



Review Paper

Wellness Tourism Experiences in Post Pandemic Travel: A Netnographic study

Anju K.P.* and Bindu V.T.

Department of Tourism Management, Avinashilingam Institute for Home science and Higher Education for Women, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India
20phtof001@avinuty.ac.in

Available online at: www.isca.in, www.isca.me

Received 30th July 2023, revised 3rd August 2023, accepted 2nd September 2023

Abstract

Wellness is a broad term that refers to a healthy mental, physical, and spiritual balance that leads to total well-being. A wellness vacation is founded on Ayurveda concepts; meditation, yoga, physical activity, and a healthy diet are all good ways to start. As a renowned wellness location, Kerala provides various traditional and modern wellness products and services that have long drawn visitors from around the world. Health has been at the forefront of our societal consciousness for over three years due to COVID-19. In the post-pandemic times, the wellness consumer mindset has evolved dramatically toward different demands. The tourism sector is rapidly adapting to meet this new demand from tourists. Research has been conducted to determine the Determinants of wellness tourism experience and destination preparedness for post-pandemic travel in Kerala wellness centers. Four dimensions of the wellness tourism experience have been identified and explored: Physical, Mental, Spiritual, and Environmental, which have a good influence on wellness tourism. Researchers adopted a netnographic study using 200 comments published in Trip Advisor from January 2021 to January 2022. The findings of the survey reveal that visitors are impressed by the Physical, mental, and environmental components, in particular, "food," "employee's behavior," and "atmosphere," place an excellent role in creating positive wellness experience. This paper ends with identifying new motivational factors, and suggestions have been made to revitalize the wellness tourism industry of Kerala.

Keywords: Wellness tourism, netnography, tripadvisor, physical experience, mental experience, spiritual experience, environmental experience, pandemic.

Introduction

Internet and technological advancements have facilitated the study of online data by a growing number of scholars. Two types of netnographic study have been identified: research involving reading texts without actively participating and research involving the active production of data by the researcher. The participants are unknown to you as a researcher, and the participants are unaware that their words are being analyzed. However, to carry out research in forums open to the public, Trip Advisor is one of the best options because anyone can share their experience reviews¹⁻³. In recent years, online user-generated content platforms have provided destination management and marketing with an increasingly vital perspective. Not only does online user-generated content information shape the online destination image, but it also creates awareness among tourists who stumble upon such information while browsing online, thereby motivating them to choose a destination and make travel decisions. With the advancement of information and communication technology (ICT), travellers are now able to generate and share their opinions and impressions of locations on the Internet. Numerous studies indicate that a traveler's first impressions and decisions

are increasingly influenced by the opinions of other travellers who have visited the same location^{4,5}. Research on online destination image is still in its infancy, however, it is commonly understood that destination image influences a variety of demand-and-supply sectors, such as personal feelings, visitor experience, behaviour, travel decisions, and destination development^{4,6,7}. Pandemics and new diseases have a long history of altering environments and cultures. This has had a long-lasting selective impact on the destination image, human genome, politics, society, the economy, and how people interpret nature. They are the leading cause of human disease, mortality, and public unrest^{8,9}.

Wellness tourism is a specialized part of the tourism industry that is growing quickly^{10,11}. As a result of this growth, more resorts, hotels, wellness retreats, and unique travel packages offer health and wellness services through different activities¹². For more than two years, health has been at the top of everyone's mind. COVID-19 has made a big difference in our lives¹³. To stop the virus from spreading, national borders were closed, lockdowns were ordered, and social isolation became the norm¹⁴. During the pandemic, tourism industry crashed hard¹⁵. Most people had to change or cancel their plans to travel. At the

same time, their daily problems like fears of getting the disease, the possibility of losing friends and family members, the fact that the elderly and sick were especially vulnerable, the possibility of losing their jobs, and so on, all added up to a lot of mental stress. Most surveys show that the main goal after a Corona vacation is health¹⁶. Previous studies have found that important things, like rest and recovery, healing, well-being, and meditation, bring tourists back to the area after the pandemic¹⁷. Wellness tourism should give visitors an "uplifting experience" as well as mental health benefits like growth and change, shared experiences, and a wellness-friendly environment¹. For the wellness tourism industry to get back on its feet after the pandemic, sustainable development had to take into account the desire to visit the location in general, the need to relax, and the culture and nature of the destination.

