wellness traveler reviews, mindfulness was characterized by the concepts of rejuvenation, escape and growth.

Revitalization: Pathway

Comments about relaxation and rejuvenation were in abundance amongst four and five star reviews where wellness travelers stressed the importance of this dimension as an expectation and a benefit of their experience. This was evident in that reviewers described such experiences as peaceful, beautifully secluded, wonderfully relaxing, a place to escape, unwind, reflect and recharge. Findings consistently demonstrated rejuvenation as both a motivation and a benefit of wellness travel. The review quoted below, represents not only an experience gained as a result of wellness travel, but also describes rejuvenation as a motivation fulfilled:

"I went by myself for a week to relax, recharge and exercise. I had one of my best weeks ever. The staff and the environment helped me to regain my energy, inspiration and

smile. I can't thank you enough for great place for solo visitors looking to revitalize and have a life changing experience." (5 star review)

Comments about the supportive atmosphere and environment also added to this concept of rejuvenation:

"This wellness farm is the place to escape from the noise and tension of the city. The whole ambiance will immediately enchant your body and mind to "stop and smell the roses" as soon as you arrive. Your body clock automatically slows down and rejuvenates. You will achieve rejuvenation and renewal by participating in this supportive holistic environment." (4 star review)

Growth: Pathway

Growth is a difficult concept to measure and identify as a tangible experience. However, the notion of transformation, progress, illumination of the mind and life changing experiences were present in many of the five and four star reviews, thus resulting in the formation of this interpretive code. Conceptually speaking, growth cannot necessarily be categorized as a direct experience during wellness travel, however, it is regarded as a dimension because it is a result of wellness travel. Comments on this dimension are very reflective in nature, revealing the fact that wellness travel truly can have a long-term impact on mental health:

"There should be a moratorium on reviewing Kamalaya until way after the fact, because its benefits aren't always felt immediately. I didn't expect it to have such a profound impact on me but it really was a little slice of paradise, with a very calm and enriching energy. It is the perfect place to come and contemplate your life, to make some changes to your mind and body, to re-charge your batteries, to detox, or simply lie by the pool. The international group of therapists were all outstanding - so intuitive, wise and knowledgeable. I have come away with so much more awareness of life, my mind and health and have the tools to carry what I learnt with me. Thank you to all the wonderful staff for making it such a beautiful, life changing experience not just a lovely holiday." (5 star review)

Another wellness traveler reflects on their long-term relationship with a specific wellness resort, further testifying to the longitudinal benefits of wellness travel:

“I first went to Canyon Ranch 20+ years ago for their weeklong ‘Life Enhancement Center Program’. It has been a foundation for holistic health for the rest of my life. I went back with a friend for a refresher for a week. Though I wanted to lose weight, my focus was motivation. I have to say, I did not lose one single pound while I was there, but I learned and tried new things in physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health, had a wonderful relaxing time, met some great people, and came back renewed.” (4 star review)

The Spirit

Spiritual wellness is conceptualized as non-physical and the birthplace of ones emotions. Wellness travelers illustrated this theme as important through rich description of immersion, community and spiritual connection.

Immersion: Pathway

Immersion can be described as any experience resulting in deep engagement or interest in a particular setting or activity leading to some sense of spiritual enlightenment. This was particularly apparent in reviews referring to becoming immersed in the sounds of nature, the culture of a community or a spiritual practice. Based on online reviews, it is obvious that wellness travelers often times felt a deep sense of transformation as a result of immersion into an experience:

“It was my first yoga retreat, so I immersed myself in the yoga/satsang/workshop/ashram aspect of the place. An ashram can be a magical place by committing to that aspect I had many moving experiences and one jaw dropping, maybe life-transforming one.” (5 star review)

Another wellness traveler review reflects on solo travel and the power of being surrounded by nature showing consistent evidence of immersion:

“I have been here alone, twice. It’s a really good place to reflect with oneself and commune with nature. You have the space to really, truly immerse yourself in the surroundings. I really had a truly joyous moment alone at this place. I cannot find the right words to describe this place, it is simply amazing. From food, to your room, massage, activities, and simply being one with nature. Enchanting.” (5 star review)

Community: Pathway

Several reviews addressed having shared experiences with other guests, friends, family and staff as an enriching part of their wellness travel experience. Reviews described the community as being loving, amazing, including people from all walks of life and providing unforgettable experiences. The results tend to confirm social interaction as an integral part of the wellness tourism experience. For example, one review describes their connection with the wellness resort and the guests they met there as life changing:

"The nature of my journey is somewhat personal, I was looking for answers to questions that I never believed would be answered here, but let's just say, I met some amazing people who changed my view on life, people who were just so beautiful, it's a rare thing in this world. Many people I met stated that Kamalaya has this amazing energy, so many people experience it, but just cannot put their finger on it, but whatever it is, it's unbelievable. I will literally look back on this last 7 days as a life changing event for me, thank you Kamalaya and to all the amazing guests that stay there, you are truly changing lives. Lastly, to that special person whom I met on the boat trip, you are a gift." (5 star review)

Further evidence to support this code is illustrated by reviews detailing their experiences travelling solo and sitting at shared dinner tables, which provided them with a connection they were not otherwise expecting:

"This is an ideal place to come as a single. Everyone is very open and friendly and the center operates on a community basis, with a community table in the restaurant. I met very interesting people of all ages and walks of life. We bonded over long daily walks along the beach, quiet talks in the serene gardens and shared meals." (4 star review)

Spiritual Connection: Pathway

The concept of spiritual connection was referred to with regards to meditation, astrology readings and spiritual development. Many guests reflected on meditation settings as providing a relationship to the spirit and bringing them closer to a higher power:

"Waking up before the sun and sitting for 25 minutes of silent meditation are definitely challenging, but I am growing and learning and discovering more about myself and others and our relationship to God." (5 star review)

And:

"Whether you are a beginner or advanced, you will find growth and peace through this experience. This true ashram emphasizes spiritual development" (4 star review)

The Environment

The environment refers to the physical space in which wellness travelers are operating which may also include surrounding human activity. This dimension was evident as a result of wellness travelers reviews about the staff, grounds, rooms, price and crowding.

Staff: Pathway & Barrier

Representing the second highest category of interpretive codes, the level of service provided by staff was a significant point of discussion amongst wellness traveler reviews. While the majority of reviews about staff were positive in nature, there was also a meaningful representation of negative reviews expressed as well. From a favorable perspective, staff were described as delightful, exceptional, impeccable, and attentive in addition to going to great lengths to create memorable experiences for guests:

"The staff really do look after you and genuinely care about your wellbeing and your program. The trainers are fantastic, the balance between education classes and fitness classes is perfect and the extra excursions give you the opportunity to try something new with support from the staff. I can't say enough about the staff! We were blown away by their service, attention to detail and willingness to exceed your needs and highest expectations." (4 star review)

In addition to speaking of experiences with the staff while on property, there were also guests who praised the service given even after leaving the resort. A large part of sustaining health and wellness happens after you have left the facilities. As illustrated by the following review, staff showed support & encouragement even after the guest had left the resort:

"The staff is warm and always eager to help, support or train. And they support you after you leave with the information packed website and ongoing email or phone support. I will definitely return for more encouragement and reminders about how to live a healthy life." (5 star review)

On the contrary, negative reviews regarding staff revealed inconsistency in service, reactive service, and lack of employee training and low quality management:

"The service was entirely reactive instead of proactive. You have a choice between the Balinese employees that were cheerful and helpful, yet would screw things up due to language barrier, or the local indigenous employees that looked like they wanted to stab you when asking them for something. (1 star review)

And:

"Want your mini bar restocked? Gotta call reception. Want your wine poured? Pour it yourself, because they aren't coming by to pour it for you. The service at the restaurant is UTTERLY slow." (2 star review)

While negative reviews were existent in the data, it is important to note that most of the reviews given with regards to staff were positive in nature.

Grounds: Pathway & Barrier

Included for this interpretive code were reviews addressing property surroundings including the location of the wellness resort, public space (e.g. pools, gardens, workout space) as well as the intangible atmosphere that was felt due to the nature of the grounds. Positive reviews described the grounds as beautiful, scenic, private, lovely, magical and perfect:

"The resort is a really special and nurturing resort, designed to sit in cohesion with the natural landscape, set in the midst of a lush, green rainforest, they are one. The hotel grounds within the rainforest are carefully maintained by a group of gardeners who are always pruning, trimming, cutting etc. The view of the valley and surrounding hills is just lovely. It is the perfect place to relax and reflect." (4 star review)

On the other hand, there were some reviews that did not have such a positive experience with the wellness resorts being located so close to nature:

"If you do not like bugs, this would not be the place for you. Given the proximity to nature, there were so many bugs. Everywhere. Cockroaches in our room, fire ants in our kitchen, and mosquitos galore." (3 star review)

Rooms: Pathway & Barrier

This category addressed the physical makeup of lodging facilities offered by the wellness resorts. Positively, rooms were described as comfortable, clean, private, beautiful and calming:

“Our room was in all the way at the edge, looking out over the river valley and across into the jungle. 'Room' is clearly an understatement, as even this, the most basic accommodation they offer, was a charming little villa. Our room was not brand new, but nevertheless in mint condition. Exotic hardwood furniture and a canopied bed added a touch of tasteful 'colonialism'. All Como products one could wish for, and candles lit at night.” (5 star review)

In contrast to this, those reviews below 4 stars described the rooms as dated, forgotten and rustic.

“Our room unfortunately was a huge disappointment. It seems that we ended up at the “forgotten cabin”. All was very much worn and run down. No box spring for the mattress. Not the bed you would expect at a resort rated this high. It is a real shame that management hides behind “rustic experience” that the clientele is looking for, as an excuse to not update anything.” (3 star review)

There were also a few reviews that reflected on the difficulty of transportation between the rooms and the rest of the property:

“Our hut faced the forest and I had the feeling of living in a jungle. It was beautiful! Unfortunately, I did not recon with the inconvenience we had to go thru every time we use the bathroom, for it is located beneath the house. So we have to go out of our room, down a flight of stairs when we need to go there. It is not for the weak of heart as the steps are steep and plentiful.” (4 star review)

Price: Barrier

Unlike the other interpretive codes, price was heavily discussed in reviews given at four stars or below. Amongst all reviewers, price was mentioned as a barrier to enjoying the wellness travel experience as often times the price point was very high and did not match up with the level of service or the offerings of the wellness property. As evidenced in the following review, while the resort was regarded positively, the price still created a barrier for future visits:

“The Farm is absolutely heaven. The grounds are beautiful; the staff very helpful and attentive, the food is out-of-this-world, great spa treatments! All of this comes at a price.

The Farm used to be more accessible for everyone (they had deals on their website) but now it's so expensive that I simply can't afford to go anymore.” (4 star review)

On the other hand, a one star reviewer speaks horridly of their price vs. service experience:

“Do not waste your time or money going to this place. We paid over \$2100 per night, per room. We booked two rooms. The rooms are 2.5, maybe 3 stars at best. Every time I opened the shades during the day there was someone on a golf cart outside my window or very close by. This also happened to my travel mate. The rooms are very dark and dated.” (1 star review)

Crowding: Barrier

The amount of people in a resort did not appear to be an issue within five star reviews, however it was prominent for other reviewers who noted that overcrowding of the resort led to a less than satisfactory experience and detracted from their motivation to visit for rest and relaxation. One four star review recounts on previous experiences and how the atmosphere of the resort has changed since expansion, thus taking away from the original purpose of the resort:

“The recent expansions have created, at times, an atmosphere of business that was not apparent last year. The yoga and stretching classes were at times full to the point where even the teacher agreed they would have to modify some poses so participants didn't touch each other. Equally the restaurant, which serves amazing, healthy and delicious food, was overwhelmed by the volume of guests especially at dinner. Previous reviewers have commented on the Wellness Centre feeling a little like a production line and I felt this to be true at times.” (4 star review)

Another reviewer speaks of their experience with crowds as well as children. Because of the nature of a wellness vacation, some reviewers felt numbers and age ranges should be limited to provide the optimal experience for each guest:

“Unfortunately, we visited the spa at the end of the day and sat in one of the pools as we watched busloads of LOUD tourists enter and crowd the entire place. There was also a group of teenage boys. Overall, it just was not the relaxing, quiet experience we were hoping for.” (2 star review)

Discussion & Conclusion

The results from this study revealed a clear pattern amongst online wellness reviewers with regards to experiences that can lead to a higher level of wellness versus those experiences that detract from a holistic state of wellness. Based on the number of interpretive codes supporting each theme, it was evident that the environment was the most important aspect with regards to providing the right atmosphere conducive to experiencing different components of wellness while travelling. More specifically, the relationships guests were able to build with staff had a profound impact on their experiences as wellness travelers. Unlike traditional forms of travel, wellness travel often involves more in depth relations between staff and guests. For example, some companies provided personal trainers, nutritionist and therapists. As such, the quality of service provided at wellness resorts is of utmost importance for creating a memorable guest experience and long-term loyal guests. This was particularly apparent in those reviews that praised the staff for their willingness to go above and beyond to make a lasting impression on the guests. Often times, reviews mentioned staff leaving a long-term effect on their decision to continue their journey along the path of wellness, including future plans for wellness travel. These findings demonstrate the strong need for wellness tourism companies to pay close attention to the level of service they are providing. Unlike a traditional vacation, guests are coming for more than rest and relaxation, they are coming for a life transforming experience. It is evident from the results presented in this study that this experience begins with personalized quality service of a relational nature.

In addition to environmental factors, findings from this study consistently illustrated that culinary experiences were also very important to wellness travelers. In contrast to a regular vacation experience, the food provided at a wellness resort is judged based not only on taste and

quality, but also nutritional value, calorie content, its ability to provide energy and freshness. When it comes to food, the expectations of wellness travelers must be taken seriously. In this study, many reviews praised the quality of the food, as well its ability to satiate, provide energy, and in some cases be the catalyst for detoxing. Divergent from this, were those reviews that were horrified by the food, mostly due to low quantities and negative detoxing effects. It is important for wellness companies to be up front about their culinary landscape, as well as the expectations guests should have about detoxing while on a wellness vacation. Those reviewers who complained about a detoxing experience did not stay for long periods of time, which may have negatively affected the overall outcome of their trip.

Many wellness tourists travel with the expectation of experiencing deep rejuvenation and relaxation. In addition to this benefit of wellness travel, it was evident that profound experiences of personal growth were an outcome for some wellness travelers. Many who wrote about this theme reflected that they had not expected to have such a life changing experience leading to new beginnings and perspectives. While this type of experience is highly intangible, it is particularly important to note for those wellness tourism companies that focus on both the mindful and spiritual aspect of wellness. As was described in the literature, electronic word of mouth and reflective testimonies shared online are very powerful marketing strategies (Kardon, 2007; Park, Lee et. al., 2007). While it cannot necessarily be promised that each visitor will have such a transformational experience, focusing on providing a long term commitment to travelers could be a step in the right direction to differentiate in this rapidly growing market.

Lastly, it was particularly apparent in the reviews that travelers truly valued the community aspect provided at many wellness resorts. Unlike more traditional forms of travel, wellness tourism attracts the likes of the solo traveler quite often. With this in mind, many

wellness travelers are looking for an inwardly focused experience, but also made note of how important it was to have the opportunity for combining energy and experiences with others. Some wellness companies included in this study already provided the landscape for this, including community dining and group meditation opportunities. For those companies that are not yet capitalizing on this aspect, it is important to take note on its importance for holistic wellness and specifically for marketing towards solo travelers.

Implications and Future Research

The findings indicate that in order to create a holistic sense of well-being for wellness travelers, wellness tourism companies must consider four categories to inform marketing strategies and on-site offerings.

First, a clear indication of the physical demands that will be expected for specific wellness programs should be well-defined. While it is important for marketers to focus on the outcome of “*feeling well*”, misrepresentations in this area should be avoided, as it will lead to poor reviews and a tainted company image. Specifically, marketing materials should focus on describing the type of food that will be offering, including pictures and videos chronicling the dining experience. The schedules for activities and services should be clear prior to guests arriving to avoid any confusion, especially for short-term visitors. Lastly, those guests wanting to take part in a detox vacation should be made well aware of some of the unpleasant side effects and given a minimum stay requirement to avoid negative experiences. While the road to wellness does garner amazing results, wellness resorts need to be clear about what is involved in the entire process.

Second, marketing strategies targeted towards the mental aspect of wellness travel need to be exposed. Results consistently and clearly illustrated many experiences related to growth, transformation and life change. This outcome of wellness travel is difficult to market because it is intangible. Focus on testimonies provided by past visitors as well as scientific research providing evidence to show the benefits of this type of travel would be advantageous.

Third, an emphasis geared towards solo travelers is definitely warranted. Many reviewers commented on the power of shared experiences with others while travelling alone. Marketers of wellness tourism should capitalize on this, as this is one of few forms of tourism where tourists could feel comfortable traveling alone.

Lastly, a focus on creating and sustaining an environment conducive to wellness is paramount to wellness tourism providers. Many of the wellness resorts in this study were not designed to be budget friendly. With this being the case, the attention to detail of service and offerings is vital to long-term success. A simply beautiful setting is not enough for this sophisticated traveler. Additionally, with attention to well-being becoming more and more widespread, it is important for companies to expand their offerings to be inclusive of a lower socio-economic bracket. With that being said, the focus on facilities may be much more simplistic, but the experiences need to remain grounded in body, mind, spirit and environment.

In order to augment the findings from this study, future research on wellness tourism experiences should incorporate other methods of qualitative analysis (e.g. in depth interviews, focus groups, case studies etc.) as well as quantitative techniques. Further to this, future research should focus more specifically on an explicit type of wellness tourism, for example yoga tourism or spiritual tourism, in order to understand the underlying dimensions unique to these types of tourists. Additionally, future studies should consider employing theories that may provide a more

in depth explanation of the wellness tourism experience. As an example, Filep (2014), has suggested an expansion between tourism research and positive psychological theories as a relevant and necessary connection to be explored.

Limitations

This research attempted to expand the understanding of wellness tourism experiences using an exploratory qualitative approach, but was not without its limitations. Due to the nature of the data collected for this study, it was restricted to only those wellness travelers that choose to review their experience online. Additionally, the focus of this study was on twenty wellness resorts, chosen using a stratified random sampling method, which cannot necessarily be considered representative of the entire population of wellness resorts. Moreover, reviews included in this study were written in English and did not consider any reviews in other languages. Furthermore, the results could be different if experiences not posted online were considered in the data collection process.

Results from this study were based solely on reviews published on Tripadvisor.com. While Tripadvisor is considered to be a valuable source of information with regards to tourist experiences, it is not without its cynics. Many hold the opinion that Tripadvisor does reveal the true opinions and candid experiences of travelers, however it is important to note that these reviews are written in a reflective manner after the experience has already occurred. In contrast this, some believe that reviews are not representative of all tourist opinions and may even represent some falsified reviews. With this limitation in mind, it was assumed that all reviews provided for this study were honest in nature. It is acknowledged that the source of this data does present difficulties in generalizability of this study, therefore it is advised that other researchers

take caution in generalizing results from this research. It is advised that this research is further validated through other sources of data on wellness tourism experiences.

CHAPTER 5

ARTICLE 2. TRANSFORMATIVE EXPERIENCES AMONG YOGA TOURISTS: AN EXPLORATORY INQUIRY

Introduction

Yoga tourism has seen rapid growth in recent years due to the changing face of spirituality in the west. This niche market tourism sector has evolved as a part of the ‘travel to feel well’ trend, now commonly referred to as ‘wellness tourism’. The concept of wellness can be traced back to Halbert Dunn (1959) who argued that to be ‘*well*’ comprised a holistic sense of balance between body, mind, spirit and environment. Wellness tourism is “the sum of all the relationships resulting from a journey by people whose motive, in whole or in part, is to maintain or promote their health and well-being, and who stay at least one night at a facility that is specifically designed to enable and enhance people’s physical, psychological, spiritual and/or social well-being” (Voigt, Brown & Howat, 2011, p. 17). Yoga tourism, a subset of wellness tourism, is described as “tourism which focuses on the union of body, mind and spirit, but which is essentially a religious” (Smith & Kelly, 2006, p. 17). While travelling for yoga has seen a recent growth in popularity, the model of yoga is thousands of years old and can be traced back to ancient Indian culture. Yoga is one of six central systems of Indian thought known as *darsana*, which means “*to see*” (Desikachar, 1999). Yoga means union of the body, mind and spirit (Desikachar, 1999) and is thought to provide stress relief through pranayama (breathing techniques), asana (physical postures) and meditation. According to the Yoga in America Study

(2016), yoga has grown from a niche activity to one that now involves 36.7 million Americans (up from 20.4 million in 2012) and supports a \$27 billion industry with forecasts for continued growth (Clarke, Black, Stussman, Barnes, & Nahin, 2015). To compliment this growing industry, yoga practitioners are now beginning to seek a more balanced vacation through the pursuit of yoga centered travel opportunities. A plethora of yoga vacation opportunities have started to emerge including yoga retreats, seminars, conferences and festivals. While current statistics report that only 8% of yoga practitioners have attended a yoga retreat, 62% report interest in attending a retreat in the near future, leaving much room for the growth and development of this industry.

Continued developments in the field of positive psychology are in line with the growing interest in and demand for yoga tourism. Positive psychology is the study of happiness. It is the scientific study of what makes life worth living and of how humans prosper in the face of adversity (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). The goal of positive psychology is to understand the complexity of human strength and virtue, determining what can lead to higher levels of overall life satisfaction and happiness. William James (1890) maintained that in order to gain a holistic perspective of the human being, one must also take into account the subjective experiences of that individual. From a tourism perspective, it has been suggested by Filep (2012) that more researchers take into account the positive psychological experiences of tourists. In an attempt to gain more understanding of the yoga tourism experience, a range of positive psychological factors were considered in this research, namely, positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning, accomplishment (Seligman, 2011), self acceptance and personal growth (Ryff, 1998).

