

AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF VIEW POINTS OF RESPONDENTS ABOUT WELLNESS TOURISM IN HARYANA

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ABSTRACT

India is emerging as a leading wellness destination in the world for health conscious consumers. The primary purpose of this segment is to achieve, promote or maintain health and a sense of well-being. It is about being proactive in discovering new avenues to promote a healthier, less stressful life style. Rising income levels, hectic daily routines, increasing self-responsibility towards health etc. are determining factors which led to the development of wellness tourism. Although its origin dates back to 1959 when Halbert Dunn wrote for the first time about a special state of health comprising an overall sense of well-being which sees man as consisting of body, spirit and mind and being dependent on his environment. Wellness is not a static concept and is subjective and relative, thus always in flux. For some it is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (WHO); for others it may be a spiritual mystical journey (Perneck and Johnson). Wellness is multi-dimensional activity which consists of physical fitness/beauty care, healthy nutrition/diet, relaxation/meditation and mental activity/education and illness prevention. Keeping in view multidimensional aspect of concept of wellness, this study is an attempt to identify the variables which lead to determine market analysis of wellness tourism in Haryana. In the second part, a case study of two districts namely Kurukshetra and Kaithal is described. Particular attention is drawn to opportunities, challenges and strategies for the development of wellness tourism in Haryana.

Keywords: wellness tourism, physical health, mental health, spiritual health

INTRODUCTION

India is emerging as a global health destination today with a strong annual value growth of 10% in medical tourism in 2009 (Euro monitor international). This performance of India has been due to availability of world-class doctors in the country and hospitals equipped with the latest technology and well-trained specialists, which are at par with the hospitals in the US and Europe, but with lower treatment costs. The country offers not just the high technology allopathic treatments but also holistic treatments where modern allopathic medicines are embedded with India's traditional treasure such as ayurvedic treatment, yoga, naturopathy etc. To tap the potential of these century old philosophies, the Ministry of Tourism is positioning India as a center of ayurveda, yoga, siddha, naturopathy, spirituality known as a center of wellness. A national workshop in Delhi was organized recently with the active participation of the Department of AYUSH, Ministry of Health, and the National Accreditation Board for Hospitals and Healthcare Providers (NABH) to position India as the leading destination for wellness tourism. The underlying objective of the workshop was to formulate strategies to improve wellness, identifying the core areas of Indian techniques that need to be promoted, incorporating the country's natural attributes; to lengthen the average stay and increase total expenditure by wellness visitors; and to increase professionalism and excellence amongst those delivering experiences (www.expresshospitality.com).

REVIEW OF LITRERATURE

Wellness tourism is not a new idea; it has been a centuries-old ritual. Many visitors to modern day health and wellness centers are unaware of the origin of the treatments they enjoy. They may not realize that Indian Ayurvedic practices go back as far as 5000 BC or that Egyptian women in 3000BC used similar cosmetics to the ones that are sometimes used today. Modern massage techniques started to be developed in the early 19th century particularly in Sweden. Lee (2004) suggests that the European health and wellness model has been based around the four elements; water, fire, earth and air. Indian Ayurveda and

Chinese philosophy do this too, but with a slightly different manner. Opinions on what constitutes wellness vary greatly. For some, it represents a philosophical standpoint whereby one confronts the true nature of existence, including one's inevitable mortality (Steiner and Reisinger); for others, it is about self-development and the reconciliation of body, mind and spirit (Kelly and Smith, Lehto, Brown, Chen and Morrison). It also includes cosmetic surgery to beautify the body in order to enhance psychological well-being (Connell). Wellness can be defined in many ways. Lutz Hertel of the German Wellness Association finds that the numerous definitions of wellness in the American-English language region share certain common features: the key importance of the life-style, self-responsibility for health, the multi-factoral roots of health as well as the exploitation of our potential for a better quality of life. Taking Kaspar's definition as detailed one where wellness tourism is the sum of all the relationships and phenomena resulting from a journey and residence by people whose main motive is to preserve or promote their health. They require comprehensive service package comprising physical fitness/beauty care, healthy nutrition/diet, relaxation/meditation and mental activity/education. Figure 1 explains wellness model.