The tourism industry is a business that sells experiences, so this research interest is totally valid. Wellness time is just that gives tourists the chance to do things that are different from their normal lives. Additionally, by viewing the visitor as a full-fledged actor in the production of his or her own experience, the experiential view alters the roles of both tourism industry professionals and tourists¹⁸⁻²⁰.

Literature review: Wellness tourism, which is travel with the goal of improving or maintaining physical and mental health, is one of the fastest-growing market segments²¹. People who don't have a medical problem go on this kind of health tourism. The main goal is to make sure they are healthy and happy in the long run²². Wellness tourists thought about how much they wanted to learn about the place, how much they wanted to relax, and how the culture and nature of the place affected them²³. After the pandemic, things are very different from how they were before. The things that drive people have changed. Rest and recovery, healing, well-being, and meditation, which have been found to be important in previous studies, are likely to play a big role in tourism's comeback after the pandemic¹⁸. Three push factors for wellness tourism were identified: "the health trend, relaxation and reward, and new experiences". Additionally six more pull motivation variables were found: well-being, heritage, both natural and cultural, leisure and recreation, and scenery.

Kerala is known for its beautiful landscape, interesting cultural sites, and thriving wellness tourism industry. Kerala the "Land of Ayurveda" has become one of the best places in India for wellness and medical tourism. Since it started investing in a three-phase project 30 years ago, Kerala Ayurveda has been seen as a "unique attraction." By doing this, Kerala became one of the best places in the world for health care. This could be expanded by working with other industries, especially the tourism industry²⁴. Kerala's wellness tourism industry relies on three things: rejuvenation, spirituality or culture, and food²⁵. The state has unique natural resources, local customs, and wellness options like Ayurveda that make it a great place for wellness tourists. To market Kerala as a place to go for health and wellness, destination marketers in Kerala need to put more

emphasis on the area's natural resources than on health and other resources in their marketing communications. Setting up a destination's competitive posture depends on its differences and uniqueness. So, Kerala needs to combine its tourism services by combining natural resources and cultural heritage with traditional methods of health and wellness, with Ayurveda as a key part¹⁵.

Impact of pandemic on tourism industry: Covid 19 is not the only pandemic threat, with influenza and other diseases also causing concern, they are a normal part of global health in developing countries¹⁰. All tourism markets in the region have been hit hard by this terrible pandemic. Compared to 2019, international tourist visits fell 78% worldwide in 2020. International tourist arrivals fell by 82% in the Asia and Pacific region, which was the hardest hit of all regional tourism markets²⁶. In the past, the tourism industry has gone through a number of tough times. But the current health crisis has a big effect on the tourism and travel industry²⁷. Many countries around the world had banned travel and put their regions and countries on lockdown²⁸. From a social and economic point of view, these actions caused a lot of complicated and difficult problems. Many studies and institutional reports of post COVID-19 explain the effects of travel bans, restrictions, and lockdowns. The global travel and hospitality industry has shrunk the number of international flights and cruises that have been cancelled. International visitor product supply chains have been completely messed up, which has caused ripple effects at many levels of the manufacturer and supplier network. There were money problems for many airlines. COVID-19 - had lot of bad effects on the daily operations of the key players in the tourism and wellness industries. Because of this, tourism's share of GDP has dropped a lot⁹.