A framework for transformative experience has been adopted by Fu, Tanyatanaboon & Lehto (2015) in order to examine the positive psychological experiences within the context of yoga tourism. Transformative experiences can be traced back to the idea of the ‘experience economy’ coined by Pine and Gilmore (1998). More specifically, transformative experiences fall on the latter part of the spectrum of ordinary to extraordinary experiences (Walls, Okumus, Wang & Kwun, 2011). It was deemed important to use this framework in order to understand the magnitude of impact each positive psychological factor had within the yoga tourism context. For the purposes of this study, a definition of transformative experience has been adapted from existing literature to include any individual that feels that he/she has changed (in whole or in part) as a result of an encounter while travelling (Fu et. al., 2015).

Despite the rapid growth of yoga tourism, very little research on the topic exists. The scarcity of academic research available about this phenomenon makes it very difficult for practitioners to fully understand the benefits of yoga travel, and thus provide effective marketing materials to future yoga tourists. In line with the paradigms provided by positive psychology, this study attempted to explore the transformative experiences of yoga tourists as they relate to overall happiness and well-being. Qualitative methods were used to (1) examine the factors that contribute to choosing a yoga retreat experience (2) uncover and explore the mechanism by which the yoga retreat experience acts as a functional means to guest well-being & transformation and (3) investigate the catalysts that initiate transformational experiences.

Literature Review

Yoga Tourism

The pursuit of wellness is rooted in finding balance in mental, physical and emotional states. Wellness is not static, but a continuously evolving and ongoing phenomenon affecting daily living practices (Dunn, 1959; Travis, 1984). Today's notion of balance through wellness symbolizes an important cultural shift from a reactive health and wellness paradigm, to a more proactive personalized approach. This idea of proactivity starts with deep self-study in order to develop a balanced and healthy lifestyle focused on long term success, instead of short term fixes (The Hartman Group, 2015). Consumers today focus on elements of wellness including a healthy diet, rest and exercise as well as the fulfillment of emotional, mental and/or spiritual needs (The Hartman Group, 2015; Verschuren 2004). While the awareness of health and wellness is on the rise, consumers still struggle significantly with maintaining a healthy lifestyle. In 1985, the World Tourism Organization placed yoga under the category of social life and competition (WTO, 1985). However, current literature regards yoga tourism as a subset of wellness tourism because of the shared commonalities between the two markets. According to a 2015 health and wellness study, consumers claim to be actively managing 10 health conditions, either through treatment (35%) or prevention (65%) (The Hartman Group, 2015). Fundamentally, these are the factors that contribute to the thriving wellness tourism industry, in addition to its subset, yoga tourism. Moreover, yoga tourism includes holistic practices and therapies that address the need for improved physical fitness, nutrition education, preventative medicinal practices, coping with personal issues and reduction of stress (Lehto, Brown, Chen & Morrison, 2006).

The concept of wellness tourism has taken on a significant destination image in countries such as India, South Korea, China, Russia, Germany and The United States. According to the

Huffington Post (2016), due to its rich history and culture of yoga, India is currently the fastest growing wellness tourism destination with a projected annual growth rate of 22%. Today, yoga practices, retreats and seminars are often offered in conjunction with other wellness travel experiences. The concept of the yoga retreat can be defined as a program where the main theme and purpose for travel is “the yoga practice, around which the total travel experience is planned and developed” (Lehto et. al., 2006, p. 27).

Although there is evidence of substantial growth within the yoga tourism market, very little research has been done in this area, leaving much room for further exploration. On the basis of consumer involvement theory, Lehto et. al. (2006) conducted a study to understand the motivations behind yoga travel. In conclusion, this study found significant motivations to travel for yoga including ‘seeking spirituality’, ‘enhancing mental well-being’, ‘enhancing physical condition’, and ‘controlling negative emotions’ (Lehto et. al., 2006). Based on the evidence currently available, the only other study done specifically on yoga tourism was that of Kumar (2015). This study was conceptual in nature and used secondary data to highlight the potential for yoga tourism as a unique offering of Indian tourism. While there has been very little academic research on yoga tourism, there has been some evaluation of yoga travel within online industry publications. Mind body green, an online wellness website offers motivations to travel for yoga including ‘improving your yoga practice’, gaining a new perspective’, ‘being in the right environment for meditation’, ‘relaxation’, ‘healthy eating’, ‘ridding of bad habits’ and ‘sharing experiences with like minded people’. Additionally, yoga.com shares potential benefits of going on a yoga retreat including ‘immersion’, ‘deep relaxation’, ‘progression in your yoga practice’, ‘examination of the self’, ‘connection with nature’ and ‘re-evaluating ones life’.

Moreover, Wellness Tourism Worldwide reports yoga and meditation topped the list of wellness travel trends for the year 2014.

Yoga and Positive Psychology

In line with the intentions of yoga, positive psychology aims to transform ones daily existence into a deeper, more meaningful life with the goal of reaching higher levels of subjective well-being as well as transformative, even spiritual experiences (Butzer, Ahmed, Khalsa, 2015). Developed by Seligman (2011) The PERMA Model of well-being delineates the key domains that need to be satisfied in order to help individuals find their path to flourishing or “flow”. Included in this model are the domains of positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning and accomplishment. Positive emotions refer to hedonic feelings of happiness while engagement refers to the psychological connection to different areas of life. Positive relationships refer to the feeling of being socially assimilated in ones environment, feeling support from a community and other social connections. Meaning refers to the abstract concept of belief in the value of ones life and connectedness to the greater universe. Accomplishment encompasses progress towards goals, thus leading to a sense of achievement in life (Seligman, 2011). The main goal or desired outcome of the PERMA model is subjective well-being. In addition to these domains, Ryff (1998) argue that self-acceptance and personal growth are also essential to overall well-being. Self-acceptance encompasses self-understanding and an individuals satisfaction or happiness with oneself, while personal growth involves the development of positive life skills and self esteem. Combining these positive psychological theories, this study uses qualitative methods to explore the experiences of yoga retreat participants. While there is some research linking yoga to positive psychology (Butzer, Ahmed & Khalsa, 2015), research linking yoga tourism to positive psychology is absent in the literature.

It is possible that the relationship between yoga, tourism and positive psychology has been overlooked due to the positivistic history of this research discipline in addition to the fact that it can be difficult to measure subjective well-being. In response to this gap in the research, this study attempted to explore yoga traveler experiences through the lens of humanism, which has recently gained more distinction in critical tourism research (Belhassen & Caton, 2011; Willson, McIntosh & Zahra, 2013).

Transformative experiences

The importance of the ‘experience economy’ has seen rapid growth in recent years as more and more companies in the hospitality and tourism industry are focusing on crafting unforgettable experiences for their customers (Pine and Gilmore, 1998). No longer is it sufficient to simply offer defective free products and quality services, companies in today's environment must go above and beyond to differentiate themselves from competitors. Within the travel environment, it is argued that almost everything a “tourist goes through at a destination is an experience, be it behavioral or perceptual, cognitive or emotional, expressed or implied” (Oh, Fiore & Jeoung, 2007). p. 120).). A consumer experience is the “multidimensional takeaway impression or outcome, based on the consumer’s willingness and capacity to be affected and influenced by physical and/or human interaction dimensions and formed by people’s encounters with products, services, and businesses influencing consumption values (emotive and cognitive), satisfaction, and repeat patronage” (Walls et. al., 2011, p. 18). The root of transformative experiences can be traced back to Mezirow’s (1978) transformational learning theory. Mezirow described transformative learning as “an enhanced level of awareness of the context of one’s beliefs and feelings and involves profound changes in self, changes in cognitive, emotional, somatic and unconscious dimensions” (Mezirow, 1978, p. 161, 177). Transformative experiences

can be framed within the spectrum of ordinary to extraordinary experiences, described as immersive, peak and optimal (Walls et. al., 2011) leading to an outcome of perspective transformation (Mezirow, 2000). Travel and tourism is considered by many as an agent of change, peace and international understanding that can lead to long-term perspective shifts and behavioral changes (Lean, 2009).

Although travel and tourism has been associated with personal transformation for many years now (Leed, 1991), research on transformative experiences within the wellness tourism context is limited. Within the wider field of travel and tourism, the term has been used to discuss the effects of travel on the destination (Andereck, Valentine, Knopf, & Vogt, 2005; Kim, Uysal, & Sirgy, 2013) as well as the impact of travel upon the traveler (Lean, 2009; Kim, Woo & Uysal, 2015). Additionally, transformational experience has been discussed in regards to environmental awareness (Beaumont, 2001), learning (Coghlan & Gooch, 2011), cross cultural understanding (Lyons, Hanley, Wearing, & Neil, 2012), spirituality (Willson, McIntosh, & Zahra, 2013) and volunteer tourism (Coghlan & Weiler, 2015). Within the wellness tourism literature, transformational experience has been discussed in regards to the benefits of wellness tourism (Voigt et. al., 2011) and retreat center experiences (Fu et. al., 2015). In 2011, Voigt et. al., conducted a quantitative study which revealed six benefits of wellness tourism namely transcendence, physical health and appearance, escapism and relaxation, important others and novelty, reestablishing self esteem and indulgence. More recently, Fu et. al., (2015), performed thematic analysis on a set of Tripadvisor reviews about retreats in Thailand. Results from this study revealed four major themes of changes incurred as a result of Thai retreat experiences, bodily change, emotional change, attitudinal change and skill change (Fu et. al., 2015). In

addition to these changes, Fu et. al. (2015) set forth a proposed framework to analyze the spectra of these changes (Fig. 5.1.) and suggest further inquiry utilizing this framework.

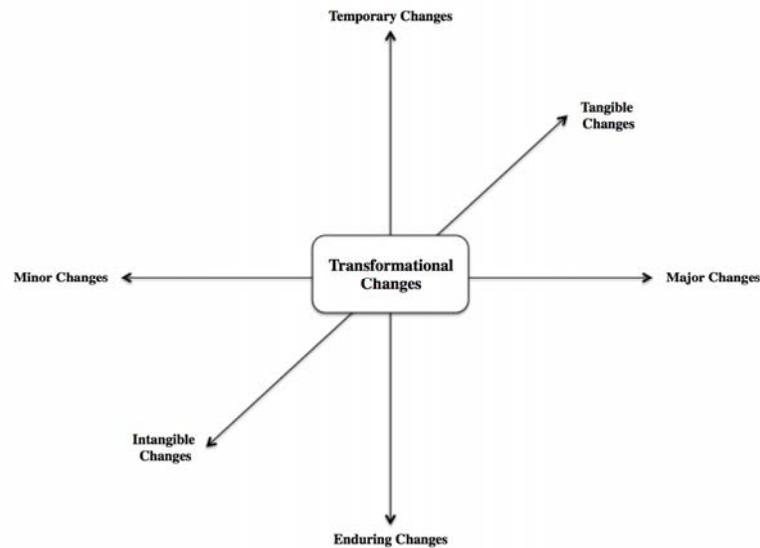


Figure 5.1: Spectra of transformative changes. Adopted by (Fu et. al., 2015).

Transformative experiences in hospitality and tourism are extremely complex and multidimensional in nature leaving much room for understanding. While there has been some research done within the wellness tourism context, it is evident that further inquiry is necessary to gain a more complete understanding of these types of experiences. More specifically, academic research on transformative experiences within the context of yoga tourism is not apparent in the literature, but argued to provide the opportunity for reflection and personal transformation through meaningful experiences (Boswijk, Peelen, Olthof & Beddow, 2012). Utilizing the proposed framework developed by Fu et al., (2015), this study aims to expand upon the current state of the literature on this topic with regards to yoga tourism.

Methodology

The current study implemented qualitative research methods in order delve deeply into understanding yoga retreat experiences as they relate to psychological well-being. Qualitative methods were considered appropriate due to the scarcity of research on this phenomenon. Moreover, the qualitative approach was considered to be a better fit due to the multi-dimensional nature of examining yoga within the tourism context. Employing a qualitative approach allowed the researcher to gain insightful information as well as to discover additional nuances and relationships between themes in the data (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Rooted in the tenets of positive psychological theory, a deductive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was used to investigate and explore each research objective.

Data collection

Networks including yoga retreat participants were not available to the researcher, therefore the snowball sampling technique was deemed most appropriate to attain a purposive sample suitable for this study (Noy, 2008). Initial contact was made with a local yoga studio owner in the southeast to request a sampling of yoga retreat participants for interviews. This resulted in five participants. Each participant was asked to identify any other possible yoga tourists who may be interested in doing an interview. These contacts resulted in four more interviews. In addition to these participants, personal contacts were used to further expand the sample. Participants were no longer recruited for this study once similarities in the responses became apparent and theoretical saturation was reached. The sample included a total of twelve female yoga tourists representing four countries of origin ranging from twenty five to fifty two years old. Amongst the sample, five participants depended on teaching yoga for the majority of their income, while seven did not.

Data were collected by conducting individual in depth semi-structured interviews, which asked participants about their experiences as yoga tourists. Using a semi-structured guide allowed for consistency across the data while also making it possible to gain rich insights from participants (Patton, 2002). Prior to asking any theory specific questions, participants were asked to reflect on their experiences while travelling for yoga and any benefits they felt as a result. Additionally, participants were asked to describe the factors that played an important role when choosing a yoga retreat. Subsequently, participants were asked questions about their experiences as they related to positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning, accomplishment, self-acceptance and personal growth. Lastly, participants were asked to reflect on the relationship between travelling for yoga and their day-to-day lives. Interviews were conducted in English and lasted on average, 42 minutes, covering a range of 29-69 minutes. A pseudonym was given to participants for ease of reference and to protect their identities.

Data analysis

In order to adequately address the aims of this research, this study employed the steps of deductive thematic analysis as described by Braun and Clarke (2006). Thematic analysis is a “method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (Braun & Clarke, 2006 p. 6). Thematic analysis can be applied inductively or using a theoretical or deductive approach. The deductive approach was chosen for this research based on a priori themes identified prior to conducting the research. Deductive thematic analysis is driven by theory, but still moves beyond simply counting words and phrases to derive latent meaning and relationships among themes. The following six steps were adopted from Braun and Clarke (2006) to guide the current study: (1) Familiarization – All interviews were transcribed from audio to text and subsequently read through by the primary researcher who began to write down

initial ideas for coding within the proposed theoretical framework. Any ideas that fell outside this framework were also noted for further analysis (2) Generation of initial codes – Using NVivo 11, a qualitative text mining software, initial codes were attached to specific quotes in the data. This was done systematically for each individual interview, until all interviews were fully coded (3) Searching for themes – Data were extracted from NVivo 11 and organized into an excel chart grouping all quotes with their individual codes. (4) Reviewing themes – At this point, each code was reexamined and matched with an a priori theme to create a codebook. Subsequently, each a priori theme was given an operationalized definition specific to the context of yoga retreat experiences. Each identified theme was reviewed both at the level of the codebook as well as within the original data set. Table 5.1. provides an example of select direct quotes, codes and themes.

Table 5.1. Example data extract from codebook

Original Quote	Theme & Interpretive Codes	Catalyst of Change	Category of Change
"A storm rolled in, and it's humid and hot and we're dripping with sweat and breathing big breaths, and it starts to rain and it was kind of violent outside and we were working really hard at our asana under the tent. Through nature I guess, I felt connected in that moment."	Engagement Nature Immersion Mindfulness Perspective Yoga	Nature	Emotional
"There is this pose that I would work on and I didn't have the understanding about my hips needing to be more open, so I would force my knees down or I would force my legs into lotus pose trying to make this shape with the posture. I made it very external and I realized that I was doing myself more harm than good, so what needed to happen was I needed to slow down and get over my ego about it. Basically I had to just work through it slowly and let go the expectation of achieving in this particular posture."	Personal Growth Perspective Yoga Mindfulness Immersion	Activity	Physical

<p>“The things that I buy in terms of food I try to go for... sustainably caught fish, I’m not just going to go for the cheapest price, I’m going to go where I can get something that supports the farmer...that kind of thing. I’m looking at wellness not just for me, but I exist in a community and I don’t exist on my own. I’m trying to figure out what are the things that I can do that work for everyone.”</p>	<p>Relationships Community Sustainability Transcendence</p>	<p>Retreat environment, Activity (local community food partners on retreat)</p>	<p>Attitudinal, Physical</p>
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(5) Defining themes - Ongoing analysis of each theme and subsequent codes and quotes continued to refine the specifics of the overall story. A thematic map connecting codes and themes was developed to aid in explaining guest well-being and transformation (Fig 5.2.) (6) Scholarly report – Production of the final scholarly report provided opportunity for final analysis and refinement. At this point, selections of the most compelling and representative extracts were chosen to be displayed. Connections between previous literature and theoretical underpinnings were made.

Findings

Yoga retreat destination choice

Analyses of the findings relating to the elements of the preferred destination for yoga tourists are discussed in the following section. Investigation into both the participants past destination choices as well as their ideal destination choice for a yoga retreat revealed five distinct factors including climate, activities, local and sustainable, knowledgeable staff and accessibility. Findings illustrated that most participants preferred warmer climates, located in a quiet place, with mostly untouched surroundings. Additionally, participants preferred retreats located close to a natural water source (e.g. river, lake, ocean) and/or hiking terrain (e.g. mountains). Climate preference is linked to the second category, activities. While participants did agree that yoga should be the main focus of the retreat experience, all participants

commented favorably on having a multitude of other offerings on the property. For example, comments about hiking, swimming, kayaking, spa services, yoga workshops and paddleboard yoga were in abundance. It seemed that yoga tourists are searching for a holistic wellness experience with yoga as the focal point.

"I would be interested in doing a retreat that also offered some other type of adventurous things. Like kayaking, biking, stand up paddleboard yoga... something involving nature. I think that's the main thing, it has to involve nature in some sort of cool way." - Kaycee (Yoga Teacher)

Further elaboration revealed that the participants valued sustainably focused retreats offering some connection to the local community. Specifically, participants mentioned wanting the opportunity to delve into local food through the opportunity to take cooking classes from local chefs, and meeting the local farmers who grew the food:

"Somewhere where I can feel a real connection with the food I am eating. I want to know the farmer, the cook, the local butcher. I want fresh, organic, local, well prepared food. I like to understand where my food is coming from, so for me that is also part of the retreat experience. I would even do a cooking class if it was available." – Catherine (Yoga Teacher)

Based on participant accounts, it was obvious that the quality of the retreat leader was very important. Much of a yoga retreat experience is molded by the guidance of the lead yoga teacher. This person creates all activities and leads workshops while on retreat, thus making their role paramount to the success of a retreat. This was illustrated in the following response:

"I think one of the things that matters is who is leading the retreat. I know it's an experience that is very much inward going, but it still matters. You want to have a charismatic leader, I think. Somebody who can create that atmosphere where the community is on the same page and supportive of each other. That is important."- Kaitlyn (Student)

While the majority of the findings related to factors describing the retreat experiences, accessibility of the retreat was also regarded as an important factor by many participants.

Accessibility incorporates price, location, duration and package. The majority of participants mentioned price when asked about the factors that go into choosing a retreat. Additionally, participants revealed that they are more willing to spend the money when a retreat is offered in an attractive package including lodging, meals and some extra activities outside of yoga. Moreover, participants revealed that ease of transportation and time commitments were also important factors:

“There's so much to consider...location, time, price. It can't be hard to get to. It can't be more than 2 weeks... 2 weeks is pushing it, 10-12 days is a good amount of time for a retreat.” – Catherine (Yoga Teacher)

"In terms of price, it depends on the value for the package. Are all meals included? Are all accommodations included? I would pay anywhere between \$2500-\$3000 for a 7-day, 6-night retreat. I'd be willing to spend that kind of money, just because I know that it would be something that I wouldn't forget and something that goes far beyond a regular vacation. I tell myself, save up your money so you can go on retreat at least once a year. It's so so important." – Kaycee (Yoga Teacher)

Guest well-being & transformation

The yoga tourists interviewed for this study expressed a range of transformational experiences as they relate to their overall well-being. Recollections of these experiences were described with clarity, often times accompanied by intense emotion. Rooted in the precepts of positive psychology, ranges of transformational changes were uncovered. The spectra of transformational changes are described in Table 5.2. below (Fu et. al., 2015).

Table 5.2. Spectra of Transformational Changes. Adapted from Fu et. al. (2015)

Minor - Major Changes
This spectrum refers to the degree to which the change was considered significant on a scale from small changes to relatively profound changes (Fu et. al., 2015). Minor changes were considered to be small, specific and in reference to a particular moment in time. In opposition, major changes were regarded as more enlightening, affecting beliefs and attitudes without being limited to a specific behavior or skill.
Temporary - Enduring Changes
This spectrum of changes delineates between the degree to which an experience was considered permanent or ephemeral (Fu et. al., 2015). Temporary changes referred to those experiences most often stimulated by the environment and atmosphere a retreat provides, without reference to how long the changes may have lasted. On the other hand, enduring changes were indicated to affect ones lifestyle beyond the retreat experience.
Intangible - Tangible Changes
This spectrum concerns the palpability of changes (Fu et. al., 2015). For example, intangible changes described improvement in areas such as self-acceptance, spirituality and relationships with others. Tangible changes were seen as more concrete, for example accomplishing a concrete goal.