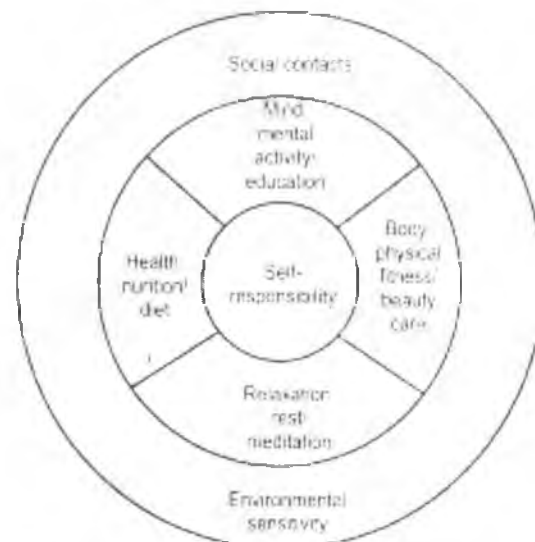


Figure 1 Wellness Model

DIMENSIONS OF WELLNESS TOURISM

Wellness Tourism is regarded as a subset of health tourism, and it is a holistic concept. One

differentiation would be the medical activities play an important role in health tourism, however, most forms of wellness tourism do not include medical or cure dimension. Health tourism refers to those clients with medical conditions who would travel to experience healing therapies. A person who seeks a wellness travel experience, is generally healthy to start with, and seeks therapies to maintain his or her well being. Thus, wellness programs are pursued solely by 'healthy' people whose main aim is prevention. A line of demarcation can be drawn between this wellness with its comprehensive package including physical fitness, healthy diet, meditation and illness prevention proper (Mueller and Kaufmann). These wellness guests can claim services which are very similar to those enjoyed by normal cure guests but here the motive is slightly different i.e. preserving and promoting their health which contrasts with the cure guests.

Wellness is not a static concept and it changes from country to country. In Germany, Austria and Switzerland physical fitness is also seen as being extremely important but this is combined with other principles of optimum wellness which includes healthy eating, rest and relaxation and some forms of spiritual activity such as meditation and yoga. There is an increasing shift towards self-responsibility and a balanced approach to life. In Central and Eastern Europe the term health is closely related to physical and medical healing. In Southern Europe, there is an emphasis on seaside wellness, where sunshine, sea air and thalassotherapies are used to enhance wellbeing. In Asian countries, many spiritual activities such as yoga, meditation and massage are more integrated into everyday life than they are in most western countries. The use of energy flows is a more accepted form of healing e.g. Riki, Shistu and balance creation for living space like Feng Shui.

Wellness tourism means traveling across borders for spa and wellness vacations, preventive health services, diagnostics, even DNA testing and stem-cell banking, according to SpaFinder, Inc. a global spa and wellness company based in New York City. However, there is much more to wellness tourism than spas and yoga. Fitness, diet, nutrition, sports, and meditation are all part of

wellness programs. The main objective behind these activities is to relax and energize oneself so that he can feel refreshed after a period of hard work. Wellness tourism also includes exploring nature and experiencing different cultures to keep in tune with the finer aspects of life. Customized products, personal attention, unique treatments, and high quality service are all synonymous with wellness tourism, and consumers have the right to demand nothing less. The use of indigenous products and ingredients is essential and most spas today offer these as part of their regular treatments. Health conscious consumers are willing to travel far and wide in their quest to look and feel better. Weight loss, managing stress, and slowing the ageing process are some of the areas that many people seek help in through wellness programs. Natural supplements like vitamins and minerals may also form part of these programs that aim at improving overall health. Many resorts and hotels have developed spa centers that are adding health and wellness programming options to facilitate guests who see wellness as a deciding factor when choosing a resort vacation. Spa facilities developed by resorts and hotels form part of the largest group that caters to the wellness tourism industry.