Changes in wellness travel motives: Wellness tourism continues to make a substantial contribution to Kerala's economy. The concept of wellness tourism is not novel around the globe. Both global wellness and wellness tourism have a long history. Elite community formerly regarded wellness tourism as a prestigious item²⁹. However after the epidemic, this attitude has shifted, and wellness and health are now the fundamental need for all individuals. People are ready to travel, but there have been changes to the push and pull factors of travel, as well as the method of selecting a place. Post-Corona travel will be substantially influenced by factors distinct from those preceding the Corona, according to the vast majority of researchers. Safety, health, hygienic conditions, brand recognition, and cost-effectiveness are projected to impact travel decisions significantly. Prior overseas travel experience was universally correlated with a priority placed on safety and cleanliness while choosing a holiday destination³⁰.

Although relaxation is the major purpose of wellness vacations, travellers with other motivations for visiting a destination may also consider a wellness product as a desirable addition to their decision¹⁵.

Research Gap Identified: Wellness tourism is a fast expanding business on a global scale, according to contemporary tourism literature research. It is debated that the pandemic influence consumer behavior in favor of wellness tourism over the medium term^{31,32}. Quantitative analysis has been used thus far by researchers to examine the elements influencing the wellness tourism experience and the image of wellness destinations. In the aftermath of the epidemic, motivating variables and perceptions shifted, but academics have neglected to highlight these changes.

By identifying the research gap, this paper adapted netnographic study to investigate the factors that influence the wellness tourist experience and post-pandemic readiness. The user-generated content and website analysis have assisted the researchers in identifying the altered perspective of wellness tourism experience and in determining the policies of stakeholders in response to the altered motivational elements. The study has used the Trip Advisor comments, where wellness tourists can record their experiences and share them online. The primary objective of this work is to analyse Physical, Mental, spiritual, and environmental experience (using the PMSE framework) of wellness tourists who visited Kerala for wellness purposes.

The findings of the study will allow wellness tourism service providers to propose managerial decisions for the sustainable growth of the wellness tourism industry. The research question is as follows: i. What are the dimensions of wellness tourism experience in the context of Kerala? ii. What are the elements of wellness tourism that drive the marketing strategies of wellness destination?

Methodology

The current study employed the PMSE wellness dimension framework developed by Kongtaveesawas³⁸. The potential 26 sub-attributes within the four dimensions of PMSE framework were used to identify online comments on wellness tourism experience in Kerala (Figure-1). We adopted a qualitative research methodology to better comprehend the wellness tourism experience and address the research questions³². A qualitative design can enhance our comprehension and provide a more insightful study of all components of the wellness tourist experience. “Netnography analysis is based on the collection of consumers' reviews containing detailed information about their experiences published on the Internet. Compared to other qualitative research techniques, the distinctive value of Netnography is that it excels at telling the story, understanding complex social phenomena, and assists the researcher in developing themes from the consumers' points of view”⁴.

To prepare for their journey or to share their thoughts during or after their stay, an accelerating number of tourists are utilizing social networks. In addition, prior research indicates that travellers are more likely to rely on internet testimonials posted

by other tourists than on online advertising from the tourism business. Netnography is ideally suited to the examination of the wellness tourist experience.

Table-1: Attributes of wellness tourism Experience (PMSE Framework)³¹.

| |
|---|
| 1. Physical experience Attributes |
| Food quality and or food service, Activities that require your physical participation as a guest, Wellness services that you can participate in passively, Detoxication programs to help your body densified from unhealthy toxins or substances you consume in your everyday life, Destination's visual arts, Reasonable price of wellness service, Supply typology, Wellness amenities, products, and souvenirs, Hygiene policy of the destination. |
| 2. Mental experience Attributes |
| Feeling of life progress and/or positive change regarding wellness, New experiences leading you to escape, restores and refresh from your everyday life, Being empathized and cared for by the staff, Being a part of the destination community, To learn new things form local. |
| 3. Spiritual experience Attributes |
| Spirit/soul uplifted, sharing wellbeing travel experience with destination communities, stakeholders, and others, high level of engagement or interest in destinations activities attributions of knowledge, memories, perceptions, emotions, and self-identify. To be able to recall experience anytime you like is an advantage. |
| 4. Environmental experience Attributes |
| Wellness-related and knowledgeable staff and management, Environmental concern atmosphere of the destination, Wellbeing of the destinations (local products and food provided). Place that is not too crowded, Authentic destination. Link between wellbeing and sustainable tourism. |