In order explore the relationships among each positive psychological factor and transformational change; an integrative thematic framework was developed (Figure 5.2.). Each positive psychological theme is presented within its spectra of changes below, supported by quotes from the interview participants.

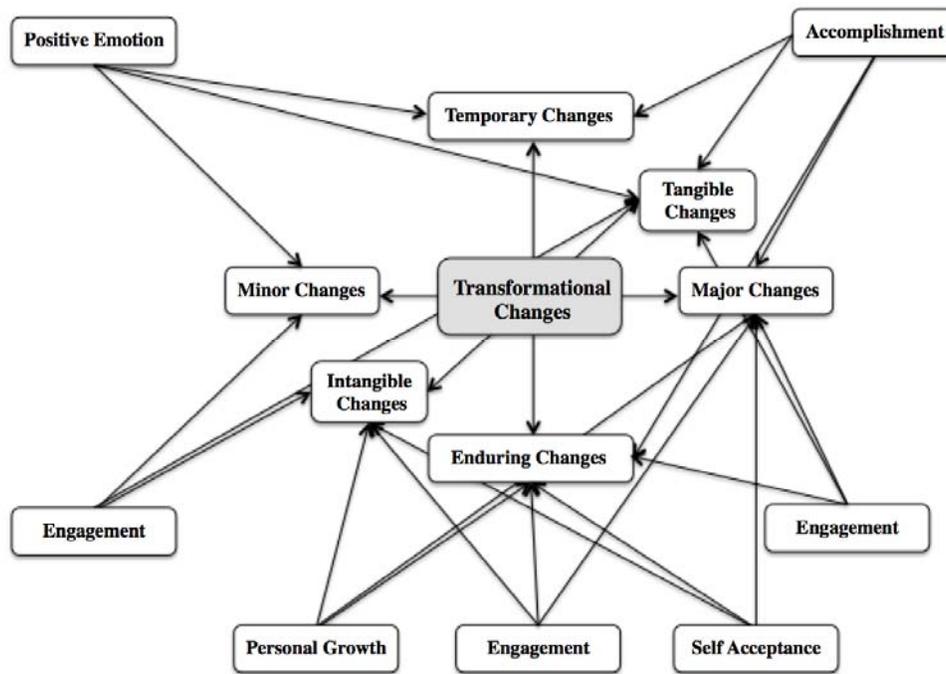


Figure 5.2. Integrative thematic framework

Positive Emotions

Positive emotions are fundamental when considering well-being (Seligman, 2011). Experiences related to contentment and happiness were discovered within the data to support this theme. Positive emotion was classified as minor, temporary and intangible on the spectra of changes. Comments about the simplicity of being surrounded by nature were in abundance amongst participants when describing this positive psychological benefit. Changes induced by positive emotion were most often described with words such as content, happiness, smiling, silence, learning, alone time and euphoria. These changes were categorized as being primarily emotional in nature. Frequently, participants described moments of positive emotion invoked by the atmosphere of the retreat, happening at a specific moment in time leading to a memorable but intangible experience. This is demonstrated in the following quote:

"It was a moment after one of our meditations. I think the euphoria after you've come out of a long meditation, surrounded by nature, in tune with everything around you and then you're just like, this is just great. That's the feeling. That is happiness." – Lauren (Student)

While the changes invoked by positive emotion were minor and temporary in nature, the idea of experiencing authentic happiness throughout ones life has been proven as an essential part of well-being (Seligman, 2011), thus laying the foundation for more long term transformational changes.

Engagement

Engagement has been described as those moments when we are able to engage fully with the present moment, thus entering the state of being known as ‘flow’” (Seligman, 2011). In line with positive emotion, engagement was classified as resulting in minor, temporary and intangible changes. Elaboration on this theme involved comments describing experiences that involved mindfulness, creativity, nature, immersion, learning and reflection. The thematic analysis of interviews revealed that engagement most often occurred in nature and led to the psychological enhancement of the self. These changes were categorized as being primarily attitudinal in nature as many participants described having a perspective shift due to intense levels of engagement. The majority of comments used to describe engagement referred to a specific moment in time making it a minor change:

"A storm rolled in, and it's humid and hot and we're dripping with sweat and breathing big breaths, and it starts to rain and it was kind of violent outside and we were working really hard at our asana under the tent. Through nature I guess, I felt connected in that moment." - Vanessa (Yoga Teacher)

Another participant describes her experience with becoming absorbed and engaged as being the catalyst for a change in perspective, making this an intangible change:

"What helps me become absorbed is... just detaching from the world and being surrounded by nature. Simply, the setting of retreats helps you to gain perspective on what a small speck you are in this huge world." – Anna (Student)

Relationships

Relationships refer to the idea that well-being must be supported by a community of love and support from others (Seligman, 2011). In this study, data was coded under this theme if it illustrated experiences with others while on retreat, in addition to relationships that were cultivated on a yoga retreat, but continued long after the retreat as over. Relationships were classified as having a major, enduring and intangible impact on transformational experiences. Findings illustrated that relationships built during retreats often times led to a shift in perspective motivated by learning about different cultural backgrounds, but also bound by the shared experience of vulnerability while on retreat. Therefore, these changes were categorized as being primarily attitudinal in nature:

"We were all at the same age trying to figure out our lives. I was in transition, and then I met several other women who were in the same weird space of not knowing ... Having that bond with those women was essential, and I still talk to them. The connections definitely transcend the retreat." - Kaycee (Yoga Teacher)

Furthermore, one participant recollected how her retreat experience resulted in an enduring life change that led her to be more cognizant of the relationships she builds and sustains within her home community:

"The things that I buy in terms of food I try to go for... sustainably caught fish, I'm not just going to go for the cheapest price, I'm going to go where I can get something that supports the farmer...that kind of thing. I'm looking at wellness not just for me, but I exist in a community and I don't exist on my own. I'm trying to figure out what are the things that I can do that work for everyone." - Kaila (Yoga Teacher)

Meaning

Meaning encapsulates having a sense of purpose and direction in life. This may involve religious connections to a higher power or feeling connection to a higher purpose or personally meaningful goal (Seligman, 2011). Meaning was classified as producing major, enduring and intangible transformational experiences. Participants described experiences surrounding meaning as cultivating reverence, perspective, and connection to a higher purpose and/or higher power. These changes were classified as being mainly attitudinal in nature. From a spiritual perspective, comments about connecting to a higher purpose, were richly described by participants as a major turning point leading to a shift in their attitudes and beliefs:

"My first retreat in India is really where I learnt about spirituality. I just learned that honestly, God is in everything, God is a part of you. If you praise God and honor God, you honor and praise yourself. I think when I do yoga, that's when I feel most connected to God and myself, my mind, body, soul, spirit... it connects everything and everyone."
Catherine (Yoga Teacher)

Another participant illustrated her experience while on retreat as being clarifying in determining what her passion and purpose for life was:

"I am not religious in any way, shape or form, so I don't look to a higher power in terms of any deity or anything like that, but I certainly feel my highest calling as a human being and as a member of this community...of this world. For me, it is to serve others and to hold space in a way that's nonjudgmental... to be there for people who need to cry, laugh, be angry - whatever they need." Kaila (Yoga Teacher)

Based on participant accounts, it was evident that connection to a higher purpose and/or power was seen as a transformational retreat experience.

Accomplishments

Accomplishments can be marked as receiving a certification or award in addition to being described through feelings of achievement (Seligman, 2011). In this study, accomplishments were mainly described as feelings of achievement while on the retreat as well as

accomplishments reached by continuing certain practices after leaving the retreat. Therefore, accomplished were categorized as both temporary and enduring transformational experiences as well as major and tangible in nature. Additionally, these experiences were thought to bring both physical and attitudinal changes. Findings consistently demonstrated that yoga retreats led to major concrete changes with regards to accomplishments in ones daily life. For example, many participants shared different daily routines they have now incorporated due to their experience on retreat, as well as some who even spoke of sharing new knowledge with their loved ones:

"I think just having the confidence, is what I gain from going on the retreats, and then practicing this mindfulness. When I leave, I'm always so sad that I'm leaving all these people who are like-minded, but then I realize I have an opportunity to bring what I've learned — the courage, the love, the patience — and I can use that in my day-to-day job in Labour, dealing with people who have just lost their jobs... I try to ask myself - How do you practice patience here? How are you courageous when you see stuff going wrong? Are you the one to stand up and say something?" - Kaycee (Yoga Teacher)

"Honestly, before the retreat, we have never tried a vegetarian diet. My husband has some health issues that we need to overcome, so we're eating totally vegetarian, healthful, nutritious food. I would not have taken the opportunity to explore that with him had I not been exposed to it during the retreat." - Kaitlyn (Student)

The notion of taking away knowledge and new practices from a retreat into one's daily life was the most tangible transformation retreat participants described. While many did not describe huge accomplishments conquered on the retreat, many highlighted how incredibly important they felt the retreat experience was as a catalyst for these changes.

Self-Acceptance

Self-acceptance, while fairly intangible in nature, was consistently described as having a profound and lasting effect on yoga retreat participants. Self-acceptance comprised those moments described as the catalyst leading to self-love, understanding and happiness with ones life (Ryff, 1998). Self-acceptance was classified as a major, intangible, tangible and enduring

transformational change. Many participants commented on realizations they had while on retreat about self-love, body image and letting go of unrealistic expectations to make room for mindful living. Numerous participants elaborated further describing their retreat as a jumping board for living on the path of self-acceptance – knowing that it is a continuous process, not a destination. Self-acceptance was categorized as having brought both emotional and attitudinal changes to participants:

"Self-acceptance, it's a huge one that I continually work on. I'm not really one for huge goals...like yearly goals or anything. I think that people set too many fake goals and too high standards for themselves and then they end up failing. Retreats have this way of breaking down these ideals, and yoga for me, helps me maintain this idea of moving forward inch by inch, instead of trying to conquer everything at once." Catherine (Yoga Teacher)

In addition to this, many participants reflected on different activities they did on retreat that pulled them outside of their comfort zone, but led to major changes regarding self-acceptance.

"There was an activity that we did where we looked in a mirror, and you had to sit there in a chair with all these people around you, and you had to tell yourself, "I love you." And everybody came up and said, "I love you," and people were in tears, crying, because we never do that for ourselves. You do it for other people, but to do it for yourself - this was life changing for me." - Diana (Yoga Teacher)

Following this quote in the interview, Diana went on further to reflect on a practice she now has of writing herself encouraging messages in the mirror to maintain this sense of self-acceptance she felt so intensely on her retreat. Both the activities on retreat, as well as the at home practices combined with the intangible feelings of self-acceptance that were described, makes this category both tangible and intangible.

Personal Growth

According to Ryff (1998), personal growth involves the development of lifelong skills as well as progress with self-esteem. With the data, participants described personal growth mainly

through the catalyst of reflection, resulting in empowerment and healing. However, one participant referred to a more physical experience through her yoga practice bringing about both attitudinal and physical change. Personal growth is categorized as major, enduring and intangible. Meredith, a participant who reflected on dealing with a particularly difficult situation in her life at the time, continues here reflecting on the growth she experienced while on retreat that empowered her to acknowledge her strengths in a time when she was struggling.

"Just acknowledging my strength to be able to walk through it. Acknowledging my capabilities, strength and determination ... I am good enough to do this, I am smart enough to do this. I can do this. I think it was healing for me to acknowledge those things and realize that it's going to work and I'm going to be okay." - Meredith (Student)

Furthermore, Kaila spoke about a specific process she had to overcome with regards to her yoga practice while on retreat. As evidenced in this quote, the ability to retreat and reflect, allowed Kaila to feel empowered to let go of certain external expectations she had for herself.

"There is this pose that I would work on and I didn't have the understanding about my hips needing to be more open, so I would force my knees down or I would force my legs into lotus pose trying to make this shape with the posture. I made it very external and I realized that I was doing myself more harm than good, so what needed to happen was I needed to slow down and get over my ego about it. Basically I had to just work through it slowly and let go the expectation of achieving in this particular posture." – Kaila (Yoga Teacher)

Transformational catalysts

Participants in this study articulated a variety of transformational experiences that are described above. Further investigation into each transformational experience revealed three categories of catalysts: activities, retreat environment and natural surroundings. Figure 5.3 illustrates each category revealing the associated sub classifications. A wide range of activities were referred to as the catalyst for a transformative experience. In fact, the majority of transformational experiences began with an organized activity. Participants commented on the

challenging nature of certain activities on both a physical and an emotional level. Further to this, many participants revealed certain activities that they transferred into their home life, including journaling, cooking healthier food, daily yoga practices, meditation and self-love practices. In general, activities that had the greatest impact put participants in challenging and vulnerable situations within the support of a group lead by a charismatic and knowledgeable leader. This is substantiated by the quote below:

"There was one night and the activity was around a fire and we had to write three things that we wanted to let go of and then we threw them in the fire. As a part of that, some people shared what they wrote. Actually, the leader of the retreat began... and she shared some pretty heavy things she was struggling with. It kind of made you feel vulnerable in a way, but it also made you feel really connected because everybody's things were different, but what they had in common was that we all have struggles and we are all in this thing together."- Abigail (Student)

The second catalyst was the retreat environment. This category refers to the atmosphere felt within the retreat environment. For example, many participants reflected on the ability to be in silence while on retreat without being judged as a catalyst for reflection. Other descriptions of the atmosphere included sharing meals and space with like-minded people along with the ability to spend time detached from the outside world (free from electronics, internet etc). This type of atmosphere provided participants with the space to feel free from judgment and comfortable enough to reflect:

"Just being surrounded by a group of women was really powerful to me because women can relate on many things. I think it was really important to be among a group of people that I felt that I could relate to and feel comfortable around. I felt safer in a sense... it was just a nice closed in environment that came together to create a little community." - Elizabeth (Student)

Lastly, natural surroundings were mentioned several times throughout the data as providing the physical environment necessary for transformation to occur. Participants reflected on having

time to reflect alone while surrounded by nature, feeling a type of reverence for the planet that is usually clouded by activity and feeling connection to the elements through practicing yoga outside in the wilderness. The simplicity of being surrounded by nature seemed to have significantly supplemented the transformative experiences of many participants as epitomized by the quote below:

"I just like seeing the beauty of the world. It makes you feel a little bit of reverence for this planet. You get a little bit more respect for the environment. It just makes you feel a little bit smaller than you might feel otherwise... there's this little bit of diminishment to your ego. One night I looked up, and it was like being in a planetarium. I literally ended up on my knees because it was dizzying. I'll never forget those kinds of moments. They create memories that are almost tangible." - Ashley (Student)

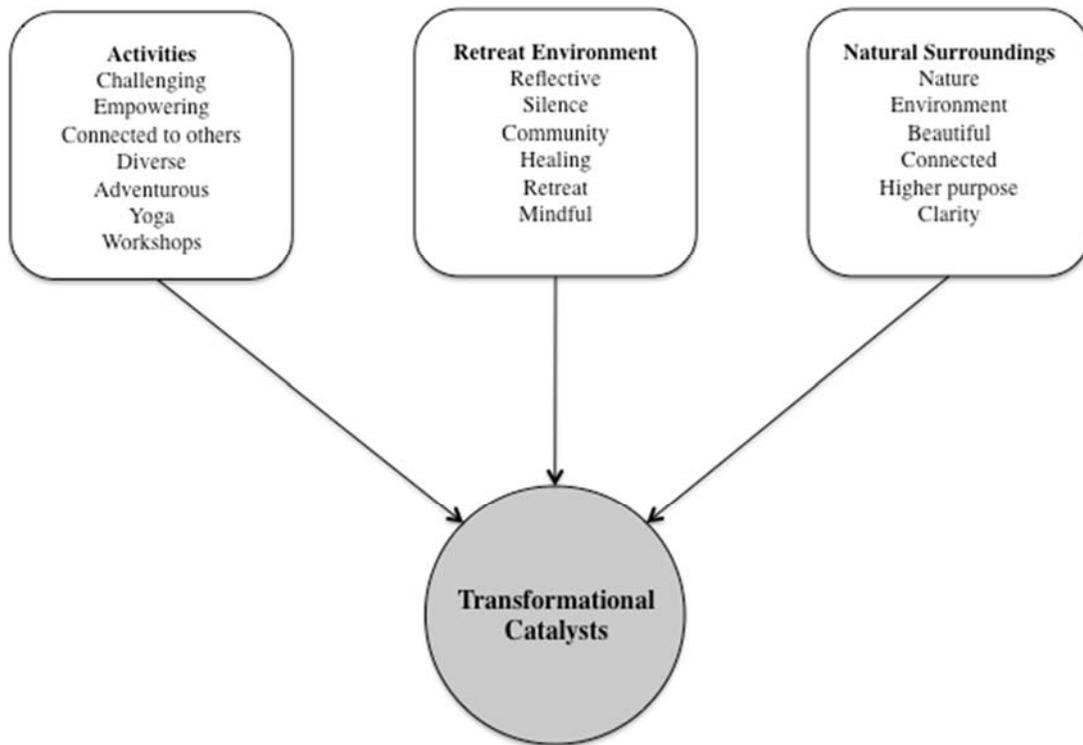


Figure 5.3. Transformational catalysts with interpretive codes

Discussion & Conclusion

The results of this exploratory study revealed the factors that go into destination choice for a yoga retreat as well as the mechanisms by which yoga retreat participants experience transformation and well-being with regards the catalyst of the change and the spectra of the change. This study revealed five factors relating to destination choice, climate, activities, local and sustainable, knowledgeable staff and accessibility; seven positive psychological factors contributing to transformational change, positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning, accomplishment (Seligman, 2011), self-acceptance and personal growth (Ryff, 1998); three spectrums from which transformational change occurs, minor – major, temporary – enduring, and intangible – tangible (Fu, et. al., 2015); and three categories of transformational catalysts, activities, retreat environment and natural surroundings. A qualitative approach allowed for a more in depth understanding specific to the yoga retreat experience, which had not been explored previously in the literature.

As mentioned previously, yoga tourism is a rapidly growing industry with more and more of the population becoming in tune with their health and wellness while traveling. Therefore, investigating the factors that contribute to choosing a yoga retreat was deemed to be important. Echoing Chen et al. (2008), this study found that climate was very important as well as the types of activities offered. However, it is interesting to note that there was no mention of traditional service delivery or small gestures usually provided by line level employees. It was revealed that yoga retreat participants valued the knowledge and characteristics of the retreat leader much more than traditional service quality. This is not to say that service quality is not important, but to highlight the fact that yoga retreats may consider employing minimal line staff in order to focus on the factors that truly impact transformational experiences.

Research linking tourism to positive psychology is long overdue (Filep, 2012). The deductive thematic analysis employed in this study was based on seven positive psychological factors derived from previous literature (Ryff, 1998; Seligman, 2011). Though these factors had previously been developed, they had never been tested in a tourism context. Findings from this study revealed that the dynamics of positive psychological well-being are evident in yoga retreat participants. In fact, these elements were all categorized as having some degree of impact on transformational change. Minor, temporary and intangible changes on the retreat included those intense moments of happiness as well as powerful moments of engagement. While these changes may have been transient, they were an important aid in creating memorable experiences for participants, which led to more major, enduring, and tangible changes that often surfaced after the retreat was over. Yoga retreat participants experienced physical changes as well as changes in behavior, attitude and skill. This echoes previous literature that found retreat experiences to invoke similar domains of changes (Fu et. al., 2015). Findings from this study however are unique in that they are specific to yoga retreats. A closer look into the differences between various types of wellness tourism with regards to transformational change would shed new light on this phenomenon. As such, this study makes a significant contribution to the literature by establishing a link between positive psychological theories and yoga tourism.

Findings from this study clearly revealed three distinct catalysts for transformational experiences. Activities were a very important part of guests transformational experiences. An in depth look into the nature of the activities revealed that guests experienced transformation both singly as well as in group settings. Guests reflected on activities that challenged them to be vulnerable, aware and contemplative. These activities often led to a boost in confidence, shift in perspective and realization of truths. Many activities were experienced with the support of a

group, which allowed for a communal process of transformation. As reflected in the data, many guests spent time building lasting relationships during these activities with other yoga retreat participants. These results validate those of Voigt et. al. (2010) who found wellness tourists experienced a “belongingness to a special social world” (p. 550).

Reflections from yoga tourists illustrated that the retreat environment was also an important catalyst, which stimulated transformation. The environment described refers to a non-physical space encapsulating more of a feeling about a specific atmosphere yoga retreats provide. The presence of silence was very important to those participants in this study. Silence provided the ability to detach and reflect in a non-judgmental atmosphere. This was a novel finding unique to this research and may be considered specific to the yoga retreat environment. A closer look into the factors significant to wellness retreat environments is recommended.

Lastly, the presence of natural surroundings played a significant role in how guests consumed the yoga retreat experience. In alignment with previous findings, it was revealed that nature is an important element in the transformational experience (Fu et. al., 2015; Lehto, 2013; Little, 2012). The data revealed that untouched surroundings provided the optimal environment to experience certain outdoor activities, alone time, meditation and yoga classes. This connection with nature provided guests the space to reflect and come to certain attitudinal, emotional and physical changes.

Managerial Implications

Findings revealed in this research lend themselves to three specific managerial implications. First, there is a clear indication that it is important to approach yoga retreat activities from a holistic perspective. For example, simply offering yoga classes at a retreat will

not be enough. Thought must be put into the location for the classes, the content as well as the experience level of the instructor. Further to this, it is obvious that those looking to go to yoga retreats are hungry for more adventurous activity as well. Including a certain number of these activities in a package would be advantageous to retreat operators looking to differentiate their business. It is also clear from this research that passive, silent activities are just as transformative as active ones. Providing a conducive atmosphere for this will be important for those retreats looking to brand themselves as transformative spaces. Lastly, retreat participants thrived greatly as a result of sharing experiences and creating bonds with others on the retreat. The, in large part, was due to the similarities between participants. With this in mind, yoga retreat companies could begin marketing retreats towards a specific type of person, for example women looking to start their own business.