With stress being the number one cause of many diseases today, wellness tourism has become more mainstream, especially in the corporate world where mixing business with 'spa' pleasure is an increasing norm. The American Academy of Family Physicians estimates that 60% of all problems brought to physicians are stress related. US corporations lose approximately \$150 billion each year to stress-related disorders. With wellness treatment becoming affordable, a large number of middle income earners are able to seek professional treatment and wellness programs. This is evident from the fact that the fastest growing segment in the hospitality industry is hotels and resorts with spas. According to N. Venkat, managing director and chief operating officer, Birla Wellness, "Wellness tourism is booming all over the world as an increasing number of people are made to subscribe to sedentary lifestyles. This invariably creates mental tension, physical strain, and also has a large base of consumers willing to spend on themselves. And so people across the globe are seeking outlets to

relieve pent pressure and, thus, creating various business opportunities in the wellness industry. Indulgence of wellness activities is therefore largely the premise of the middle classes except in countries where government subsidize medical activities e.g. spas in Central and Eastern Europe during socialist era or where yoga and/or meditation are integrated into everyday life e.g. India, Thailand (Smith and P).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The review of literature indicates need for studies in wellness tourism in India. Therefore this study focuses on different aspects of wellness tourism. The specific objectives of the study are:

- To identify various reasons of wellness tourism in Kurukshetra & Kaithal districts.
- To study the perception of respondents towards benefits of wellness tourism in Kurukshetra & Kaithal districts.

In line with objectives, the following hypotheses are formulated.

H1 Different people have different reasons for wellness tourism.

H2 The perception of respondents towards benefits of wellness tourism are different.

METHODOLOGY

The introductory part in the study brings out that the wellness tourism industry has been growing tremendously in the country and the world as a whole. It is further set out to expand on a large scale with the growing sedentary-lifestyle and pressures but simultaneously increasing awareness of self responsibility of the people towards their health. Compared to national scene, Haryana has a laidback approach for wellness tourism. Not so any more as the growing competition and changing scene in the corporate world has given the push and pull to follow wellness tourism as a systematic approach. The present research paper is only a modest effort in this area. A questionnaire was developed and study was been conducted in Kurukshetra and Kaithal district of Haryana, Kurukshetra is a religious & educational hub & Kaithal is a commercial town of northern Haryana as shown in Figure 2



Figure 2 : Map of Haryana State

The study is exploratory in nature and uses local survey for data collection. A structured questionnaire on 5 point Likert scale was administered on hundred respondents in which fifty were from Kurukshetra (33 (50.8%) replied) & fifty from Kaithal (32(49.2%) replied) in all 65 responses were received. The data was collected between February 2011 to March 2011. The questionnaire has 44 variables.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The data is analysed to find profile of respondents and their perception on wellness tourism.

Profile of Respondents

It is presented in table1. Total 65 respondents were surveyed and majority of them are young & of middle age group (38.5% fall between 26-35), majority of them (44%), are in the income group of less than 25,000, graduates are 51.6%, females are 69.2%, married are 89.1% and 38.5% are government employee \$ 20% are businessman. (Table1).

Table 1 : Profile of Respondents

		Number (N=65) & per cent	Missing value and per cent
Age	Less than 25	2 (3.1%)	1 (1.5%)
	26-35	25 (38.5%)	
	36-45	24 (36.9%)	
	46 above	13 (20%)	
Income	Less than 25000	28 (44%)	2 (3.1%)
	25-35000	21 (33.3%)	
	35000 above	14 (22.2%)	
Education	+ 2	4 (6.3%)	1 (1.5%)
	Graduate	33 (51.6%)	
	Post graduate+	27 (42.2%)	
Gender	Male	20 (30.8%)	---
	Female	45 (69.2%)	
Marital Status	Married	57 (89.1%)	1 (1.5%)
	Unmarried	7 (10.9%)	
Occupation	Business	13 (20%)	---
	Govt. Employee	25 (38.5%)	
	Any other	27 (41.5%)	

H1 Different people have different reasons for wellness tourism

Respondents were asked questions on different reasons for wellness tourism in Kurukshetra & Kaithal