Study Area: Kerala, a state with a long history of Ayurvedic wellness practices; wellness tourism is initially viewed as a complementary activity for Ayurvedic practitioners and Ayurvedic product manufacturers. Presently the state is having 65 accredited green leaf certified Ayurveda Centre throughout the state. In addition to Ayurveda, Kerala offers a variety of wellness goods such as Kalari, naturopathy, siddha, yoga, and meditation.

Data Collection: The primary purpose of the study was to analyze the wellness tourism experience (Physical, Mental, Spiritual, and Environmental experience) based on Trip Advisor reviews. Numerous studies demonstrate that a traveler's first impressions and decisions are increasingly influenced by reviews from other travellers who have visited the same

destination^{4,5} and also have a significant impact on tourists' decisions and behavior, as well as assist service providers in initiating new development themes^{31,33}. We gathered textual Tripadvisor comments from the top-ranked wellness centre in Kerala from 2021 January to 2022 January. This time period was chosen for data gathering because, following the outbreak of COVID-19, the industry began to re-enter the market in 2021 (Approximately 200 reviews were considered for the study). After recognizing the need for wellness, health and gaining new driving elements, people gradually began to travel specifically for their wellbeing. We only evaluated reviews written English and the grammatical errors are not corrected in order to get the genuine and exact opinion.

Results and discussion

This section provides findings from the internet reviews of wellness travellers regarding their most memorable wellness experiences, accompanied by brief data extracts. The reviews were categorized according to the particular wellness tourism experience dimension. The research classifies wellness tourism experiences along four aspects¹. The subthemes have been identified and additionally, the experience may be positive or negative. The favorable and unfavorable reviews have been detected and noted in the upcoming session, which will be beneficial for managerial implications.

Physical experience attribute: Experiences with the physical body were crucial^{1,34,35}. Physical experience is mentioned in about 44 percent of reviews (Table-2). This broad dimension has been subdivided into ten subthemes. The wellness center's "food quality and/or food services" received the most mentions among the sub-themes. A considerable number of the physical reviews mentioned the quality of the cuisine, praising the chef, the authenticity of the food, and the ingredients utilized. This can be observed in the comments and noteworthy reviews listed below:

The food provided, in harmony with Ayurveda treatments, is light and simple yet delicious. Catering predominantly to local vegetarian tastes. Delicacies available include fresh fish caught daily from the ocean in front of you. Offer a range of cuisine to suit even the most fussiest of diners.

I was also under impression that Ayurveda retreats are meant to have food that are strictly medicinal. But was amazed to find food not only healthy but tasty as well. Never imagined food with very less salt and oil tastes so good without compromising on authenticity of coconut based Kerala food.

A significant number of wellness tourists commented positively on the wellness amenities, products, and souvenirs, destination visual arts, activities that require your physical participation as a guest, wellness services that you can participate in passively, for example:

Overall Healing Ambience, The designing of the entire Ayurvedic Cottages, Exotic looking Beautiful Pools, the Room Facilities, Everyday Maintenance Services by the various personnel, Tailor-made Panchakarma and Rejuvenation Therapies, Highly Dedicated Doctors and Therapists, Yoga for All Levels of Fitness and Meditation.

Moreover, the reviewers appreciated and positively mentioned the hygiene policy and cleanliness of the wellness center. comments like hygienic treatment room, good and clean area, and good standard of housekeeping. Cleanliness that contributes to the physical experience of wellness tourism For example:

The grounds of the resorts was kept clean all the time. Treatment rooms are also clean well equipped and comfortable.