Second, creating a clear and conscious connection to the local environment and community is paramount to yoga retreat operators. As evidenced in this study, yoga travellers are revealing themselves to conscious stewards of the environment and their communities. Going beyond the conventional marketing strategies of 'going green', yoga retreat operators need to put more focus on creating and providing tangible experiences for their guests to interact with and give back to their local surroundings. For example, yoga retreat operators could employ a local chef to come and provide cooking classes for the guests. Additionally, they could employ a local tour guide to lead a hike or other nature based activity. In this way, yoga retreat participants would remain connected to their environment while being immersed in the local culture of the community they are visiting.

Moving beyond the context of the retreat, yoga retreat operators need to begin tracking the transformational experiences of their guests. Over time, this collection of data could provide

a foundation for truthfully marketing and providing transformational experiences. Additionally, this type of data could aid in increasing the amount of loyal guests who are passionate about coming back year after year to continue their transformational journey.

Limitations & Future Research

The current research is exploratory in nature, thus providing an initial starting point for further exploration into the transformational experiences of wellness tourists. There is considerable potential for future investigation into the relationships among positive psychology, yoga tourism and wellness tourism. Additionally, it would be interesting to examine the differences between transformational experiences of wellness tourists as opposed to those of traditional tourists. The current study, while providing a sound foundational template, does have its limitations. Data from this study are only representative of the sample of twelve yoga retreat participants, therefore results from this study are limited to this sample. Further quantitative research into this topic could provide more wide-reaching generalizable results.

More specifically, future quantitative research validating the factor structure of the positive psychological measures explored in this study is warranted. Subsequent to this, it would be interesting to incorporate quality of life (QOL) measures to determine the impact of transformational yoga retreat experiences on QOL. Conducting comparative tests of this model within other tourism contexts would shed light on the relative importance of travelling for wellness vs. other forms of tourism. Additional factors such as length of stay, at home wellness practices, current health and patron status would also be of significant importance within the model. In line with discussions under managerial implications, conducting a longitudinal study would be of relative importance to both retreat operators as well as yoga tourists themselves.

CHAPTER 6

ARTICLE 3: DO VACATIONS REALLY MAKE US HAPPIER? EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN TOURISM, WELLNESS AND QUALITY OF LIFE USING POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORY

Abstract

The aim of this study was to examine the relationships between tourists' positive psychological well-being and satisfaction with quality of life (QOL). More specifically, this study examined tourists' well-being using the PERMA model of well-being developed by Seligman (2011) and its capacity to predict QOL. This paper examines the differences between wellness and non-wellness tourists as it relates to well-being and QOL. Additionally, this study examined the importance/performance ratings of well-being experiences while travelling. To capture these relationships, 862 respondents were recruited through Amazon Mechanical Turk and answered questions about their well-being while travelling and satisfaction with quality of life. Confirmatory factor analysis, structural equation modeling and importance performance analysis were employed to answer the research questions. Results suggest that the PERMA model does not contribute to QOL. Wellness travelers experience greater connection between overall health and QOL. Generally, the travel and tourism industry is performing up to the expectations of both wellness and non-wellness tourists. Both theoretical and managerial implications are discussed. Future research evaluating the existence of positive psychological well-being within the tourism context is warranted.

Introduction

The connection between tourism and wellness has been argued for decades (Gross, 1961). Vacations have long been considered an avenue for travelers to escape from their everyday life and pursue the sought after indulgences that can lead to rest, relaxation and rejuvenation. In fact, it has been many years since the development and subsequent growth of mass tourism destinations that cater to those vacationers seeking such relaxation (Knowles & Curtis, 1999). In addition to the goal of rest and relaxation, travel and tourism has also been considered a promising opportunity for individuals to pursue higher levels of life satisfaction (Rubenstein, 1980). Hobson and Dietrich (1995) argued that there is an “underlying assumption in our society that tourism is a mentally and physically healthy pursuit to follow in our leisure time” (p. 23). More recently, this has been conceptualized through studies investigating the contribution of travel and tourism to quality of life (QOL) by tourism scholars around the world (Dolnicar, Yanamandram & Cliff, 2012; Filep, 2014; Filep & Deery, 2010; Neal, Sirgy, & Uysal, 1999; Uysal, Sirgy, Woo & Kim, 2016; Neal, Uysal & Sirgy, 2007).

Unfortunately, these views of traditional tourism experiences leading to healthier lives is becoming outdated with new evidence revealing that the reality of today’s vacation environment does not always lead to positive effects. According to the Global Wellness Institute (2013), travel and tourism actually has the capability to decrease overall levels of health. Combining the stresses of airport hassle along with the interference of exercise routines, overindulgence in food, alcohol and sun exposure often times leaves travelers needing another vacation after their vacation (GWI, 2013). While some researchers have argued vacations contribute positively to tourists’ overall well-being and quality of life (Dolnicar et al., 2012), there is an opposing argument linking tourism to decreased levels of well-being, particularly those in relation to

physical health (Hunter-Jones, 2003). These divergent viewpoints make it unclear whether vacations do in fact increase or decrease one's overall well-being and quality of life creating room for further investigation into this topic.

In response to the growing concern for these pervasive issues, an alternative niche market, 'wellness tourism', has begun to emerge. Although travelling for wellness can be traced back hundreds of years, the current conceptualization and growth of this market in the western world is fairly new (GWI, 2013). Overarching issues driving the wellness tourism market include an increasingly chaotic life environment, high stress work conditions and a decrease in social and community structures. Coupled with an increasing longing to simply slow down and focus on the deeper meaning, the growth of wellness tourism addresses a clear need amongst travelers (Douglas, 2001; Pollock, A., Williams, Gartner & Lime, 2000; Lehto, Brown, Chen, & Morrison, 2006; Smith & Puczko, 2008).

Various terminologies including holistic, health, yoga, spa and medical tourism have been used across different articles all describing wellness tourism. Although wellness tourism does share commonalities with these niche markets, it is incorrect to use the terms interchangeably. In a general sense, wellness tourism has been defined as a subset of health tourism including travel for the purposes of maintaining or enhancing one's personal wellbeing (GWI, 2013). More specifically, Voigt, Brown and Howat (2011) defined wellness tourism as "the sum of all the relationships resulting from a journey by people whose motive, in whole or in part, is to maintain or promote their health and well-being, and who stay at least one night at a facility that is specifically designed to enable and enhance people's physical, psychological, spiritual and/or social well-being" (Voigt, Brown & Howat, 2011, p. 17). Within the wellness tourism market, travelers are further classified as either primary or secondary. Primary wellness travelers are

those people who travel with wellness as the sole purpose for their trip while secondary wellness travelers are those people who seek to maintain wellness while taking any type of trip. For the purposes of this study, wellness tourism is delineated as a subset, housed under the larger umbrella of health tourism while wellness travelers are defined as those people who travel with wellness as their primary or secondary purpose (Chen, Prebensen, & Huan, 2008; GWI, 2013; Medina-Muñoz & Medina-Muñoz, 2013; Voigt et al., 2011). In contrast to wellness travelers, non-wellness travelers are those people who travel for either business or leisure without participating in any wellness activities during travel.

Although there is some research to suggest that wellness tourism can positively impact tourists' well-being (Smith & Kelly, 2006; Smith & Puczko, 2008), there is insufficient evidence to draw any firm conclusions. Furthermore, while there have been a handful of studies investigating the contribution of travel experiences to tourists QOL (Gilbert & Abdullah, 2004; McCabe, Joldersma & Li, 2010). Nawijn, 2011; Neal et al., 2007; Pols & Kroon, 2007), an examination of the impact of different types of tourism on OQL is not evident in the literature. Consequently, this study aims to investigate the relationship between wellness tourism, overall well-being, and quality of life, compared to that of non-wellness tourism. To this end, the following research questions are posited:

- (1) What positive psychological benefits derived from wellness/ non-wellness tourism predict an increased satisfaction with quality of life?
- (2) Do happiness, health and negative emotions play a mediating role between the PERMA model of psychological well-being and quality of life?
- (3) Does length of stay play a moderating role in determining how wellness/non-wellness tourism contributes to quality of life?

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- (4) What differences exist amongst the types of travelers (wellness vs. non) as it relates to quality of life?
- (5) What are the most important positive psychological benefits from wellness tourism the perspective of wellness travelers?
- (6) Based on importance, how well does wellness tourism satisfy the positive psychological needs of wellness travelers?

Literature Review

Tourism and Quality of Life

Quality of life research can be dated back to the 1960's when the debate over the meaning of this term began. With over 100 definitions and models of QOL in existence, defining this concept has proven to be a difficult task (Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011). The main debate regarding QOL lies in whether it should be measured objectively or subjectively, uni-dimensionally or multi-dimensionally. Inherent to the objective line of thought is the judgment of an elite person or group who has identified specific standards that must be met in order to lead to ultimate satisfaction with life. Subjectively, individuals are the tool by which QOL is measured (Blishen & Atkinson, 1980). Uni-dimensionally, QOL is determined by a set of survey items developed to measure ones satisfaction with life as a whole. For example one of the items from Diener, Emmons, Larsen and Griffin's (1985) satisfaction with life scale reads "the conditions of my life are excellent". Contrarily, the multi-dimensional perspective measures QOL within numerous different life domains, for example social life, family life, and work life (Uysal et al., 2016). In the current study, QOL is understood from the subjective, uni-dimensional perspective and described broadly as one's personal report of life satisfaction, including levels of

gratification and contentment with regards to their life experiences (Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011).

Research on QOL is evident across multiple disciplines including political science, sociology, economics, psychology and most recently tourism. The relationship between travel and quality of life has recently attracted significant attention from scholars in the field (Andereck & Nyaupane, 2010; Corvo, 2011; Filep & Deery, 2010; Gilbert & Abdullah, 2004; McCabe et al., 2010). Nawijn, 2011; Neal et al., 2007; Pols & Kroon, 2007; Smith & Kelly, 2006; Smith & Puczko, 2008). QOL studies in tourism can be identified from two perspectives, that of the host community and that of the tourist. In 2016, Uysal et al., conducted an extensive review of the literature revealing a fairly equal split between the two groups. The current study operationalizes QOL from the perspective of the tourist. In 1999, Neal et al., employed three subjective overall life satisfaction measures to reveal that tourism services (within the leisure domain) contributed to overall life satisfaction. Following this study, in 2007, the authors set out to further examine this model by testing the moderating effect of length of stay. Results indicated that overall life satisfaction is higher for those tourists who stay for longer periods of time (Neal et al., 2007). More recently, Dolnicar et al. (2012) employed eight life domains (vacations, health, money, family, leisure, people, work and spiritual life) to investigate the contribution of vacations to people's quality of life. Results from this study revealed that vacations do in fact contribute to QOL, however, this happens at different levels for different people. In contrast to these findings, some studies found that vacations do not significantly contribute to QOL. For example, in 2009, Michalko, Kiss, Kovacs and Sulyok found that vacation experiences did not affect the overall QOL of Hungarian tourists. Additionally, Kroesen and Handy (2014) discovered that, while holidays can increase short-term happiness, they are unable to enduringly raise tourist happiness.

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Commented [AD4]: Comment Addressed: This is written "et al." not "et. al." Ensure this is corrected throughout. → I did a search & fixed this, will also fix is other papers where it is an issue.

While there have been numerous studies done regarding traveler vacation experience and QOL, there has only been one study that attempted to look at the link between wellness tourism and travelers' quality of life (Chen, 2007). Their study revealed that variables relating to intrinsic reward and treating dermatitis were the only two indicators that affected the overall QOL of wellness tourism patrons at resorts in Taiwan. Although the positive relationship between vacations and QOL seems evident, it is unclear as to whether or not QOL can be increased based on the specific type of tourism being experienced by the traveler. Therefore, this study will operationalize QOL within the domains of wellness tourism and non-wellness tourism, in order to determine whether or not differences between these two groups exist.

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Theoretical Background

In order to delve into the theoretical background of this study, we must first visit the notion of happiness. Tourism research on happiness, quality of life and well-being has experienced rapid growth in recent years. Travelers' happiness can be described as "a psychological state of fulfillment and well-being that is experienced in anticipatory, on site and reflective travel phases" (Filep, 2014, p. 266). Understanding this intangible concept is not only important to tourism researchers, but it is also vital to the marketing and promotion of tourism destinations around the world. Substantiating a link between happiness and tourism can aid in a more explanatory understanding of the positive psychological benefits of travel. While there has been a steady increase in research addressing the psychological benefits that may lead to happiness while traveling, an extensive review of the literature revealed that tourist happiness has been predominantly understood through the lens of subjective well-being (SWB) (Corvo, 2011; Gilbert & Abdullah, 2004), thus overlooking the eudemonic nature of powerful tourism

experiences (Filep, 2014). Subjective well-being measures encompass positive affect components such as joy, elation, contentment and ecstasy (Diener, 2000). In 2004, Gilbert and Abdullah conducted a study to examine whether or not holiday-taking has a positive impact on both life satisfaction and subjective well-being. Comparing a holiday-taking group with a non-holiday-taking control group revealed that holidays do in fact result in a higher sense of subjective well-being. More recently, Kroesen and Handy (2014) examined the extent to which holiday behavior and happiness influence each other over time. These authors also examined happiness from a subjective perspective, revealing that holiday-taking does have a positive long term relationship with the cognitive component of happiness (perceived realization of wants), but does not have a positive long term relationship with the affective component (how people generally feel). In response to the continuous use of SWB in tourism happiness studies, Filep (2014) argued that this is problematic, due to the fact that SWB is largely based on hedonic measures, it is missing the mark in understanding meaningful vacation experiences. Expanding on SWB to include more eudemonic measures, Seligman (2011) refined his original theory of authentic happiness advancing into what is now known as the PERMA model of well-being. Filep (2014) argued that this model is better suited to explain the phenomenon of happiness within the tourism field.

Developed by Seligman (2011) the PERMA model of well-being delineates the key domains which need to be satisfied in order to achieve the ultimate form of well-being – that is, happiness. Operationalized as ‘The PERMA Profiler’, this model measures the five key pillars of well-being namely, positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning and accomplishment, in addition to health and negative emotions (Butler & Kern, 2015). Positive emotions encompass hedonic feelings of happiness such as gladness, hope and pleasure. Engagement refers to a

deeper psychological context involving strong connections to activities, organizations and community. Relationships involve building connections with the individuals around us. This construct delivers feelings of social integration and acceptance. Meaning embodies the idea that our life is valuable and that we are here for a greater purpose than ourselves. Accomplishment involves the need to move towards every day goals and larger achievements, thus giving us a sense of importance in the world (Forgeard, Jayawickreme, Kern & Seligman, 2011; Kern, Waters, Adler & White 2014; Seligman, 2011). The profiler also includes general measures of physical health and vitality, happiness as well as tendencies towards feeling sad, angry and anxious. Although health, happiness and negative emotions are not part of the five pillars of well-being, both have been conceptualized as important factors in capturing the true nature of one's wellbeing (Andrews & Withey, 2012; Butler & Kern, 2015). The five key domains of the PERMA model were operationalized to represent well-being, while health, happiness and negative emotions were maintained as intermediate factors to help explain how or why the PERMA model may influence QOL within the tourism context.

While positive psychological theories have been applied in the tourism context (Filep & Deery 2010; McCabe & Johnson, 2013; Nawijn, 2011; Pearce, & Packer, 2013), there have been no empirical investigations using The PERMA Profiler in tourism research. Although Filep's (2009) study did draw from the precepts of Seligman's theory, linking travel experiences to the elements of authentic happiness (positive emotions, engagement and meaning), it was published prior to the current development of The PERMA Profiler. Unlike comparable theories such as Subjective Well-being theory (Diener et al., 1985) and Self Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), The PERMA Profiler merges divergent viewpoints by incorporating both hedonic and eudemonic characteristics of well-being. Although this model has never been used within the

Commented [AD6]: This could be used to explain why there were not as many differences between the two groups since we hypothesize that hedonic attributes of travel will be experienced in greater ways for those who travel for wellness. → I am not sure I follow what you are saying here?

tourism field, it is argued that Seligman's ideas are relevant to deepen the explanation of powerful tourism experiences (Filep, 2014). Therefore, the current study adopts the PERMA model, for the first time in tourism research, to examine the relationships between tourism, well-being and quality of life.

In addition to the PERMA model, the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SwLS) will be employed in order to provide the link between wellness tourism and quality of life, (Diener et al., 1985). This 5-item instrument was designed to measure global cognitive judgments of satisfaction with one's QOL. The SwLS has been used in hundreds of studies and has established good psychometric properties (Pavot & Diener, 2008). In line with previous studies on tourism and QOL (Neal et al., 1999), the hierarchy model of life satisfaction is used to explain the relationship between tourism, well-being, and quality of life (Meadow, 1988). The underlying premise of this model suggests that life satisfaction is determined by satisfaction within different life domains and thus a 'spillover' effect occurs linking satisfaction within one domain with QOL (Meadow, 1988). In addition to investigating these relationships, length of time spent travelling will also be examined within the model. Previous research has revealed that individuals who travel for longer periods of time are more likely to have a higher satisfaction with life (Neal et al., 2007). More specifically, length of stay has been examined as a moderating variable to determine whether or not travelers who stay for longer periods of time are more likely to have a higher satisfaction with life than those who stay for shorter periods of time (Neal et al., 2007). The goal of the current study is to examine this effect as it is related to both wellness travel and non-wellness travel. A representation of the proposed model and the hypothesized relationships are specified as in Figure 6.1.

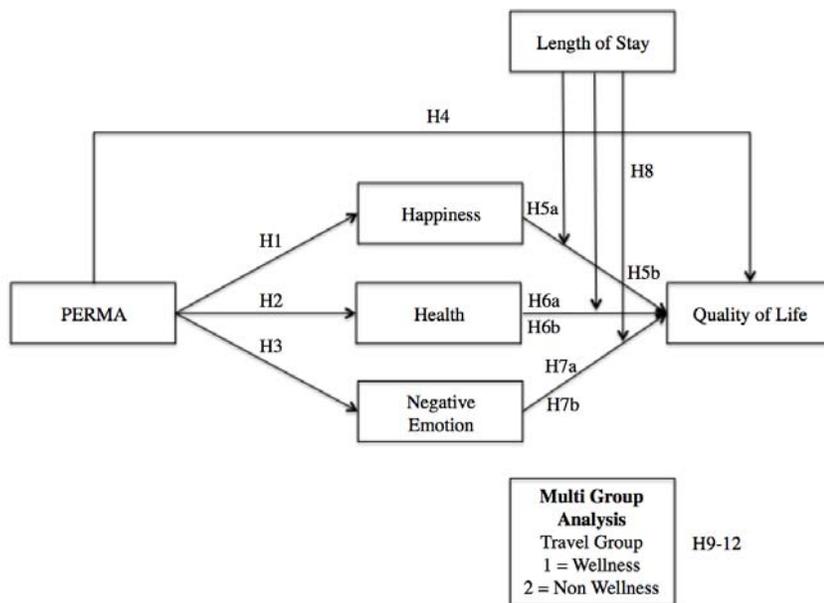


Figure 6.1. Hypothesized Model

Main Hypotheses

- H₁ Happiness is a positive function of the PERMA model of well-being.
- H₂ Health is a positive function of the PERMA model of well-being.
- H₃ Negative emotion is a negative function of the PERMA model of well-being.
- H₄ Quality of life is a positive function of the PERMA model of well-being
- H_{5a} Quality of life is a positive function of happiness.
- H_{6a} Quality of life is a positive function of health.
- H_{7a} Quality of life is a negative function of negative emotion.

Mediation Hypotheses

H_{5b} Happiness mediates the positive relationship between the PERMA model of well-being and quality of life.

H_{6b} Health mediates the positive relationship between the PERMA model of well-being and quality of life.

H_{7b} Negative emotion mediates the negative relationship between the PERMA model of well-being and quality of life.

Moderation Hypotheses

H₈ Length of stay strengthens the effect of the PERMA model on quality of life (mediated by happiness, health & negative emotions).

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Multi Group Hypotheses

H₉ The effect of the positive psychological well-being on quality of life is stronger for wellness travelers than for non-wellness travelers.

H₁₀ The effect of happiness on quality of life is stronger for wellness travelers than for non-wellness travelers.

H₁₁ The effect of health on quality of life is stronger for wellness travelers than for non-wellness travelers.

H₁₂ The effect of negative emotions on quality of life is stronger for non-wellness travelers than for wellness travelers.

Methodology

In order to adequately answer the research questions posed, this study employed a series of quantitative methods over five phases: (1) exploratory factor analysis (the pilot study) (2)

analysis of descriptive statistics and frequencies (3) confirmatory factor analysis (4) structural equation modeling testing for mediation, moderation and multi-group differences and (5) importance performance analysis. In this section, phase 1 will be discussed in relation to the pilot study. Subsequent phases will be discussed in the findings section.