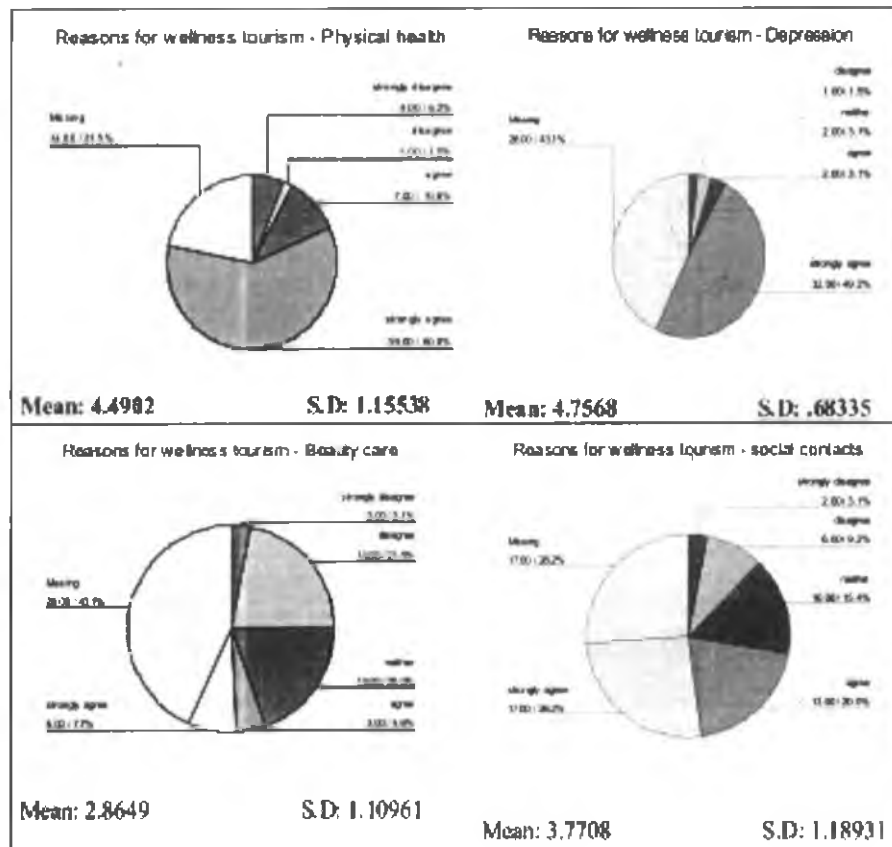
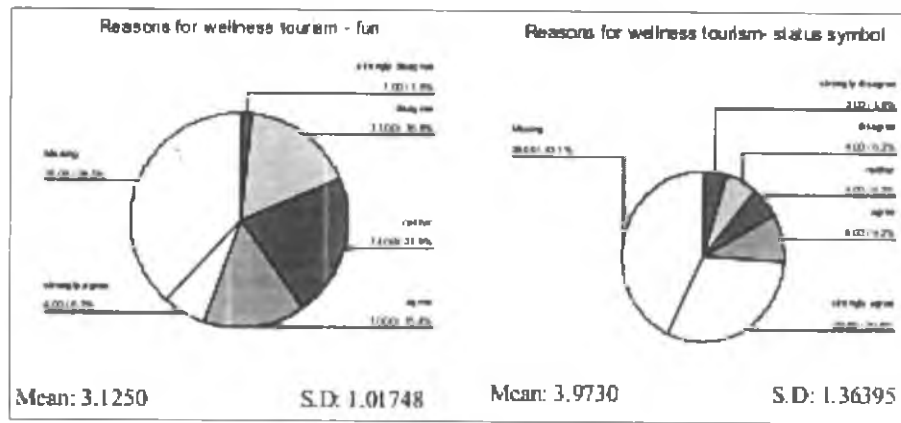


Figure 3 Different reasons for wellness tourism



Part of Figure 3

and Kaithal districts. The percentage analysis, mean & standard deviation were used to analyze the data. The results are presented in the form of pie charts in Table 2, which shows that physical health and depression are the two major reasons for joining various activities under wellness tourism.