Reference for reasonable price of wellness service and service typology are rare and not found from the collected reviews.

Table-2: Physical Experience of Wellness Tourism.

| Reviews extracted from Trip advisor |
|---|
| <p>Food quality and or food service <i>Food was tasty and fresh, perfect combination of healthy food, good without compromising on authenticity of coconut based kerala food, The foods are focused to the guests tridoshas, we had a vegan menu which really helped our detox treatments, Ayurvedic Food Choices for All with Various Menus Catering to All Tastes served by Friendly Restaurant personnel, The food is so fresh, healthy and delicious, traditional cuisine curated as per Ayurvedic standards, although the food is pure veg but so tasty with all the varieties they provide. Food was great too, even on a special diet plan you get wonderful, tasty meals. Every day there are healthy desserts prepared and drinks for all three doshas, simple as per your dietary requirement good for our body, The ingredients used for cooking is taken from their own organic farms, food was excellent! really delicious, serve the healthiest food in the most delicious way, The satvik sugar free organic meals offered here are delicious and filling, quality of food is world class, healthy and tasty, though I have taken the diet menu, food is tailored in keeping with the treatment offered (completely vegetarian) meals were delicious, the great master chefs who add spice to basic food and makes it super tasty in every possible manner as per your body type, organically prepared, perfect and enhances your senses with all the care, grown on the property, food, is in harmony with Ayurveda treatments, The food choice and quality is outstanding.</i></p> |
| <p>Hygiene policy of the destination. <i>Property is clean and good place for a detox getaway, grounds of the resorts was kept clean all the time. Treatment rooms are clean well equipped and comfortable, well maintained and clean, everything around is spectacular! Cottages are clean, hygiene is taken care . Overall a must to visit if you looking to be pampered and</i></p> |

relax, massages were done under hygienic conditions, cleanliness and service was great, "We found the Cottage, clean and comfortable, and the housekeeping of good standard.

Detoxification program to help your body densified from unhealthy toxin or substances you consume in your everyday life.

Unforgettable days in the resort for Rejuvenation and Body purification treatments, The treatments are individualized and very effective, treatments made a difference with improved metabolism, genuinely care for individual well-being and do what it takes to keep us on right track, The yoga and meditation will relax your mind and soul which enhances your speed of recovery.

Wellness amenities products, and souvenirs, Destination visual arts, activities that require your physical participation as a guest, wellness services that you can participate in passively

The designing of the entire Ayurvedic Cottages, Exotic looking Beautiful Pools, the Room Facilities, Cleanliness and Everyday Maintenance Services by the various personnel, Tailor-made Panchakarma and Rejuvenation Therapies, The property has an amazing yoga centre, organic farm, gym, recreation room, swimming pool, tennis court, canteen and ayurvedic treatment centre. It feels like living in nature with 5 star facilities, luxury resort that offers all modern amenities while keeping us rooted to ayurveda lifestyle, women's dressing area is huge! They have multiple showers and changing rooms.

Convenient logistics

The staff at the reception who help you with all the travel arrangements to airport.

The results from this study support the findings of the previous research work. The key positive attribute that contribute to the best physical experience of the wellness tourist is "food quality and or food services". People are happy with the traditional food served. Food acts as a catalyst for the holist wellness experience. Travellers' holistic physical wellness was most significantly determined by their culinary experiences. It's not just about "good food," as is the case in the majority of typical hospitality and tourism businesses; rather, it's about the process of discovering why food is such a crucial component of our daily lives³⁶. Majority of the research found that gastronomic experiences served as a means of encouraging wellness, in some cases, these experiences were viewed as a barrier, evoking negative emotions.