Exploratory factor analysis – The pilot study

Survey items were adapted from previously validated positive psychological scales, however in order to evaluate clarity, content, reliability and the underlying dimensionality of the data within a tourism context, a pilot survey was deemed necessary. The pilot survey was tested among 144 travelers, 89 wellness travelers and 55 non-wellness travelers, recruited using the online platform, Amazon Mechanical Turk. In order to determine the appropriateness of the data for multivariate analysis, tests for normality were conducted. Data from the pilot study were deemed to be normally distributed with no skewness (<3), kurtosis (<10) or multicollinearity ($<.850$) violations (Kline, 2005). An initial exploratory factor analysis (EFA) conducted in SPSS v. 22 used the Principle Axis Factoring Extraction Method and Promax with Kaiser Normalization Rotation Method. The results of the EFA yielded five components with a KMO of 0.874, total variance explained of 69.94% and an overall Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.89. One variable suffered from low factor loadings (.495) and cross loading issues, however, this variable was retained for further analysis due to the fact that the full scale had been previously validated. Furthermore, each variable was reviewed in order to ensure that the wording clearly reflected the purpose of each factor to measure the well-being and quality of life of participants as a result of travelling, as opposed to life in general. The final survey instrument consisted of 48 items, including two identifying questions to determine whether or not the participant was a

Commented [AD8]: I think these are supposed to be capitalized and I thought you had used PCA. → I did not use PCA in the end.

wellness traveler or a non-wellness traveler, eight demographic questions, ten questions about travel behavior and 28 5-point Likert scale items (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree) to measure the study variables. A copy of the survey can be found in the appendices.

Commented [AD9]: What were these identifying questions? → **These questions were to determine which group they were in, which is reflected in the addition to the sentence here.**

Commented [AD10]: Where these TB questions taken from previous studies? If so, cite.

The Main Study Sample

Participants for this study were recruited through Amazon Mechanical Turk, an online data collection platform. Previous research supports the use of this platform as a valid method for collecting data as the participants recruited through this platform are demographically varied (Wong, Newton, & Newton, 2014) and because online panels suffer from lower levels of sample bias compared to traditional mail surveys (Dolnicar, Laesser, & Matus, 2009). In order to participate, Amazon Mechanical Turk workers had to be aged 18 or older and traveled for wellness (primary or secondary), business or leisure. Workers who met these criteria were compensated \$0.60 for completing the online survey. A total of 888 survey responses were collected using the online research software company, Qualtrics. After screening for unengaged responses, twenty-six respondents were removed resulting in 862 two useable responses included for analysis.

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Commented [AD12]: Do you need to state this? I think it introduces skepticism of your work. → **I removed the part about compensation as it is mentioned later anyways.**

Commented [AD13]: Okay so you did not allude to the different levels of wellness travel but once I think I can remember where I read it here but it wasn't discussed in great detail. → **See addition in the introduction section.**

Demographics

Participants in the study were fairly equally split between male (51%) and female (49%). The majority of the sample was between 25-34 years of age, held a bachelors degree and resided in the United States of America. Within the main sample, 42% identified as secondary wellness travelers, 34% as primary wellness travelers and 24% as non-wellness travelers. Other demographic characteristics pertinent to the sample can be found in the table below.

Table 6.1. Demographic profile of the sample

Commented [AD14]: I have changed this table to reflect only wellness & non-wellness travelers to be in line with the rest of the analysis.

Category	Wellness	Non Wellness	Percentage(%)
Age			
Under 25	71	18	10.3
25-34	291	110	46.5
35-44	168	36	23.7
45-54	63	21	9.7
55-64	46	20	7.7
65 & Over	16	2	2.1
Gender			
Male	340	100	51.0
Female	315	107	49.0
Education			
High school	137	35	20.6
Associates degree	92	29	14.0
Bachelor's degree	296	95	45.4
Master's degree	100	38	16.0
Professional degree	21	4	2.9
Doctorate degree	5	5	1.2
Income (US Dollars \$)			
under 29,000	190	58	29.0
30-49,000	149	58	24.0
50-69,000	116	29	17.0
70-89,000	79	20	11.0
90-109,000	52	22	9.0
Above 110,000	69	20	10.0
Marital Status			
Married	307	99	47.1
Single (never married)	223	77	34.8
Living with Partner	76	16	10.7
Divorced	36	9	5.2
Separated	9	2	1.3
Widowed	4	4	0.9
Employment Status			
Full time employed	438	139	61.4
Part time employed	68	29	10.3
Self employed	61	15	8.1
Unemployed	56	12	7.2
Student Full time	45	18	6.7
Student Part Time	28	8	3.8

Retired	17	5	2.3
Country of Residence			
USA	573	188	88.3
India	69	15	9.7
Canada	5	0	0.6
Bulgaria	1	1	0.2
Other	7	3	1.2

Findings

Characteristics of the sample

Due the novelty of wellness tourism as a niche market and area of research, it was deemed appropriate to report on the characteristics of the sample. Mean scores and frequencies are reported on categories including length of stay, monetary commitment to travel, travel group, activities and accommodations. In general, across groups, people stayed about 4 nights while traveling and spent \$1618 on their trip. Most people travelled with family (30%) or as a couple (28%) and chose to stay in a hotel (33%) for their accommodations. The majority of both primary and secondary wellness travelers participated in eco/adventure activities while traveling (38%) while the second largest group was spa and beauty (17%). Additional details regarding the characteristics of the sample can be found in the table below.

Table 6.2. Characteristics of the sample

Category	Wellness	Non Wellness	Percentage(%)
Length of stay (mean = 3.63 nights)			
1-5	321	175	90
6-10	34	26	8
11 & over	5	6	2
Expenditure (US Dollars \$) (mean = \$1618)			
Under 1000	407	119	61.7
1001 - 2000	128	38	19.5
2001 - 3000	52	23	8.8
3001 - 4000	20	0	2.3
4001 - 5000	20	17	4.3

Commented [AD15]: Just for my purpose, what in the proceeding sentence is characteristics of travel vs travel behavior? → Hmm... Well I was going for characteristics as LOS, Expenditure, travel group and behavior as activities and accommodation choice. However, I have changed it to read characteristics for all as I believe this is more clear cut & simple, as essentially it's just descriptive stats of the sample.

Commented [AD16]: I have changed this table to reflect only wellness & non-wellness travelers to be in line with the rest of the analysis.

Commented [AD17]: Okay. How was this question asked again? Did you provide the ranges or did you create the ranges following the data collection? I am curious as to how you would have been able to calculate the mean from ranges. The same question applies to the expenditure. → This question was given a text box, as well as the expenditure question. I created the ranges following the data collection. I calculated the means based on the numbers written in. Ranges were provided to make the table more simple.

5001 - 6000	3	0	0.4
6001 - 7000	0	1	0.1
70001 - 8000	3	0	0.4
8001 - 9000	0	2	0.2
9001 - 10000	6	4	1.2
1001 & Over	7	2	1.1
Travel Group			
Family	182	77	30.0
Couple	190	48	28.0
Friends	157	33	22.0
Solo	126	41	19.0
Work Mates	0	8	1.0
Accommodation			
Regular Hotel	476	141	33.1
Bed & Breakfast	266	78	18.5
Park/RV/Camping	156	39	10.5
Family & Friends	85	35	6.4
Condo Rental	90	27	6.3
Wellness Hotel	86	29	6.2
Retreat	87	25	6.0
Cruise	83	25	5.8
Other	40	11	2.7
Wellness Cruise	38	8	2.5
Ashram	30	8	2.0
Activities			
Eco/Adventure	249	n/a	38.2
Spa Beauty	110	n/a	16.9
Spiritual	81	n/a	12.4
Mind Body	67	n/a	10.3
Fitness	53	n/a	8.1
Personal Growth	41	n/a	6.3
Healthy Eating	38	n/a	5.8
Health	10	n/a	1.5
Other	3	n/a	0.5

Confirmatory factor analysis

In order to determine the appropriateness of the data for multivariate analysis, tests for normality were conducted. Data from the main study survey were deemed normally distributed with no skewness (< 3), kurtosis (< 10) or multicollinearity ($< .850$) violations (Kline, 2005).

Commented [AD18]: In hindsight, these questions should still have been asked of the non wellness group. → They were asked this question up front (had they ever participated in any of these activities while travelling) – because they answered no, they were categorized as non-wellness travelers. Therefore, later in the survey, these questions were not displayed to them, for if they were... this would make them wellness travelers.

Means, standard deviations and skewness and kurtosis statistics are represented in detail in table 6.3. The next step in the analysis was to perform a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) in order to verify the measurement scale properties as well as the reliability and validity of the indicators. An initial confirmatory factor analysis conducted in AMOS V. 22 used the a priori assumptions based on the hypothesized model. Maximum likelihood estimation procedure along with the covariance matrix method was considered suitable for latent structure analysis and convergent validity checks due to the continuous nature of the data. Maximum likelihood confirmatory factor analysis demands data have no missing cases in order to maintain the reliability of the data set. A total of 17 variables had missing data < 5%. These scaled variables were replaced using the median of nearby points. No observations were removed during this process. Therefore the sample for confirmatory factor analysis remained at 862 observations, which was considered large enough to proceed. All factors included in this study had at least two observed variables.

Table 6.3. Confirmatory Factor Analysis Items

Variable Name	Item	Wellness Travelers				Non Wellness Travelers			
		Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Positive Emotions: As a result of travelling (for wellness) I feel like...									
P1	I am more joyful	4.25	0.73	-1.31	3.54	4.23	0.73	-1.43	4.45
P2	I am more positive	4.32	0.73	-1.36	3.43	4.32	0.67	-0.88	1.75
P3	I am happier	4.31	0.73	-1.29	3.22	4.31	0.69	-1.13	2.68
Engagement: As a result of travelling (for wellness) I feel like I am MORE able to...									
E1	Become absorbed in what I am doing	3.94	0.79	-0.88	1.55	3.87	0.81	-0.64	0.72
E2	Feel excited and interested in things	4.19	0.76	-1.11	2.26	4.15	0.73	-0.93	1.90
E3	Lose track of time while doing something I enjoy	3.92	0.94	-0.88	0.58	3.91	0.91	-0.69	0.36
Relationships: As a result of travelling (for wellness) I feel like...									
R1	I have more support in my relationships with others	3.71	0.90	-0.70	0.56	3.78	0.89	-0.56	0.08

R2	I have more loving relationships with others	3.79	0.95	-0.65	0.12	3.74	0.91	-0.36	-0.45
R3	I am more satisfied with my personal relationships	3.96	0.86	-0.83	0.81	3.95	0.85	-0.72	0.61
Meaning: As a result of travelling (for wellness) I feel like...									
M1	My life is more purposeful and meaningful	3.96	0.87	-0.85	0.89	3.93	0.82	-0.60	0.30
M2	My life is more valuable and worthwhile	3.96	0.92	-0.96	1.09	3.90	0.84	-0.55	0.11
M3	I have more sense of direction for my life	3.89	0.92	-0.77	0.51	3.82	0.94	-0.75	0.37
Accomplishment: As a result of travelling (for wellness) I feel like...									
A1	I spend more time making progress towards accomplishing my goals	3.75	0.90	-0.68	0.35	3.65	0.91	-0.44	-0.40
A2	I achieve important goals more often	3.71	0.93	-0.45	-0.16	3.63	0.92	-0.42	-0.30
A3	I am able to handle my responsibilities more often	3.88	0.90	-0.71	0.36	3.80	0.92	-0.54	-0.10
Happiness									
Hap1	In general, I would say that I am a very happy person.	3.86	0.96	-1.06	0.97	3.89	0.97	-0.93	0.49
Hap2	As a result of travelling (for wellness), I feel happier.	4.21	0.69	-0.95	2.36	4.23	0.69	-0.88	1.91
Health									
H1	How would you say your health is?	3.56	0.86	-0.22	-0.05	3.66	0.83	-0.35	0.18
H2	How satisfied are you with your current physical health?	3.41	0.94	-0.44	0.05	3.43	0.87	-0.47	0.20
H3	Compared to others of your same age and sex, how is your health?	3.59	0.89	-0.27	-0.09	3.62	0.89	-0.32	-0.21
Negative Emotions									
N1	How often do you feel anxious?	2.74	0.99	0.26	-0.45	2.80	0.90	0.17	-0.42
N2	How often do you feel angry?	2.49	0.88	0.46	0.27	2.51	0.79	0.59	0.76
N3	How often do you feel sad?	2.64	0.93	0.32	-0.18	2.57	0.86	0.62	0.22
Quality of Life									
QOL1	In most ways, my life is close to ideal.	3.44	1.06	-0.66	-0.40	3.41	1.00	-0.77	-0.10

QOL2	The conditions of my life are excellent.	3.52	1.05	-0.71	-0.08	3.49	1.03	-0.52	-0.30
QOL3	I am completely satisfied with my life.	3.59	1.06	-0.81	0.05	3.60	1.10	-0.75	-0.24
QOL4	So far, I have gotten the most important things I want in life.	3.61	1.03	-0.84	0.14	3.57	0.96	-0.67	-0.02
QOL5	If I could live my life over, I would change nothing	2.99	1.24	-0.05	-1.12	2.95	1.18	-0.09	-1.08

Prior to conducting the initial first-order CFA, goodness of fit test statistics for evaluating CFA and SEM models were assessed. Thresholds for these statistics were adopted from Hair, Black, Babin and Anderson (2010) and Hu and Bentler (1999) (Table 6.5). The initial first-order CFA produced good model fit with tucker lewis index (TLI = 0.961) and comparative fit index (CFI = 0.967) indices exceeding the recommended 0.90 minimum. Additionally, the goodness of fit (GFI) and the adjusted goodness of fit (AGFI = 0.916) also exceeded the recommendation of > 0.90 and 0.80 respectively. Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA = 0.044) and standardized root mean square residual (SRMR = 0.032) both indicated good model fit as well. Prior to assessing the final measurement model fit, tests for validity and reliability had to be conducted. Composite reliability scores were all above 0.70, except for Happiness (CR = 0.587) (Hair et al., 2010). Convergent validity was violated as determined by calculating the average variance extracted (AVE) which were all above .50 except for two factors (engagement and happiness), which fell just below this cut off point at .495 and 0.426 respectively. Discriminant validity was determined by the square root of the AVE being greater than any inter factor correlation. Each factor maintained good discriminant validity except for engagement and happiness.

Based on these validity issues, the latent factors engagement and happiness were re-examined for cross-loading issues and low factor scores, thus resulting in removing the construct happiness and one of the variables for engagement (E3). The variable Hap 2 was removed due to low factor loadings and cross loading issues. Due to the fact that happiness only consisted of two variables that described the latent factor, the entire construct could not be included for further analysis. Validity and reliability scores for the final CFA model can be found in the table below.

Table 6. 4. Validity & Reliability Scores

	CR	AVE	MSV	NE	P	QOL	A	M	R	E	H
NE	0.824	0.567	0.248	0.753							
P	0.964	0.821	0.635	0.040	0.906						
QOL	0.885	0.657	0.287	0.498	0.010	0.811					
A	0.910	0.734	0.602	0.012	0.487	0.022	0.857				
M	0.913	0.738	0.602	0.081	0.597	0.009	0.776	0.859			
R	0.880	0.664	0.566	0.033	0.583	0.006	0.752	0.746	0.815		
E	0.821	0.582	0.635	0.061	0.797	0.048	0.671	0.743	0.732	0.763	
H	0.925	0.771	0.287	0.357	0.038	0.536	0.054	0.057	0.032	0.049	0.878

CR = Composite reliability; AVE = Average variance extracted; MSV = Maximum shared squared variance

NE = Negative emotions, P = Positive emotions; QOL = Quality of life; A = Accomplishments; M = Meaning; R = Relationships; E = Engagement; H = Health

At this point, the final CFA model was assessed for overall measurement fit. Similar to the initial model, this final CFA produced good fit statistics (TLI = 0.962, CFI = 0.968, RMSEA = 0.047, SRMR = 0.0324, GFI = 0.938 and AGFI = 0.918). While these fit statistics are not much different than the initial model, the choice was made to remove E3 and happiness based on validity issues. Both models are represented below (Figure 6.2), along with the criteria upon which they were judged (Table 6.5) (adopted from Hair et al., 2010; Hu & Bentler, 1999). Well-being related constructs included in the PERMA model revealed high correlations (above 0.70) with each other. The highest correlation occurred between the constructs positive emotion and

Commented [AD19]: Why isn't Happiness in this table? Update with Happiness → Happiness was added to the original model (see figure) however, because it was kicked out, it still is not in the final validity & reliability table.

Use *, **, *** to denote the significance of the correlations between the study constructs. → I do not know which ones are significant?? This did not show up in my analysis.

Since "WB" was used in later IP analysis, should it be placed in this table also? → WB is calculated by PERMA + Happiness, it is not a construct on its own. This is why it is not included in this table → As you know, I attempted to make WB a second order factor, but the model fit for this was not acceptable, not did it provide any more significance.

Commented [AD20]: You did not report on this earlier → It is now reported above.

Commented [AD21]: Is the previous table necessary if you are stating only hair here? → I have removed the previous table.

Is this for real??? Are you sure AGFI should be this low? I believe it must be higher than .95 and GIF higher than .9?? → According to Hair (2010) AGFI values are typically lower than GFI values (pg. 651). However, Hair does not provide a threshold, this threshold is from Hu & Bentler (1999). GFI has been recommended to be > 0.90 or 0.95 (Hair, 2010 P. 649).

engagement ($r = .80$). This was determined to be acceptable due to the interrelation between the constructs in the model.

Table 6.5 Model Fit Comparison between Initial CFA & Final CFA

	P-Value	CMIN/df	TLI	CFI	GFI	AGFI	RMSEA	SRMR	PCLOSE
Standard	> 0.05	< 3	> 0.90	> 0.90	> 0.90	> 0.80	< 0.10	< 0.09	> 0.05
Initial CFA Model	0	2.683	0.961	0.967	0.935	0.916	0.044	0.032	0.996
Final CFA Model	0	2.939	0.962	0.968	0.938	0.918	0.047	0.032	0.846

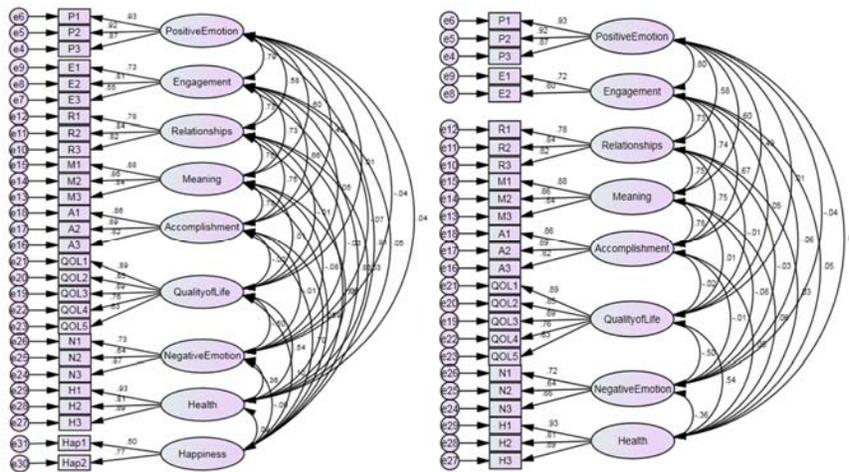
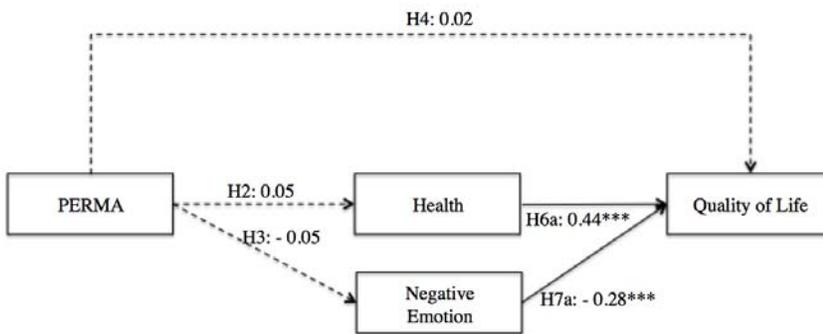


Figure 6.2. Initial (left) & Final (right) Confirmatory Factor Analysis Models

Structural Equation Model

Structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to test the hypothesized model (Figure 6.1) in Amos v. 22. However, because happiness was removed during the CFA process, it was also removed from the final structural model, therefore hypothesis 1 and 4b could not be tested. The structural equation model tested positive psychological well-being measures and their influence on quality of life. The estimated standardized coefficients for the hypothesized model indicate that only 2 paths in the model were significant at the $p < 0.001$ level while 7 paths were

insignificant. The following paths were found to be insignificant: (1) from the PERMA model of well-being (all constructs) to QOL (2) from the PERMA model of well-being (all constructs) to health and (3) from the PERMA model of well-being (all constructs) to negative emotion. These results are represented in the figure below.



(***) indicates significance at the 0.001 level. Dashed lines indicate paths that are not significant.

Figure 6.3. Standardized estimated structural model

The only significant hypotheses (H_{6a} and H_{7a}) evaluated the predictive relationships between health and negative emotions with QOL. Health ($\beta = 0.44$, $p < 0.001$) was found to be a positive function of QOL while negative emotions ($\beta = -0.28$, $p < 0.001$) were found to be a negative function of QOL.

Mediation

A mediation effect becomes apparent when a third construct intercedes the relationship between two other related constructs (Hair et al., 2010). Mediation is determined by measuring the indirect effects between the antecedent variables and the consequential variables. Therefore,

support for statistically significant relationships between PERMA and the hypothesized mediators as well as support for statistically significant relationships between the hypothesized mediators and QOL must be present in the model for indirect relationships to be supported. Based on the results from the main hypotheses revealing that PERMA has not significant relationship with health or negative emotions, no mediation within the model was expected. However, because mediation was originally hypothesized, it was tested using a bootstrapping technique with user defined estimand for indirect effects. No significant mediation effects were found. Results from this analysis are shown in Table 6.6.