The first hypotheses “Different people have different reasons for wellness tourism” is accepted as reason is reflected in pie charts that shows that Mean value is higher for Physical health (4.4902) & Depression (4.7568). On the other hand the SD value for Physical Health (1.15538) and Depression (.68335) is lower as compared to other reasons like beauty care, social contract, fun, status symbol.

H 2 The perception of respondents towards benefits of wellness tourism are different.

Based on secondary data, a number of benefiting factors were identified that are used for wellness tourism. The analysis is presented in table 3, 4&5. Respondents were asked questions on 5 point scale on different variables factors contributing to benefits. Factor analysis method is used to reduce these variables to limited number of factors.

Benefiting factors of wellness tourism

The analysis is done with the help of principal component analysis and varimax rotation matrix. 12 variables were identified based upon secondary researches for wellness tourism. There principal component analysis is presented in 3 factor matrix in 4 and Varimax rotation matrix in 5.

Table: 3 Extraction 1 Principal Component Analysis

Variables	Communality	Factor	Eigen value	% of variance	Cumulative %
Physical Health	1.000	1	7.620	63.496	63.496
Mental peace	1.000	2	1.571	13.094	76.591
Beauty	1.000	3	1.222	10.185	86.776
Social contacts	1.000	4	.549	4.577	91.353
Enjoyment	1.000	5	.410	3.420	94.773
Status symbol	1.000	6	.335	2.788	97.562
Motivation for attending more camps	1.000	7	.156	1.303	98.865
Relaxation	1.000	8	.077	.642	99.507
Knowledge	1.000	9	.045	.375	99.882
Awareness	1.00	10	.011	.092	99.974

Happiness	1.000	11	.003	.026	100.000
Discipline	1.000	12	-2.598E-16	-2.165E-15	100.000

Extraction Method : Principal Component Analysis.

The output of principal component analysis shows Eigen value of three factors more than 1 explaining 86.776 % percent of total variance thus reducing 12 variables to underlying 3 factors.

Table 4 Principal Component Analysis

	Component		
	1	2	3
Physical Health	.715	-.319	.311
Mental peace	.586	-.497	.459
Beauty	.464	.187	-.702
Social contacts	.697	.492	-.161
Enjoyment	.668	.552	.421
Status symbol	.789	.415	.284
Motivation for attending more camps	.835	-.471	.098
Relaxation	.939	-.229	.005
Knowledge	.942	-.161	-.185
Awareness	.918	-.220	-.173
Happiness	.933	-.182	-.224
Discipline	.902	-.291	-.114

Extraction Method : Principal Component Analysis.

a 3 components extracted.

Table 5 : Rotated Component Matrix

	Component		
	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
Physical Health	.795	.278	-.033
Mental peace	.851	.130	-.245
Beauty	.056	.132	.850
Social contacts	.146	.691	.505
Enjoyment	.214	.940	-.022
Status symbol	.362	.852	.132
Motivation for attending more camps	.317	.850	.326
Relaxation	.830	.354	.348
Knowledge	.745	.334	.531
Awareness	.769	.281	.501
Happiness	.743	.299	.559
Discipline	.816	.242	.431

Extraction Method : Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method : Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

Table 5 shows that Factor 1 has high loadings of physical health, mental peace, relaxation, knowledge, happiness and discipline hence these factors can be termed as **Physiological and Psychological benefits** these are supported by table 4. Factor 2 shows high loading of social contacts, enjoyment status symbol and motivation for attending more camps hence these factors can be termed as **Social benefits** . Factor 3 has high loadings of beauty can be named as **beauty benefits**.

Thus it can be concluded that important benefitting factors of wellness tourism are Physiological and Psychological benefits, Social benefits and Beauty benefits.

Thus, the second hypotheses “The perception of respondents towards benefits of wellness tourism are different” is accepted.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, the study has explored that there are different reasons and different perceptions of respondents towards benefits of wellness tourism in Kurukshetra & Kaithal districts of Haryana. The study fulfills the objectives as required by the present research paper.

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