While the freshness of the food was critical to travellers' wellness. The tourist's overall satisfaction will be significantly influenced by the wellness-related products, services, and activities offered. Various services and amenities offered in the retreat center were viewed favorably in previous research as well. The offer has significantly expanded due to the rise in demand for these amenities on a global scale. The tourism industry needs holistic thinking to meet the demand for

wellness-related products and services³⁷. Any passive wellness treatments that the guest underwent, such as massages, hot baths, and facials, were considered services that had an impact on physical wellness. The skills of the staff and the sense of physical renewal following treatment were both mentioned in reviews from wellness travelers^{1,34,36}. All of the wellness centers in this study provided some sort of detoxification programme to assist your body in detoxifying from unhealthy toxins or substances you consume in your daily life. Wellness tourism providers should take special care to understand that the detoxing process is sensitive and must be handled and explored with extra care, as the effects for wellness travellers may be more far-reaching than expected.

Mental Experience Attributes: Nearly 24% of the reviews fall under the dimension mental experience (Table-3). This broad dimension is divided into five sub-themes. Among the sub-themes, the theme being empathized with and cared for by the staff received the highest ratings. An example of a review is given below:

My biggest compliment goes to the staff itself; everyone is unbelievably friendly and gives you a smile. Big compliments to the restaurant staff who serve everything, The great and smiling gate keepers being there and making us feel extra safe at nighttime. I would visit this place again in future.

Additionally, reviewers reported their positive comments on the sub themes such as feeling of life progress and/or positive change regarding wellness. New experience leading you to escape, restore and refresh. Happily they were mentioned regarding rejuvenation, recreation, and relaxation through several wellness programmes and recorded well. The comment is as follows:

I had a mild spondylitis problem with headaches and restless sleep. I am an IT professional. The doctors diligently planned the kind of treatment required. I am so thankful to them because at the end of my stay, I was pleasantly surprised for the remarkable improvement and wellbeing.

Reviews for the sub themes of mental experience such as being a part of the destination community and To learn new things form local. We haven't been found.

Table-3: Mental Experience of Wellness Tourism.

| |
|---|
| Reviews extracted from Trip advisor <i>Feeling of life progress and /or positive change regarding wellness, new experience leading you to escape, restore and refresh</i> <i>It is like a preventive clinic with considerable knowledge of chronic diseases and natural medicine, therapy / yoga and relaxing at the pool of beach, I feel strengthened in body and soul, what a fabulous relaxing holiday we had. I was pleasantly surprised for the remarkable improvement, Felt so rejuvenated!, a break from all the hustle and bustle</i> |
|---|

around, nourishes your body mind and soul, best place for anyone to relax, rejuvenate, day routine is designed to bring back balance, it's worth visiting either for wellness and rejuvenation, perfect relaxing and rejuvenating experience, very relaxing, detoxing and healthy time, hide from daily stress and recover strength.

Being empathized and cared for by the staff
Staff are professional to build your health and make you feel good, everyone is unbelievably friendly and gives you a smile, smiling gate keepers being there and making us feel extra safe at nighttime, Very helpful and Kind Staff, everyone so caring and well managed staff with friendly attitude from all staff memebers, staff is more than nice and friendly, taking care of guests and ready to answer questions on a daily basis., every individual gives lot of respect and they treat everyone with high values., Eager to help, well-mannered, polite, smiling staff, Entire staff is very warm and friendly, Everything is regimented and on time, General Manager was very helpful.

Holistic wellness is based on the idea of mindfulness. In accordance with this study, the mental health experiences were characterised as a feeling of personal growth, improvements in wellness, and a sense of being understood and taken care of by the staff. Similar to the findings from many wellness tourists intend to travel in order to fully unwind and rejuvenate^{35,38}. The findings consistently showed that rejuvenation is both a motivation for and an advantage of wellness travel. Every employee in the company played a specific part in enhancing the traveller's experience and fostering a sense of destination loyalty.