Table 6.6. Mediation Analysis

Parameter	Estimate	Lower	Upper	P	SE	SE-SE	Mean	Bias	SE-Bias
P - HEALTH - QOL	-0.022	-0.161	0.069	0.7	0.649	0.01	-0.097	-0.075	0.015
E - HEALTH - QOL	0.073	-0.114	0.338	0.508	1.606	0.025	0.265	0.191	0.036
R - HEALTH - QOL	-0.044	-0.162	0.057	0.48	0.301	0.005	-0.079	-0.035	0.007
M - HEALTH - QOL	0.035	-0.05	0.112	0.43	0.19	0.003	0.022	-0.012	0.004
A - HEALTH - QOL	0.003	-0.089	0.077	0.921	0.147	0.002	-0.014	-0.017	0.003
Parameter	Estimate	Lower	Upper	P	SE	SE-SE	Mean	Bias	SE-Bias
P - NE - QOL	-0.017	-0.104	0.042	0.63	0.306	0.005	-0.054	-0.038	0.007
E - NE - QOL	0.041	-0.08	0.253	0.534	0.75	0.012	0.132	0.091	0.017
R - NE - QOL	-0.011	-0.08	0.052	0.784	0.14	0.002	-0.027	-0.016	0.003
M - NE - QOL	0.048	-0.003	0.096	0.112	0.103	0.002	0.042	-0.006	0.002
A - NE - QOL	-0.04	-0.098	0.003	0.127	0.062	0.001	-0.048	-0.008	0.001

Moderation

A moderating effect becomes apparent when a third construct changes (strengthens or weakens) the relationship between two other related constructs (Hair et al., 2010). The potential moderating effect of length of stay was tested based on significant positive findings from previous research (Neal et al., 2007). However, within this model, no significant effect was found for length of stay.

Multi group analysis

In order to test multi group effect differences within the structural model, a chi square difference test was conducted where both models were freely estimated, except for the significant paths found in the main hypothesis testing. The chi square difference test was found to be significant ($p < 0.05$) indicating that there was a significant difference between groups. Further investigation into each individual path revealed that significant differences only existed between health and quality of life. The path between health and quality of life was found to be significantly ($p = 0.043$) stronger for wellness travelers ($\beta = 0.44$) than for non-wellness travelers ($\beta = - .01$).

Importance Performance Analysis

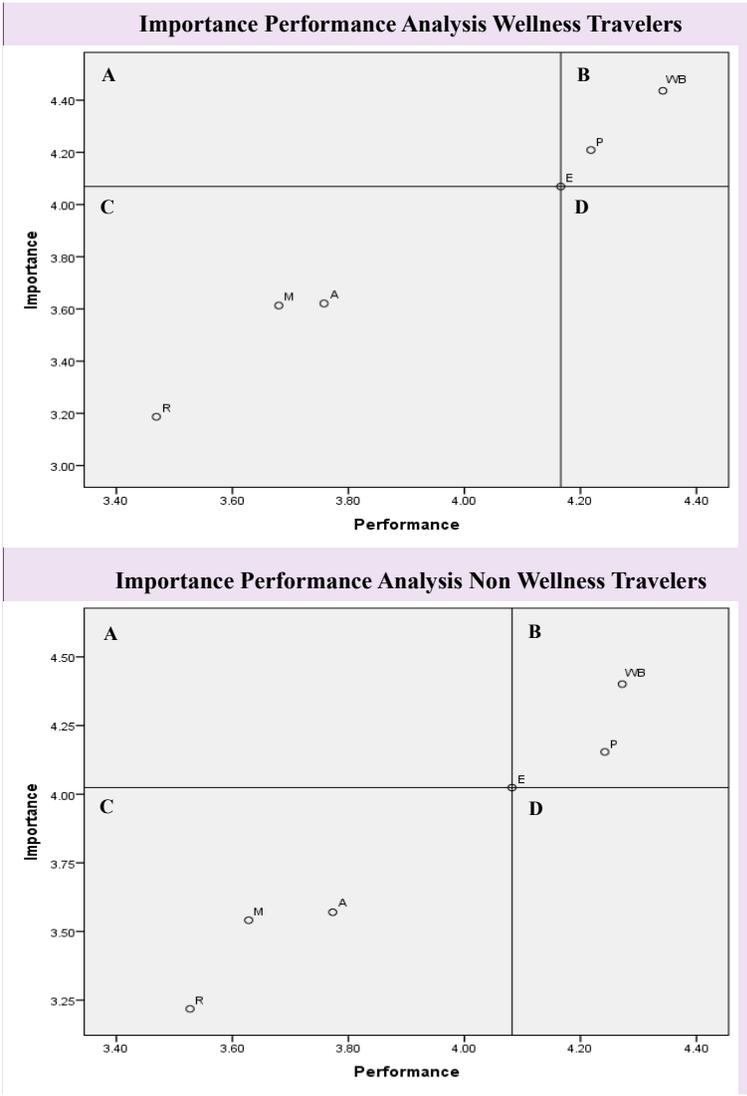
An importance/performance (IP) analysis was conducted in order to identify how well the positive psychological benefits sought by wellness travelers performed based on their importance ranking. Mean scores were computed in order to determine the most important positive psychological benefits to travelers. For the purposes of this study, only mean scores of “4” or “5” were considered to be of importance. Positive emotion ($m = 4.209$; 4.154), engagement ($m = 4.069$; 4.024) and happiness ($m = 4.436$; 4.401) all revealed mean scores above 4, indicating these positive psychological benefits to be the most important amongst both wellness and non wellness travelers. Other variables included in the model all fell below the cutoff mean score of 4. Table 6.7 provides a summary of the mean scores for each item.

Commented [AD22]: Your hypothesis is stated as “The effect of the positive psychological well-being on quality of life is stronger for wellness travelers than for non-wellness travelers.” → I changed/added hypothesis to test the direct relationship with PERMA & QOL in the structural model as well as in multi-group. Of course, there was not significance, but I reported this. I ran the multi-group tests again & realized that there was only a sig difference for health, no negative emotion.

Table 6.7. Importance Performance Mean Scores.

Variable Name	Item	Wellness		Non Wellness	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
ImptP	Positive Emotion (Importance)	4.209	.6598	4.154	.6082
ImptE	Engagement (Importance)	4.069	.8189	4.024	.8782
ImptR	Relationships (Importance)	3.187	1.1955	3.218	1.1473
ImptM	Meaning (Importance)	3.613	1.0668	3.541	1.1265
ImptA	Accomplishment (Importance)	3.621	1.0869	3.570	1.1548
ImptWB	Well-Being (Importance)	4.436	.7328	4.401	.7495
PerP	Positive Emotion (Performance)	4.218	.6419	4.242	.6306
PerE	Engagement (Performance)	4.166	.7131	4.082	.7746
PerR	Relationships (Performance)	3.469	1.0058	3.527	1.0039
PerM	Meaning (Performance)	3.680	.9458	3.628	.9409
PerA	Accomplishment (Performance)	3.758	.9325	3.773	.9662
PerfWB	Well-Being (Performance)	4.342	.5459	4.272	.6096

An IP grid was created using SPSS v. 22 based on grouping these positive psychological benefits (Figure 6.4). The vertical axis of the IP grid represents the travelers perceived importance of the benefit variables while the horizontal axis represents the performance of these benefits during their travel experiences. Quadrant A includes variables considered important by travelers that performed poorly. The variables in Quadrant B are representative of benefits that were rated of high importance as well as high performance. Quadrant C contains variables low in both importance and performance, while Quadrant D includes variables of low importance but high performance.



Commented [AD23]: What is WB? How is I computed. It does not appear in the previous table → Well-being is a blanket statement asking how important it is for you to feel happy and healthy while traveling.

Figure 6.4. Importance performance analysis grid

Similar to the results shown in Table 6.7, positive emotion, engagement and happiness were perceived as important. The IP grid illustrates that these variables are also performing at a high level for both wellness and non-wellness travelers. On the other hand, relationships, meaning and

accomplishments were not seen as important experiences to be had by travelers. Similarly, these items rated low on the performance scale and ended up in quadrant C.

Discussion and Conclusion

Although the study of QOL boasts a long history in the social sciences, research on QOL within the tourism domain is still relatively new in the field. More specifically, QOL research on tourism can be divided into two subgroups, host communities and tourists. However, an investigation of QOL across different types of tourism is not apparent in the literature. Wellness was chosen as the niche tourism market for this study due to its relationship to well-being (Smith & Kelly, 2006; Smith & Puczko, 2008) while traditional travelers were chosen as the comparison group, namely 'non-wellness travelers'. The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between wellness travelers, overall well-being and quality of life, in comparison to that of non-wellness travelers.

The objectives of this study were as follows: (1) to understand the positive psychological benefits of wellness and non-wellness tourism as they relate to quality of life (2) to determine what factors contribute to the quality of life of wellness and non-wellness travelers (3) to understand whether or not length of stay plays a significant role in determining quality of life and (4) to understand what differences may exist (if any) between wellness and non-wellness travelers as it related to quality of life (5) to gather the importance and performance of positive psychological well-being factors as they relate to tourism experiences. This study makes a significant contribution to the extant literature on tourism and wellness tourism as it takes into consideration a never before used theory - the PERMA model of well-being developed by Seligman (2011). This approach led to the following key conclusions:

Commented [AD24]: Earlier you posed 6 research questions but here you have 4 objectives. This would be the first we know what your objectives are. What you need to be doing here is to restate your RQs and discuss each accordingly and in relationship to the findings. → **Because this is the discussion and conclusion, I stated these objectives here as a summary of what was stated earlier in the research questions.**

The findings from this study suggest that the PERMA model of well-being does not contribute to travelers quality of life. It is unfortunate that happiness was not able to be included in the structural model, as this could have proven a positive relationship between PERMA and quality of life. Further research into developing a measure for happiness within the tourism domain is warranted.

Divergent from the findings revealed in this study, previous research indicated that overall life satisfaction is impacted by travel and tourism (Neal et al., 1999; Neal et al., 2007). However, these results may be explained in light of Kroesen and Handy's (2014) findings which demonstrated that vacations are unable to enduringly raise happiness, and thus do not effect quality of life in the long term. Additionally, this result also confirms Nawijn et al's (2010) concept that while vacations can increase happiness in the short term, there is no lasting impact on the long-term levels of happiness of vacationers. Another explanation of this anomaly may be supported by Dolnicar et al (2012) who found that while vacations do contribute to the QOL of the majority of people, QOL is an extremely dynamic and individual concept that may be different for different people at different times in their life. Another possible explanation for these findings is that the PERMA model needs further testing and validation within both wellness tourism and traditional tourism domains before it can be linked to QOL. Essentially, it is evident that the relationship between tourism and QOL remains unclear. Substantively, it would be interesting to explore well-being tourism as a subset within the leisure domain of quality of life.

Although this study did not reveal that the PERMA model of well-being within the tourism domain had a significant effect on overall satisfaction with QOL, it did demonstrate that both overall health and negative emotions had a significant impact on overall satisfaction with

QOL. The latter finding is consistent with previous research. This result may be evidenced by Andrews and Whitley's (2012) concept that personal health is important to one's evaluation of life, therefore, this domain spills over into overall satisfaction with QOL.

On the other hand, it was hypothesized that the PERMA model of well-being would also contribute to quality of life. One possible explanation of this may be the fact that happiness and well-being while traveling may be considered a fleeting emotion, holding little longevity within the larger concept of QOL. Therefore, travelers may not associate well-being on vacation as contributing to their quality of life. This however, does not explain why the significant eudemonic variables in the PERMA model (engagement and meaning) did not contribute to QOL. It would be interesting to investigate whether the PERMA model reveals the same results in a non-tourism setting in order to glean more insight into the relationships between well-being and QOL.

This study demonstrates that length of stay has no significant effect in predicting quality of life. While this result does contradict findings by Neal (2000) and Neal et al (2007), it supports the findings of Gilbert and Abdullah (2004) and Nawijn et al (2010). The data from this study confirm that length of stay has no bearing on well-being, happiness or quality of life for wellness travelers and non wellness travelers. It is possible that this finding was influenced by the fact that travelers completed the survey long after their trips had occurred, or because travelers were not asked about a specific trip, but about their travel experiences in general.

Results from this study partially support the multi-group hypothesis. No differences existed between groups with regards to positive psychological well-being or negative emotions, but significant differences between groups did exist based on overall health. It was shocking to see that no difference existed as this is not in line with some research that suggests wellness

tourism can positively impact travelers' well-being (Smith & Kelly, 2006; Smith & Puczko, 2008). This may be explained in light of the assumption that wellness travelers may have an overall higher level of health and well-being in their everyday life, therefore, positive psychological well-being experienced while traveling would not necessarily have a stronger effect than it does for non-wellness travelers. It is important to note that there are no other studies comparing wellness travelers and non-wellness travelers. Therefore, this result should be taken with caution and explored further. The relationship between health and quality of life was found to be stronger for wellness travelers than for non-wellness travelers. This may be explained by taking into account that the overall health and well-being of the traditional wellness traveler may be higher than that of the non-wellness traveler.

Importance performance analysis revealed that the travel and tourism sector is performing up to expectations. More specifically, travelers (both wellness and non-wellness) found positive emotions, engagement and happiness to be most important to their travel experiences as well as the highest performers. This is in line with current marketing trends in the industry with tourism boards like Aruba promoting themselves as "One happy Island", Vanatu's slogan "Discover what matters" and Pennsylvania's slogan "Pursue Your Happiness". On the other hand, both groups of travelers found relationships, meaning and accomplishments to be of low importance and performance. It seems that this finding is in line with the traditional ideals of travel to relax and unwind, without aspects of relationship building and goal setting as a priority. Traditionally, variables of low importance and low performance would not pose a threat to the industry, however, it is suggested that these categories of well-being not be ignored as an opportunity for growth. Previous research suggest meaning making to be an important aspect of a memorable tourism experience (Tung & Ritchie, 2011), therefore this result should be taken

with caution. Continued focus and differentiation on offering experiences conducive to engaging memorable tourism experiences could eventually provide a stronger link between wellness, tourism and overall satisfaction with QOL.

Implications, Future Research & Limitations

Findings from this study suggest several theoretical and managerial implications. From a theoretical point of view, this study confirms, for the first time within the tourism context, that the PERMA model of well-being does exist. Traditionally, tourist happiness and well-being has been explored through the lens of subjective well-being. Marrying both hedonic and eudemonic measures, this model introduces a new value to travel and tourism that did not exist previously. Moving beyond simply offering 'happiness' as an outcome of travel and tourism, this study extends the idea of happiness within the tourism context to include more eudemonic measures. Further investigation is needed to validate a happiness measure within the tourism context. Future research examining this model within other tourism contexts is warranted. Additionally, studies comparing the constructs of the PERMA model between vacationers and non-vacationers would reveal whether or not vacations have the ability to increase overall well-being as opposed to those who do not take vacations. This study was limited in regards to the fact that it did not look at other domains of QOL, such as family, work and leisure life. Studies examining the PERMA model within each of these domains and then in relation to QOL would reveal more information about the holistic makeup of QOL as it relates to well-being.

From a managerial point of view, this study brings light to the fact that tourism is just scraping the surface of peoples happiness, but does not seem to be infiltrating into travelers QOL. It has been proven that loyal customers are made through memorable experiences. With

this information, tourism providers need to do more to provide experiences with true meaning and lasting impact as an avenue for travel to impact quality of life. On a positive note, current tourism providers seem to be doing a good job in providing what travelers expect out of a vacation experience. However, providing deeper, more meaningful experiences could be advantageous to companies wishing to grow and differentiate themselves in the wellness tourism sector. Lastly, non-wellness tourism companies are encouraged to provide more wellness offerings to the traditional traveler. As this study revealed, wellness travel offerings may have a more significant impact on traditional travelers than on wellness travelers. Expanding offerings into this market could have positive implications for tourism companies around the globe.

CHAPTER 7

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Overview

This goal of this dissertation was to identify the characteristics of and relationships between wellness, positive psychological well-being, transformative experiences and overall quality of life within a tourism context. In order to accomplish this, three independent articles addressed eight research questions using both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. The first article qualitatively identified the existence of four dimensions of wellness within the wellness tourism context. In line with Dunn's (1959) concept of wellness, the dimensions of body, mind, spirit and environment were revealed as a result of the analysis of 1216 TripAdvisor reviews. The netnographic method in combination with exploratory inductive framework analysis was used to examine and discover meaning within these reviews. The results from this study were promising in that they revealed the possibility of wellness tourism to provide impactful and memorable experiences. However, results from the study were varying, thus revealing the need for future confirmatory research in this area.

Article two explored different dimensions of psychological well-being within the yoga tourism context. Using qualitative methods, the analysis of 12 semi-structured interviews revealed the existence of seven a priori dimensions of positive psychological well-being and their association with transformative experiences. Deductive thematic analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data in this study. Results from this study indicated that yoga tourism

does in fact provide the environment for positive psychological well-being to take place.

Additionally, the results suggest that yoga tourism has the ability to transform the lives of participants on varying levels. Due to the specificity and small sample size used in this study, future research exploring the presence of these findings within a larger wellness tourism context is warranted.

Lastly, the third article aimed to examine the relationships between tourists' positive psychological well-being and overall satisfaction with quality of life (QOL). More specifically, the objective of this article was to develop, validate and test a model of positive psychological well-being and quality of life measures. Quantitative surveys were distributed using the online platform, Amazon Mechanical Turk resulting in 862 useable surveys. Using quantitative techniques including confirmatory factor analysis, structural equation modeling and importance performance analysis, this study revealed some interesting results. CFA modeling resulted in good fit indices and statistical diagnostics including reliability and validity tests. The model did reveal some minor issues with discriminant validity resulting in three items being dropped in order to move forward with the SEM analysis. The final SEM model revealed good model fit and partially supported the proposed hypotheses. In contrast to previous research, results suggested that neither wellness tourism nor non-wellness tourism had a significant relationship with QOL. Based on multi-group analysis, results also revealed that wellness travellers experience greater connection between overall health and QOL. Lastly, importance performance analysis provided evidence to support that the travel and tourism industry is performing up to the expectations of both wellness and non-wellness tourists.

Summary of Significant Findings

Article 1: An exploratory examination of the wellness tourist experience using netnography

The main objectives of this study were to understand and report on the current market characteristics of wellness travel as well as to examine the underlying dimensions of the wellness tourism experience as they relate to or detract from overall well-being. Online wellness travel reviews were qualitatively analyzed in order to address these objectives.

In line with Dunn's (1959) concept of wellness, results revealed four specific dimensions of the wellness tourism experience: body, mind, spirit and environment. Most meaningful in the findings was the importance of the environmental element involved in wellness travel. Specific to the reviews analyzed in this study, the environment included categories such as price, grounds, rooms, overcrowding and staff. Among these, the relational quality of the staff was found to be most impactful to memorable guest experiences. Further to this, some guests mentioned the quality of staff support moving beyond the parameters of their wellness vacation and into their home life thus increasing their intention to revisit in the future. The significance of this finding advocates a relationship between wellness travel and overall quality of life, however further quantitative research disproved this hypothesis. Another key finding from this study was the importance of quality culinary experiences from a nutritional and educational standpoint. Considerably different than traditional travel experiences, the food provided while traveling for wellness is judged by guests from a very critical standpoint. This finding indicates that there is a fine balance between good taste and good nutrition that wellness tourism companies must be aware of.

A third key finding from this study was the prominence of personal transformative experiences mentioned in the online wellness traveler reviews. Many of these were linked with

the findings about the environment with regards to the relational aspect of wellness tourism experiences. Moving beyond memorable experiences, Lean (2009) argues that transformative experiences can lead to long-term perspective shifts and behavioral changes. Again, this finding suggests a possible relationship between wellness tourism and an increase in overall quality of life. Lastly, findings from this research suggest that many wellness travelers attach high value to the community aspect of wellness retreats. This relational aspect of wellness travel involved sharing experiences with others and heightened the holistic well-being experience for travelers. The significance of these findings was the indication that wellness travel experience has the capacity to move beyond ordinary memorable experience into the realm of extraordinary transformative experiences.

Article 2: Transformative experiences among yoga tourists: An exploratory enquiry

The main goals of this study were to (1) examine the factors that contribute to choosing a yoga retreat experience (2) uncover and explore the mechanism by which the yoga retreat experience acts as a functional means to guest well-being & transformation and (3) to investigate the catalysts that initiate transformational experiences.

The first key finding of this study identified the preferred destination choice attributes of yoga travelers. Among the characteristics, the most important were warm untouched climates, a variety of outdoor activity offerings, sustainable practices, competitive price for value and well established retreat leaders. These findings lay out a clear picture for yoga retreat operators looking to gain competitive advantage in the market.

Second, an integrative thematic framework revealed seven positive psychological dimensions of the yoga tourism experience and their respective relationships to transformational change. The seven dimensions (positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning,

accomplishments, self acceptance and growth) were classified a priori and confirmed through thematic qualitative analysis. Six of the seven dimensions were categorized as effecting enduring and major change, while positive emotion was the only dimension classified as producing temporary and minor change. Changes were equally seen as tangible and intangible across the dimensions. These findings suggest the yoga retreat experience to be one of permanent significance with the ability to facilitate both tangible major life changes and intangible perspective shifts. However, it is important to note that, of the participants in this study, all had previous yoga experience prior to going on a retreat. It would be interesting evaluate whether or not the same findings hold true for those wellness travelers who have little to no prior yoga experience.

Finally, the catalysts that sparked transformative experiences were discovered. The majority of transformational experiences began with organized activity. Environmental factors, including natural and untouched surroundings were seen as complimentary to the formation of these types of experiences. Similar to destination attributes, these findings allow retreat operators to take their offerings a step above the ordinary, in hopes of creating these types of transformative guest experiences.