Spiritual Experience Attributes: The reviews that mention the spiritual experience features are indeed good, although the comments are few and infrequent. Spiritual experience is stated in only 5% of the total reviews collected within the specified time period (Table-4). One of the reviews is shown below:

The highlight of the trip day was doing yoga with guruji. During his yoga class he also explained the principles of yoga, which is very interesting. Many Forms of Entertainment by Local Artists Encouraging Cultural Education, Management's Celebration of Guests in making All Feel Welcome. You don't need more truly you are taking care of your soul and body and everything you need is there.

Reviews are not reported for the level of engagement or interest in a destination's activities.

As the source of one's emotions, spiritual wellness is thought to be non-physical. Many wellness tourists placed a high value on this significant but incredibly intangible experience. It is crucial for wellness tourism providers to offer the space and conditions necessary for spiritual enlightenment, which is interconnected to

both the mindful and environmental components of wellness tourism experience^{35,38}.

Table-4: Spiritual Experience of Wellness Tourism.

| |
|--|
| Reviews extracted from Trip advisor |
| <i>You don't need more truly you are taking care of your soul and body and everything you need is there, My highlight of the day was doing yoga with guruji. During his yoga class he also explained the principles of yoga, which is very interesting, Many Forms of Entertainment by Local Artists Encouraging Cultural Education, Management's Celebration of Guests in making All Feel Welcome, Once a week a professor from the Ayurvedic school had a panel for each guest, the ayurvedic knowledge and yoga postures i will definitely use in my daily life, It gave me the reset I needed for.</i> |

Environmental Experience Attributes: Totally, 19% of the reviewers reported positive comments on the environmental experience attributes (Table-5). This main dimension has been divided into 6 sub themes. Positive comments were most common for "environmental concern," atmosphere of the destination," "wellbeing of the destination," and "not too crowded places." For example review commented by the tourist:

The retreat is surrounded by exquisite manicured gardens. The elegant entrance opens out to a stunning pool area which includes a cool, breezy outdoor dining space to enjoy. The ocean provides a beautiful backdrop to this enchanting villa. The service is truly outstanding and the atmosphere here is designed to calm the soul and warm the cockles of your heart.

The comments and appreciation of the wellness-related and knowledgeable staff and management are also noteworthy. An example is given below:

If you would like to experience the traditional Ayurvedic treatment this is the place to be. Treatments are authentic with experienced staff. Therapist have a very in depth knowledge & experience. The doctors and therapists are good educated and professional.

The reviewers also positively commented on the authenticity of the destination. One review is given below:

Remarkable the impression of being in an authentic, Ayurvedic retreat, where I could enjoy all the treatments.

Comments on "wellbeing of the destinations" and "the link between wellbeing and sustainable tourism" are not found in the collected review.

Table-5: Environmental experience of wellness tourism.

| |
|--|
| Reviews extracted from Trip advisor |
| <i>Environmental concern atmosphere of the destination,</i> |

Places that not too crowded

Wonderful daily yoga and breathing practices with some good teachers, no smoking and no alcohol on the premises, beautiful location, attentive doctors, Ayurveda Health Resort is a wonderful place to relax and unwind, surrounded by palm trees and an amazing garden, the ocean a few footsteps away, Ayurveda, combined with Indian hospitality in a very beautiful environment, beautiful garden with sea views and beach location with an extraordinary ambiance, The property is located by the beach and it's accessible with a small walk, resort is a very mystic and natural place next to the sea and between dreamfully plants and animals, A lushly paradise where we can feel totally safe and relax, good location of this retreat space, retreat is surrounded by exquisite manicured gardens, The ocean provides a beautiful backdrop to this enchanting villa, designed to calm the soul and warm the cockles of your heart.those looking for a quiet retreat away from hassles of touristy places.

Authenticity

They take traditional Ayurveda really serious, Treatments are authentic, Remarkable the impression of being in an authentic centre.