Article 3: Do vacations really make us happier? Exploring the relationships between tourism, wellness and quality of life using positive psychological theory

The purpose of this study was aimed at examining the relationships between tourists' positive psychological well-being and their overall satisfaction with quality of life (QOL). More specifically, this study examined tourists' well-being using the PERMA model of well-being developed by Seligman (2011) and its capacity to predict overall QOL. Additionally, this paper examines the differences between wellness and non-wellness tourists as it relates to well-being

and QOL. Lastly, this study examined the importance/performance ratings of well-being experiences while travelling.

The first finding from this study suggests that the PERMA model of well-being does not contribute to tourists overall quality of life. This was surprising, based on the findings from both qualitative studies one and two that suggested wellness travel to have some sort of long term enduring impact on ones life. The second key finding reveals that differences do exist between wellness and non-wellness travelers, but only between overall health and QOL. Lastly, results from the importance performance analysis suggest that the travel and tourism industry (both wellness and non-wellness) are meeting the well-being expectations of travelers.

Main contributions

The notoriety of wellness tourism has garnered steady growth and recognition in recent years from both academic and industry representatives. However, up to this point, no a priori assumptions had been formulated about the underlying positive psychological dimensions of the wellness tourism experience. Due to the absence of theoretical foundation in this area, this dissertation was set forth primarily as an exploratory study to discover the positive psychological dimensions that exist within the wellness tourism domain. Based on the results of two qualitative and one quantitative studies, three main contributions are discussed.

The Dimensions of Holistic Wellness

Based on the results from the first article, it is clear that experiences within each of the four holistic wellness dimensions are present and impactful. More specifically, experiences related to the body and the environment was revealed to be both pathways and barriers to wellness for travelers. On the other hand, experiences grouped within the dimensions of mind

and spirit were discovered as providing pathways to wellness. Future quantitative research examining the importance and performance of each of these factors is warranted. Results from this type of study would reveal the dimensions that wellness tourism companies need to focus most of their attention towards in order to gain a competitive advantage. Additionally, a quantitative study addressing how these dimensions may effect overall guest satisfaction, and further predict intention to revisit would be noteworthy. Within these dimensions, some memorable and transformative guest experiences were also noted. This finding suggest that future quantitative research may be able to confirm the range of impact these types of experiences may have on guests, and in turn, whether or not these memorable and/or transformative experiences can predict guest loyalty. Lastly, this article did not group guest experiences based on positive psychological well-being measures. It would be interesting to investigate the link between Dunn's holistic concept of wellness and Seligman's PERMA model of well-being. More specifically, is there a wellness domain in which the PERMA model is more likely to exist? Would each variable in the PERMA model thrive in a different domain? And lastly, is there a relationship between the dimensions of holistic well-being, travel and overall QOL?

Transformative Guest Experiences

Transformative experiences were assessed in the second article in relationship to a priori positive psychological well-being dimensions within the context of yoga tourism. As mentioned previously, seven dimensions were evident in this research as having some degree of transformational change, thus substantiating the link between wellness tourism and positive psychological well-being. This finding makes a significant contribution to the current state of

wellness tourism research, as it is the first to incorporate Seligman's new theory on a qualitative level. However, this study was specific to yoga tourism, therefore, it begs to question whether or not these results would hold true in a wider wellness tourism setting, or in a traditional tourism setting. The majority of changes were categorized as major and enduring, meaning that participants spoke of these changes as having a long term impact affecting their beliefs and attitudes, transcending the yoga retreat experience. This finding was interesting in light of the fact that the findings from the third article found no significant links between the dimensions of the PERMA model and overall quality of life. Perhaps this can be explained in light of the fact that this article was quantitative in nature and revealed results from a more general wellness tourism sample and traditional tourism sample. Additionally, it may be argued that it is much more difficult to capture emotions such as happiness, or experiences of engagement within a quantitative framework that attempts to generalize to a large group of people. As further explanation, it has been argued that QOL means different things to different people, thus bringing into question the usefulness of a general QOL scale. Nonetheless, it is evident that both positive psychological well-being and transformative experiences do exist within the wellness tourism context. Persistent investigation into this area is needed to bring more clarification to this complex phenomenon.

Quality of Life

Quality of life was specifically addressed in the third study, however, its evidence was clearly revealed in both studies one and two. Quantitative findings from the third study reveal that neither wellness tourism nor traditional forms of tourism have any significant impact on overall satisfaction with QOL. This result was surprising in light of previous findings that suggest a significant relationship (Uysal et. al., 2016). However, as mentioned previously in the

literature, findings surrounding tourism and QOL are inconclusive. While the majority of studies did find a significant link between tourism and QOL, some studies did not (Kroesen & Handy, 2014; Michalko, Kiss, Kovacs & Sulyok, 2009; Milman, 1998; Nawijn et. al., 2010; Tarumi, Hagihara & Morimoto, 1998; Wei & Milman, 2002). Additionally, this is one of the first studies to address wellness tourism and its impact on QOL. This dissertation evaluated well-being within the tourism domain only, thus neglecting to consider other life domains such as work life, family life and leisure life. Future research that encompasses all life domains may be necessary to evaluate the true makeup of QOL, and the possible contribution of tourism within this structure.

In conclusion, findings from the three studies included in this dissertation add new though provoking knowledge to the current state of wellness tourism research. It provides numerous areas for future research to be continued, with hopes of creating stronger links between tourism, well-being and travelers overall quality of life.

Limitations

This research is not without its limitations. This dissertation is considered limited in regards to the following areas (1) sampling (2) the list of scale items and (3) the use of self-reported measures of well-being and quality of life. With regards to sampling, both studies one and two were qualitative in nature, therefore the results from these studies cannot be generalized to a larger population. In addition, the sample used for study one was bound by time, a set number of wellness tourism companies as well as one location of the online reviews.

Secondly, as it relates to the list of scale items used for study three, the pilot study testing did not exhaust all possible scale items related to positive psychological well-being. The PERMA model of well-being was initially chosen due to the fact that it had been validated in

prior work. However, in hindsight, further exploration of this measurement is needed to be properly constructed for measurement in a tourism setting.

Lastly, the use of self-reported measures of well-being and quality of life is considered a limitation of study three. Many of the well-being measures included underpinnings of emotions, which can be seen as challenging due to the complex nature of this concept. Additionally, participants were asked to recall travel experiences where they may have felt this emotion, thus lowering the confidence of these self-reported measures. Further to this, obscurities in the language used to communicate self-reported measures is considered a limitation. Future research may find it useful to conduct surveys within a minimum time frame after travel has occurred, thus lessening the effect of this limitation.

Implications

The travel and tourism industry has long been considered to provide pleasurable, or hedonic experiences for those involved. In fact, it has been decades since the rapid growth and development of mass tourism destinations catered towards attracting those visitors looking for relaxation and rejuvenation. However, it was not until recently that the industry has been associated with eudemonic experiences that invoke more meaningful in depth experiences. This research is one of the first of its kind to marry hedonic and eudemonic well-being concepts within a tourism context. Several marketing, managerial and theoretical implications are evident based on this research.

From a marketing perspective, this research brings clarity to several strategies that can be used by companies to gain competitive advantage. As mentioned previously, the travel and tourism industry has long been associated with happiness and short term pleasure. Results from

this research bring light to the transformative qualities of travel and tourism, especially wellness tourism. Based on findings from the qualitative research, wellness tourism companies need to consider and acknowledge the power of selling transformative experiences. This will be difficult, due to the intangible nature and value proposition this puts forward, however, these types of experiences clearly have the potential to differentiate the wellness tourism within the wider travel and tourism industry. Marketing efforts focused on the connection to community and the environment could help to portray the idea of transformation through education, relationship building and cultural exchange. As was evident in the findings, these are areas that were mentioned by travelers as having significant long-term impact in their lives. More direct marketing techniques could include demonstrating sustainability as an important initiative, as well as the quality of staff on property. Unlike traditional forms of tourism, many wellness tourists are travelling to learn and shape shift their way of thinking. Therefore, clearly delineating the value in the staff on property is important from a managerial perspective.

On a managerial level, as it relates to onsite offerings, findings from this study highlight the need for wellness companies to become more all inclusive, reaching beyond the traditional yogi or health nut. As it relates to yoga retreats, it is no longer enough to simply offer well taught yoga classes and supporting lectures/seminars. The travelling yogi is looking for more adventure and opportunities to explore the outdoors (e.g. kayaking, zip lining, paddle board yoga etc.) Expanding to include these types of options could also serve as a gateway to appealing to a wider range of tourist, not just the serious yoga practitioner. Price is another area where wellness companies need to be mindful as the market continues to grow. Currently, the wellness travel segment seems to be catered more towards the affluent traveler. As the market continues to grow and become more and more saturated, the availability of lower priced options will be key. This is

not to say that companies should blindly lower prices in an effort to attract customers, but to be aware of the price/value proposition they are currently putting forward. With more and more companies entering the market, current loyal customers may be tempted to move their money elsewhere if prices are not living up to the quality of service.

Theoretically speaking, this is the first study to employ the PERMA model of well-being and one of few to step outside the normal theoretical underpinnings of subjective well-being. Introducing this type of psychological model into the tourism field is just the first step to creating stronger links between tourism and positive psychology. Longitudinally speaking, this dissertation is the start to developing wellness travel as a way of life for communities, companies and individuals around the world.

PUBLICATION NOTE

The articles presented in this dissertation will be prepared and submitted for review to the journals listed below.

Article 1. An exploratory examination of the wellness tourist experience using a netnographic approach. Targeting: *Tourism Management*

Article 2. Transformative experiences among yoga tourists: An exploratory inquiry. Targeting: *Journal of Travel Research*

Article 3. Do vacations really make us happier? Exploring the relationships between tourism, wellness and quality of life using positive psychological theory. Targeting: *International Journal of Tourism Research*

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW PROMPT

Interviews were semi-structured and used the following questions as a guide.

I gave a short introduction reminding the participant of the purpose of the study as well as their rights to withdraw at any time.

General wellness & travel questions

1. When you hear the term ‘wellness’, what does this bring to mind?
2. Can you describe a time in your life when you felt holistically well (physically, emotionally, mentally)?
3. In your day-to-day life, how do you maintain your wellbeing?
4. When you think about travelling, what does a perfect vacation look like to you?

At this point I gave a brief explanation of wellness tourism (primary vs. secondary wellness traveler) as a point of reference for the interviewee and ask them if they have any questions.

Wellness tourism motivation questions

1. Can you please describe the different types of wellness travel or wellness tourism have you participated in?
2. When deciding on a destination for wellness travel, what kinds of things do you look for? (e.g. price, attributes, location, wellness offerings etc.)
3. What motivates you to travel for wellness over other reasons for travel?

Questions to explore the benefits and outcomes of wellness tourism

1. When you think about your relationship with wellness in general, what are some of the benefits that come to mind?
2. When travelling for wellness, what benefits do you experience during your trip?
3. Think about your experiences travelling for wellness to answer the following questions.
 - a. Can you provide examples of moments where you felt particularly happy, positive and/or content?
 - b. Can you provide examples of moments where you felt particularly absorbed and interested in the moment?
 - c. Can you provide examples of moments where you felt particularly integrated and connected with another person or within a community of people?
 - d. Can you provide examples of moments where you felt connected to a higher purpose or direction in your life?
 - e. Can you provide examples of moments when you accomplished a particular goal or ambition you had set for yourself?

- f. Can you provide examples of moments where you achieved clarity around self-love and acceptance?
 - g. Can you provide examples of moments when you experienced deep personal growth and/or healing?
4. Now, think about your home life. Do you feel that you are able to experience these same measures of wellbeing while NOT on a wellness travel vacation?
 5. What connection does your commitment to wellness at home have with your choice to also travel for wellness?
 6. Any other questions or comments that arise due to the nature of a semi-structured interview.

APPENDIX B
SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Default Question Block

THANK YOU for agreeing to take part in this study which will examine the outcomes of your travel experiences with regards to your overall quality of life!

You can expect to complete this survey in approximately **10 minutes.**

ELECTRONIC CONSENT:

Please select your choice below. Clicking on the "agree" button below indicates that:

- You have read the above information.
- You agree to participate.
- You are at least 19 years of age.

Agree

Disagree

What year were you born?

What is your gender?

Male

Female

What is your highest level of education?

- Less than high school diploma
- High school graduate
- Associate degree (for example: AA, AS)
- Bachelor's degree (for example: BA, AB, BS)
- Master's degree (for example: MA, MS, MEng, MEd, MSW, MBA)
- Professional degree (for example: MD, DDS, DVM, LLB, JD)
- Doctorate degree (for example: PhD, EdD)

6. What is your combined annual household income?

Do you live in the United States of America?

- Yes
- No

What zip code do you live in?

What country and city do you live in?

What is your current marital status?

- Married
- Divorced
- Separated

- Widowed
- Single (never married)
- Living with Partner

What is your current employment status? (Choose all that apply)

- Student (part time)
- Student (full time)
- Full time employed
- Part time employed
- Self employed
- Unemployed
- Retired

Please review the following information before answering the question:

Wellness tourism is travel associated with the pursuit of **maintaining or enhancing** one's personal well-being.

Activities focused on wellness may include:

Wellness Tourism Activities



Spa & Beauty

Massage
Facials
Bathing
Hair & Nails



Eco & Adventure

Hiking
Biking
Taking Walks



Mind Body

Yoga
Tai Chi
Qigong
Biofeedback



Fitness

Gym Visits
Fitness Classes
Stretching
Pilates



Spiritual Connection

Prayer
Volunteering
Time alone



Healthy Eating

Nutrition
Weight Management
Detox
Culinary Experiences



Personal Growth

Retreats
Life Coaching
Stress Reduction
Music & Arts



Health

Integrative Medicine
Diagnostics
Chronic management
Health Check ups

Have you ever participated in **any of these activities** while traveling?

- Yes
- No

Please review the following information CAREFULLY before answering the question:

Wellness Tourism Activities



Spa & Beauty

Massage
Facials
Bathing
Hair & Nails



Eco & Adventure

Hiking
Biking
Taking Walks



Mind Body

Yoga
Tai Chi
Qigong
Biofeedback



Fitness

Gym Visits
Fitness Classes
Stretching
Pilates



Spiritual Connection

Prayer
Volunteering
Time alone



Healthy Eating

Nutrition
Weight Management
Detox
Culinary Experiences



Personal Growth

Retreats
Life Coaching
Stress Reduction
Music & Arts



Health

Integrative Medicine
Diagnostics
Chronic management
Health Check ups

Primary wellness travelers are those people who have traveled for the **sole purpose** of maintaining or enhancing their health & well-being. Primary wellness travel can include any of the activities described above.

For example, you may travel specifically for wellness (e.g. a yoga retreat or a volunteer trip).

Have you ever traveled as a **primary wellness** traveler?

Yes

No

On average, how many **primary wellness vacations** do you take each year?

1

2

- 3
- 4
- More than 4, please specify:

How many nights do you spend when traveling as a **primary wellness traveler**?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- More than 5, please specify:

About how much money do you spend on your **primary wellness vacation** in U.S. dollars (including trip planning fees, transportation, accommodation food, activities etc)?

Who do you travel with when traveling **primarily for wellness**?

- Solo
- Friends
- Family
- As a couple

In the past, where have you traveled for your **primary wellness vacations**? (Choose all that apply)

- Domestic U.S.
- International

In the past, which U.S. States and/or territories have you traveled to for your **primary wellness vacations**? (Choose all that apply)

- Alabama
- Alaska
- Arizona
- Arkansas
- California
- Colorado
- Connecticut
- Delaware
- District of Columbia
- Florida
- Georgia
- Hawaii
- Idaho
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Iowa
- Kansas
- Kentucky
- Louisiana
- Maine
- Maryland
- Massachusetts
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- Mississippi
- Missouri
- Montana
- Nebraska

- Nevada
- New Hampshire
- New Jersey
- New Mexico
- New York
- North Carolina
- North Dakota
- Ohio
- Oklahoma
- Oregon
- Pennsylvania
- Puerto Rico
- Rhode Island
- South Carolina
- South Dakota
- Tennessee
- Texas
- Utah
- Vermont
- Virginia
- Washington
- West Virginia
- Wisconsin
- Wyoming

In the past, which destinations have you traveled to for your **primary wellness vacations**?
(Choose all that apply)

- Afghanistan
- Albania
- Algeria

- Andorra
- Angola
- Antigua and Barbuda
- Argentina
- Armenia
- Australia
- Austria
- Azerbaijan
- Bahamas
- Bahrain
- Bangladesh
- Barbados
- Belarus
- Belgium
- Belize
- Benin
- Bhutan
- Bolivia
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Botswana
- Brazil
- Brunei Darussalam
- Bulgaria
- Burkina Faso
- Burundi
- Cambodia
- Cameroon
- Canada
- Cape Verde
- Central African Republic
- Chad
- Chile

- China
- Colombia
- Comoros
- Congo, Republic of the...
- Costa Rica
- Côte d'Ivoire
- Croatia
- Cuba
- Cyprus
- Czech Republic
- Democratic People's Republic of Korea
- Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Denmark
- Djibouti
- Dominica
- Dominican Republic
- Ecuador
- Egypt
- El Salvador
- Equatorial Guinea
- Eritrea
- Estonia
- Ethiopia
- Fiji
- Finland
- France
- Gabon
- Gambia
- Georgia
- Germany
- Ghana

- Greece
- Grenada
- Guatemala
- Guinea
- Guinea-Bissau
- Guyana
- Haiti
- Honduras
- Hong Kong (S.A.R.)
- Hungary
- Iceland
- India
- Indonesia
- Iran, Islamic Republic of...
- Iraq
- Ireland
- Israel
- Italy
- Jamaica
- Japan
- Jordan
- Kazakhstan
- Kenya
- Kiribati
- Kuwait
- Kyrgyzstan
- Lao People's Democratic Republic
- Latvia
- Lebanon
- Lesotho
- Liberia
- Libyan Arab Jamahiriya

- Liechtenstein
- Lithuania
- Luxembourg
- Madagascar
- Malawi
- Malaysia
- Maldives
- Mali
- Malta
- Marshall Islands
- Mauritania
- Mauritius
- Mexico
- Micronesia, Federated States of...
- Monaco
- Mongolia
- Montenegro
- Morocco
- Mozambique
- Myanmar
- Namibia
- Nauru
- Nepal
- Netherlands
- New Zealand
- Nicaragua
- Niger
- Nigeria
- North Korea
- Norway
- Oman

- Pakistan
- Palau
- Panama
- Papua New Guinea
- Paraguay
- Peru
- Philippines
- Poland
- Portugal
- Qatar
- Republic of Korea
- Republic of Moldova
- Romania
- Russian Federation
- Rwanda
- Saint Kitts and Nevis
- Saint Lucia
- Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
- Samoa
- San Marino
- Sao Tome and Principe
- Saudi Arabia
- Senegal
- Serbia
- Seychelles
- Sierra Leone
- Singapore
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Solomon Islands
- Somalia
- South Africa

- South Korea
- Spain
- Sri Lanka
- Sudan
- Suriname
- Swaziland
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Syrian Arab Republic
- Tajikistan
- Thailand
- The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
- Timor-Leste
- Togo
- Tonga
- Trinidad and Tobago
- Tunisia
- Turkey
- Turkmenistan
- Tuvalu
- Uganda
- Ukraine
- United Arab Emirates
- United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
- United Republic of Tanzania
- United States of America
- Uruguay
- Uzbekistan
- Vanuatu
- Venezuela, Bolivarian Republic of...
- Viet Nam

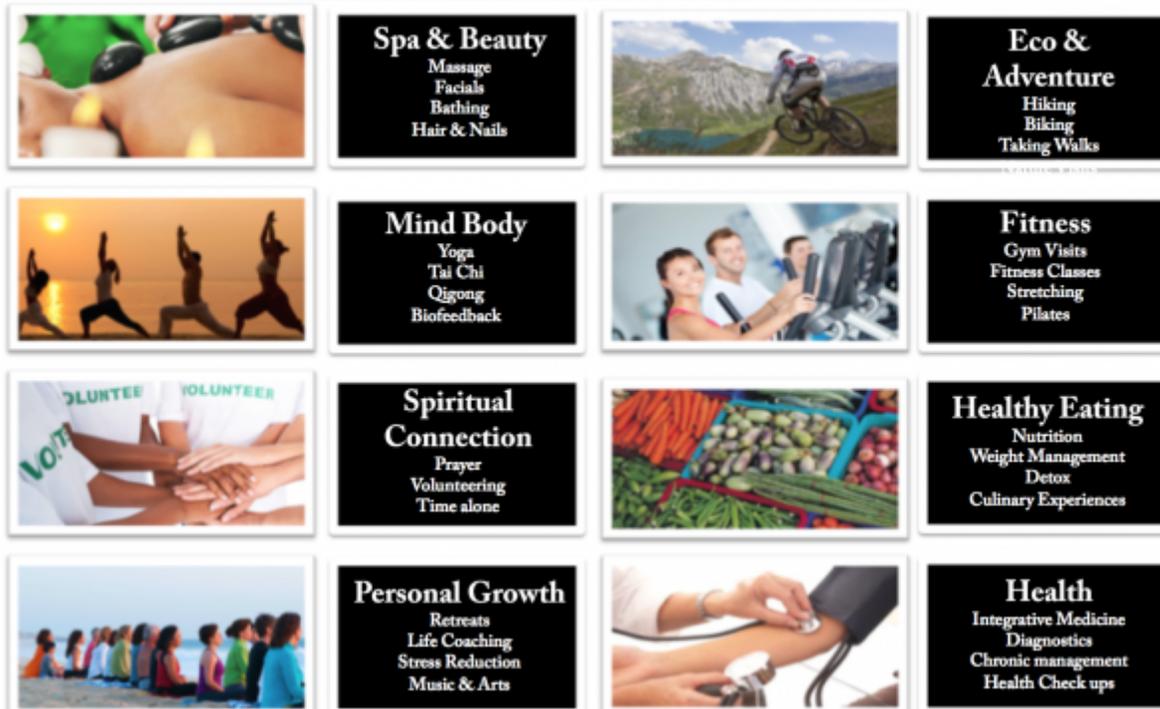
- Yemen
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe

What type of accommodation(s) have you used while traveling primarily for wellness?
(Check all that apply)

- Bed & breakfast
- Condo or vacation rental
- Wellness/healthy hotel
- Regular hotel
- Retreat center
- Wellness Cruise
- Regular cruise
- Parks/RV/Camping
- Ashram
- Other

Using the picture below as a guide, please answer the following questions.

Wellness Tourism Activities



What type(s) of wellness activities have you participated in while traveling **primarily for wellness**? (Choose all that apply)

- Spa & Beauty (e.g. Body Treatments, Spa, Massage, Nails, Facials)
- Mind-Body (e.g. Yoga, Meditation, Tai chi, Biofeedback)
- Spiritual (e.g. Prayer, Volunteering, Time alone, Time with family & friends)
- Personal Growth (e.g. Life coaching, wellness retreats, stress reduction)
- Eco & Adventure (e.g. hiking, biking, nature walks)
- Fitness (Gym visits, fitness classes)
- Healthy eating (restaurants, health food stores)
- Health (Check ups, diagnostics, chronic condition management)
- Other

What is your primary reason for traveling as a **primary wellness tourist**? (Please choose only one)

- Spa & Beauty (e.g. Body Treatments, Spa, Massage, Nails, Facials)

- Mind-Body (e.g. Yoga, Meditation, Tai chi, Biofeedback)
- Spiritual (e.g. Prayer, Volunteering, Time alone, Time with family & friends)
- Personal Growth (e.g. Life coaching, wellness retreats, stress reduction)
- Eco & Adventure (e.g. hiking, biking, nature walks)
- Fitness (Gym visits, fitness classes)
- Healthy eating (restaurants, health food stores)
- Health (Check ups, diagnostics, chronic condition management)
- Other

Take a moment to think about your most recent experiences traveling as a **primary wellness tourist**.

The following questions are asking you to think about the **impact** that primary wellness travel has had in your day-to-day life.

As a result of traveling for **wellness**, I feel like...

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am more joyful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am more positive	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am happier	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

As a result of traveling for **wellness**, I feel like I am MORE able to...

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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Become absorbed in what I am doing	<input type="radio"/>				
Feel excited and interested in things	<input type="radio"/>				
Lose track of time while doing something I enjoy	<input type="radio"/>				

As a result of traveling for **wellness**, I feel like...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I have more support in my relationships with others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have more loving relationships with others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am more satisfied with my personal relationships	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

As a result of traveling for **wellness**, I feel like...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
My life is more purposeful and meaningful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My life is more valuable and worthwhile	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have more sense of direction for my life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

As a result of traveling for **wellness**, I feel like...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I spend more time making progress towards accomplishing my goals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I achieve important goals more often	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to handle my responsibilities more often	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please rate the following statements with regards to your levels of **happiness**.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
In general, I would say that I am a very happy person.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
As a result of traveling, I feel happier.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

While traveling as a primary wellness tourist, how **important** is it for you to feel...

	Not at all Important	Slightly Important	Fairly Important	Important	Very Important
Contentment and joy	<input type="radio"/>				
Absorbed & interested in things	<input type="radio"/>				
Supported by a community of people	<input type="radio"/>				

A strong sense of purpose & direction for my life	<input type="radio"/>				
Like I am making progress towards accomplishing my goals	<input type="radio"/>				
Happy and healthy	<input type="radio"/>				

Think about your most recent wellness vacations. How well did this trip provide you with the following?

My **wellness travel** provided me with opportunities to feel...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Contentment and joy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Absorbed and interested in things	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supported by a community of people	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A strong sense of purpose & direction for my life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Like I am making progress towards accomplishing my goals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Happier and healthier	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Based on your answers, you have been categorized as a **secondary wellness tourist**.

This is someone who does not travel primarily for wellness, but DOES participate in wellness activities while they travel. Based on this information, please answer the following questions in reference to your experiences as a secondary wellness tourist.

While traveling as a **secondary wellness tourist**, how often do you participate in activities geared towards improving or maintaining your health & wellness?

- All the time
- Most of the time
- Sometimes

While traveling as a **secondary wellness tourist**, how many nights do you usually spend?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- More than 5, please specify:

About how much money do you spend on your **secondary wellness vacation** in U.S. dollars (including trip planning fees, transportation, accommodation food, activities etc)?

While traveling as a **secondary wellness tourist**, who do you normally go with?

- Solo
- Friends
- Family
- As a couple

In the past, where have you traveled for your **secondary wellness vacations**? (Choose all that apply)

- Domestic U.S.
- International

In the past, which U.S. States and/or territories have you traveled to for your **secondary wellness vacations**? (Choose all that apply)

- Alabama
- Alaska
- Arizona
- Arkansas
- California
- Colorado
- Connecticut
- Delaware
- District of Columbia
- Florida
- Georgia
- Hawaii
- Idaho
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Iowa
- Kansas
- Kentucky
- Louisiana
- Maine
- Maryland
- Massachusetts

- Michigan
- Minnesota
- Mississippi
- Missouri
- Montana
- Nebraska
- Nevada
- New Hampshire
- New Jersey
- New Mexico
- New York
- North Carolina
- North Dakota
- Ohio
- Oklahoma
- Oregon
- Pennsylvania
- Puerto Rico
- Rhode Island
- South Carolina
- South Dakota
- Tennessee
- Texas
- Utah
- Vermont
- Virginia
- Washington
- West Virginia
- Wisconsin
- Wyoming

In the past, which destinations have you traveled to for your **secondary wellness vacations**? (Choose all that apply)

- Afghanistan
- Albania
- Algeria
- Andorra
- Angola
- Antigua and Barbuda
- Argentina
- Armenia
- Australia
- Austria
- Azerbaijan
- Bahamas
- Bahrain
- Bangladesh
- Barbados
- Belarus
- Belgium
- Belize
- Benin
- Bhutan
- Bolivia
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Botswana
- Brazil
- Brunei Darussalam
- Bulgaria
- Burkina Faso
- Burundi
- Cambodia

- Cameroon
- Canada
- Cape Verde
- Central African Republic
- Chad
- Chile
- China
- Colombia
- Comoros
- Congo, Republic of the...
- Costa Rica
- Côte d'Ivoire
- Croatia
- Cuba
- Cyprus
- Czech Republic
- Democratic People's Republic of Korea
- Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Denmark
- Djibouti
- Dominica
- Dominican Republic
- Ecuador
- Egypt
- El Salvador
- Equatorial Guinea
- Eritrea
- Estonia
- Ethiopia
- Fiji
- Finland

- France
- Gabon
- Gambia
- Georgia
- Germany
- Ghana
- Greece
- Grenada
- Guatemala
- Guinea
- Guinea-Bissau
- Guyana
- Haiti
- Honduras
- Hong Kong (S.A.R.)
- Hungary
- Iceland
- India
- Indonesia
- Iran, Islamic Republic of...
- Iraq
- Ireland
- Israel
- Italy
- Jamaica
- Japan
- Jordan
- Kazakhstan
- Kenya
- Kiribati
- Kuwait
- Kyrgyzstan

- Lao People's Democratic Republic
- Latvia
- Lebanon
- Lesotho
- Liberia
- Libyan Arab Jamahiriya
- Liechtenstein
- Lithuania
- Luxembourg
- Madagascar
- Malawi
- Malaysia
- Maldives
- Mali
- Malta
- Marshall Islands
- Mauritania
- Mauritius
- Mexico
- Micronesia, Federated States of...
- Monaco
- Mongolia
- Montenegro
- Morocco
- Mozambique
- Myanmar
- Namibia
- Nauru
- Nepal
- Netherlands
- New Zealand

- Nicaragua
- Niger
- Nigeria
- North Korea
- Norway
- Oman
- Pakistan
- Palau
- Panama
- Papua New Guinea
- Paraguay
- Peru
- Philippines
- Poland
- Portugal
- Qatar
- Republic of Korea
- Republic of Moldova
- Romania
- Russian Federation
- Rwanda
- Saint Kitts and Nevis
- Saint Lucia
- Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
- Samoa
- San Marino
- Sao Tome and Principe
- Saudi Arabia
- Senegal
- Serbia
- Seychelles
- Sierra Leone

- Singapore
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Solomon Islands
- Somalia
- South Africa
- South Korea
- Spain
- Sri Lanka
- Sudan
- Suriname
- Swaziland
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Syrian Arab Republic
- Tajikistan
- Thailand
- The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
- Timor-Leste
- Togo
- Tonga
- Trinidad and Tobago
- Tunisia
- Turkey
- Turkmenistan
- Tuvalu
- Uganda
- Ukraine
- United Arab Emirates
- United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
- United Republic of Tanzania

- United States of America
- Uruguay
- Uzbekistan
- Vanuatu
- Venezuela, Bolivarian Republic of...
- Viet Nam
- Yemen
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe

What type of accommodation(s) have you used while traveling as a **secondary wellness tourist**? (Check all that apply)

- Bed & breakfast
- Condo or vacation rental
- Wellness/healthy hotel
- Regular hotel
- Retreat center
- Wellness Cruise
- Regular cruise
- Parks/RV/Camping
- Ashram
- Other

Using the picture below as a guide, please answer the following questions.

Wellness Tourism Activities



Spa & Beauty

Massage
Facials
Bathing
Hair & Nails



Eco & Adventure

Hiking
Biking
Taking Walks



Mind Body

Yoga
Tai Chi
Qigong
Biofeedback



Fitness

Gym Visits
Fitness Classes
Stretching
Pilates



Spiritual Connection

Prayer
Volunteering
Time alone



Healthy Eating

Nutrition
Weight Management
Detox
Culinary Experiences



Personal Growth

Retreats
Life Coaching
Stress Reduction
Music & Arts



Health

Integrative Medicine
Diagnostics
Chronic management
Health Check ups

What type(s) of wellness activities have you participated in while traveling as a **secondary wellness tourist**? (Choose all that apply)

- Spa & Beauty (e.g. Body Treatments, Spa, Massage, Nails, Facials)
- Mind-Body (e.g. Yoga, Meditation, Tai chi, Biofeedback)
- Spiritual (e.g. Prayer, Volunteering, Time alone, Time with family & friends)
- Personal Growth (e.g. Life coaching, wellness retreats, stress reduction)
- Eco & Adventure (e.g. hiking, biking, nature walks)
- Fitness (Gym visits, fitness classes)
- Healthy eating (restaurants, health food stores)
- Health (Check ups, diagnostics, chronic condition management)
- Other

Which category of activities do you primarily participate in when traveling as a **secondary wellness tourist**? (Please choose only one)

- Spa & Beauty (e.g. Body Treatments, Spa, Massage, Nails, Facials)

- Mind-Body (e.g. Yoga, Meditation, Tai chi, Biofeedback)
- Spiritual (e.g. Prayer, Volunteering, Time alone, Time with family & friends)
- Personal Growth (e.g. Life coaching, wellness retreats, stress reduction)
- Eco & Adventure (e.g. hiking, biking, nature walks)
- Fitness (Gym visits, fitness classes)
- Healthy eating (restaurants, health food stores)
- Health (Check ups, diagnostics, chronic condition management)
- Other

Take a moment to think about your most recent experiences traveling as a **secondary wellness tourist**.

The following questions are asking you to think about the **impact** that secondary wellness travel has had in your day-to-day life.

As a result of **participating in wellness activities while I travel**, I feel like...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am more joyful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am more positive	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am happier	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

As a result of **participating in wellness activities while I travel**, I feel like I am MORE able to...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
--	-------------------	----------	----------------------------	-------	----------------

Become absorbed in what I am doing	<input type="radio"/>				
Feel excited and interested in things	<input type="radio"/>				
Lose track of time while doing something I enjoy	<input type="radio"/>				

As a result of **participating in wellness activities while I travel**, I feel like...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I have more support in my relationships with others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have more loving relationships with others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am more satisfied with my personal relationships	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

As a result of **participating in wellness activities while I travel**, I feel like...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
My life is more purposeful and meaningful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My life is more valuable and worthwhile	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have more sense of direction for my life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

As a result of **participating in wellness activities while I travel**, I feel like...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I spend more time making progress towards accomplishing my goals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I achieve important goals more often	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to handle my responsibilities more often	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please rate the following statements with regards to your levels of **happiness**.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
In general, I would say that I am a very happy person.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
As a result of participating in wellness activities while I travel, I feel happier.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

While traveling as a **secondary wellness tourist**, how **important** is it for you to feel...

	Not at all Important	Slightly Important	Fairly Important	Important	Very Important
Contentment and joy	<input type="radio"/>				
Absorbed & interested in things	<input type="radio"/>				

Supported by a community of people	<input type="radio"/>				
A strong sense of purpose & direction for my life	<input type="radio"/>				
Like I am making progress towards accomplishing my goals	<input type="radio"/>				
Happy and healthy	<input type="radio"/>				

Think about your most recent trips where you participated in wellness activities. How well did these trips provide you with the following?

My **secondary wellness travel** provided me with opportunities to feel...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Contentment and joy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Absorbed and interested in things	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supported by a community of people	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A strong sense of purpose & direction for my life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Like I am making progress towards accomplishing my goals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Happier and healthier	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

When I travel, I travel mostly for:

Business

Leisure

Please answer the following questions in regards to your **business travel experiences**.

Please answer the following questions in regards to your **leisure travel experiences**.

On average, how many trips do you take each year?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- More than 4, please specify:

How many nights do you spend when traveling?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- More than 5, please specify:

About how much money do you spend on your travel in U.S. dollars (including trip planning fees, transportation, accommodation food, activities etc)?

Who do you travel with?

- Solo
- Friends
- Family
- As a couple
- Work mates

In the past, where have you traveled? (Choose all that apply)

- Domestic U.S.
- International

In the past, which U.S. States and/or territories have you traveled to? (Choose all that apply)

- Alabama
- Alaska
- Arizona
- Arkansas
- California
- Colorado
- Connecticut
- Delaware
- District of Columbia
- Florida
- Georgia
- Hawaii
- Idaho
- Illinois
- Indiana

- Iowa
- Kansas
- Kentucky
- Louisiana
- Maine
- Maryland
- Massachusetts
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- Mississippi
- Missouri
- Montana
- Nebraska
- Nevada
- New Hampshire
- New Jersey
- New Mexico
- New York
- North Carolina
- North Dakota
- Ohio
- Oklahoma
- Oregon
- Pennsylvania
- Puerto Rico
- Rhode Island
- South Carolina
- South Dakota
- Tennessee
- Texas
- Utah
- Vermont

- Virginia
- Washington
- West Virginia
- Wisconsin
- Wyoming

In the past, which destinations have you traveled to? (Choose all that apply)

- Afghanistan
- Albania
- Algeria
- Andorra
- Angola
- Antigua and Barbuda
- Argentina
- Armenia
- Australia
- Austria
- Azerbaijan
- Bahamas
- Bahrain
- Bangladesh
- Barbados
- Belarus
- Belgium
- Belize
- Benin
- Bhutan
- Bolivia
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Botswana

- Brazil
- Brunei Darussalam
- Bulgaria
- Burkina Faso
- Burundi
- Cambodia
- Cameroon
- Canada
- Cape Verde
- Central African Republic
- Chad
- Chile
- China
- Colombia
- Comoros
- Congo, Republic of the...
- Costa Rica
- Côte d'Ivoire
- Croatia
- Cuba
- Cyprus
- Czech Republic
- Democratic People's Republic of Korea
- Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Denmark
- Djibouti
- Dominica
- Dominican Republic
- Ecuador
- Egypt
- El Salvador
- Equatorial Guinea

- Eritrea
- Estonia
- Ethiopia
- Fiji
- Finland
- France
- Gabon
- Gambia
- Georgia
- Germany
- Ghana
- Greece
- Grenada
- Guatemala
- Guinea
- Guinea-Bissau
- Guyana
- Haiti
- Honduras
- Hong Kong (S.A.R.)
- Hungary
- Iceland
- India
- Indonesia
- Iran, Islamic Republic of...
- Iraq
- Ireland
- Israel
- Italy
- Jamaica
- Japan

- Jordan
- Kazakhstan
- Kenya
- Kiribati
- Kuwait
- Kyrgyzstan
- Lao People's Democratic Republic
- Latvia
- Lebanon
- Lesotho
- Liberia
- Libyan Arab Jamahiriya
- Liechtenstein
- Lithuania
- Luxembourg
- Madagascar
- Malawi
- Malaysia
- Maldives
- Mali
- Malta
- Marshall Islands
- Mauritania
- Mauritius
- Mexico
- Micronesia, Federated States of...
- Monaco
- Mongolia
- Montenegro
- Morocco
- Mozambique
- Myanmar

- Namibia
- Nauru
- Nepal
- Netherlands
- New Zealand
- Nicaragua
- Niger
- Nigeria
- North Korea
- Norway
- Oman
- Pakistan
- Palau
- Panama
- Papua New Guinea
- Paraguay
- Peru
- Philippines
- Poland
- Portugal
- Qatar
- Republic of Korea
- Republic of Moldova
- Romania
- Russian Federation
- Rwanda
- Saint Kitts and Nevis
- Saint Lucia
- Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
- Samoa
- San Marino

- Sao Tome and Principe
- Saudi Arabia
- Senegal
- Serbia
- Seychelles
- Sierra Leone
- Singapore
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Solomon Islands
- Somalia
- South Africa
- South Korea
- Spain
- Sri Lanka
- Sudan
- Suriname
- Swaziland
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Syrian Arab Republic
- Tajikistan
- Thailand
- The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
- Timor-Leste
- Togo
- Tonga
- Trinidad and Tobago
- Tunisia
- Turkey
- Turkmenistan
- Tuvalu

- Uganda
- Ukraine
- United Arab Emirates
- United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
- United Republic of Tanzania
- United States of America
- Uruguay
- Uzbekistan
- Vanuatu
- Venezuela, Bolivarian Republic of...
- Viet Nam
- Yemen
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe

What type of accommodation(s) have you used while traveling? (Check all that apply)

- Bed & breakfast
- Condo or vacation rental
- Hotel
- Cruise
- Regular cruise
- Parks/RV/Camping
- Family/Friends
- Other, please specify

Think about your most recent travel experiences (business or leisure) to answer the following questions.

The following questions are asking you to think about the impact that **travel** has had in your day-to-day life.

As a result of traveling, I feel like...

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am more joyful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am more positive	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am happier	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

As a result of traveling, I feel like I am MORE able to...

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Become absorbed in what I am doing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Feel excited and interested in things	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lose track of time while doing something I enjoy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

As a result of traveling, I feel like...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I have more support in my relationships with others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have more loving					

relationships with others

I am more satisfied with my personal relationships

As a result of traveling, I feel like...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
My life is more purposeful and meaningful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My life is more valuable and worthwhile	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have more sense of direction for my life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

As a result of traveling, I feel like...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I spend more time making progress towards accomplishing my goals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I achieve important goals more often	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to handle my responsibilities more often	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please rate the following statements with regards to your levels of **happiness**.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
In general, I would say that I am a very happy person.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
As a result of traveling, I feel happier.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

While traveling how **IMPORTANT** is it for you to feel...

	Not at all Important	Slightly Important	Fairly Important	Important	Very Important
Contentment and joy	<input type="radio"/>				
Absorbed & interested in things	<input type="radio"/>				
Supported by a community of people	<input type="radio"/>				
A strong sense of purpose & direction for my life	<input type="radio"/>				
Like I am making progress towards accomplishing my goals	<input type="radio"/>				
Happy and healthy	<input type="radio"/>				

Think about your most recent trips for business or leisure. How well did these trips provide you with the following?

Traveling had provided me with opportunities to feel...

Strongly	Neither agree nor	Strongly
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	disagree	Disagree	disagree	Agree	agree
Contentment and joy	<input type="radio"/>				
Absorbed and interested in things	<input type="radio"/>				
Supported by a community of people	<input type="radio"/>				
A strong sense of purpose & direction for my life	<input type="radio"/>				
Like I am making progress towards accomplishing my goals	<input type="radio"/>				
Happier and healthier	<input type="radio"/>				

How satisfied are you with your current **physical health?**

	Not at all satisfied	Slightly Satisfied	Moderately Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Extremely Satisfied
How satisfied are you with your current physical health?	<input type="radio"/>				

Please answer the following questions with regards to your **current overall health.**

	Very Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent
Overall, how would you say your health is?	<input type="radio"/>				
Compared to others of your same age and sex, how is your health?	<input type="radio"/>				

Please answer the following questions with regards to any **negative emotions** you may feel.

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
How often do you feel anxious?	<input type="radio"/>				
How often do you feel angry?	<input type="radio"/>				
How often do you feel sad?	<input type="radio"/>				

Please rate the following statements with regards to your **overall quality of life**.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
In most ways, my life is close to my ideal.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The conditions of my life are excellent.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am very satisfied with my life.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
So far, I have gotten the most important things I want in life.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If I could live my life over, I would change nothing.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please type the following code into the text box below in order to complete this survey.

991

If you have taken this survey using Amazon MTurk, please copy & paste this code for

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