Wellness-related and knowledgeable staff and management

The doctors and therapists are good educated and professional, Staff everywhere (reception, ayurvedacentre, restaurant) is super professional, Therapist have a very in depth knowledge & experience. Free medical advice based on ancient Ayurveda and tailor made course form knowledgeable professions.

Researchers came to the conclusion that environment refers to the actual surroundings that wellness tourist's visit. The reviewer comments made it abundantly clear that the environmental component of wellness tourism was its one among the significant component. Majority of environmental reviews are favorable. The results agree with other studies. The surroundings, the accommodations, the cost, and the crowding all had an impact on visitors while they were in the retreat Centre. It's crucial to remember that creating a welcoming and comprehensive wellness experience starts with the "space" in which wellness tourism resorts are situated. As an illustration, many reviews of the property's surroundings, including the location of the wellness resort, were mentioned above.

Some wellness travellers are dissatisfied with the money-back guarantee and cancellation policy. It seems like all services offered to visitors once they are inside will be good, but the visitor who cancels their trip is not given the same level of consideration. The comment that follows demonstrates this.

My wife scheduled herself and my daughter to attend this clinic. Then Covid arrived and resort shut down. My wife was dealing with cancer. She was not sure she could go at a later date and asked for a refund. Resort said no! Before resort reopened my wife passed away. I have again requested a refund. They responded with more details like death certificate, etc.

Reviews expressed dissatisfaction with the fact that the doctors were not treating patients with natural cosmetics, the employees' language led to some problems and misunderstandings for the international guests. Some of the most common negative review can be seen in the below-mentioned comments.

The only minus point goes for not using natural cosmetics. Unfortunately, rose water and cucumber face cream for facial massage was full of chemicals. Staff is absolutely not trained; no one speaks English, lots of issues and miscommunication.

Conclusion

The significance of wellbeing and wellness tourism is universally acknowledged after the outbreak of Covid1-19. The objective of this research work is to identify the dimensions of wellness tourism experience that drive focal strategies of wellness tourism stakeholders for the post pandemic-destination preparedness in Kerala. Kerala was selected for this study as it is a potential wellness tourism Centre in India. Based on the post-consumption experience of tourist it is able to understand the satisfied needs and can underline the dimension to be developed. The findings of this netnographic study expected to support the wellness tourism service providers to improvise their services based on the genuine opinion of the tourist. The findings indicate that in order increase the positive wellness tourism experience, the priorities can be given to the four dimensions of wellness tourism experience for the sustainable development of the industry in post pandemic time. First the Physical experience, Businesses should be aware that while this physical experience might work as a mechanism to support wellness tourism, specific wellness programmes should have a well-defined indication of the physical demands that can be anticipated. The physical experience is greatly influenced by "food", as was previously mentioned. In addition, wellness travellers mentioned how much it meant to them to know where their food was grown and harvested and how it affected the local community. With this in mind, it's crucial that the culinary experiences offered by wellness tourism businesses be holistic.

Additionally variety of wellness products and-services offered by the same company could boost visitor demand for the wellness centre. Inform all wellness travellers, both primary and secondary, about the services and products so they can decide which wellness services and products to use. Although the mental experience component is entirely intangible, staff can make more of an effort to help people feel that they are being understood and cared for by the staff. The management can ensure that the local community is a part of their service and procedure so that tourists can be a part of the community and learn new things from the local people. One of the ultimate goals of wellness tourism is spiritual experience. Individual spiritual and soul upliftment can be attained by specialised services to the solo travellers. Service providers should focus on offering comfortable stay and travel, individualized services,

and maintaining a low price rather than increasing the number of visitors³⁸.

Since it is one of the few types of tourism where client's needs to feel secure traveling alone. Creating and upkeep surroundings that support wellness must be a top priority for wellness tourism providers. Numerous wellness resorts were not built to be cheap. The care taken in offering services and products is essential for enduring success. A beautiful site is simply insufficient for the wellness traveller. Furthermore, as the value of wellness increases, companies must expand their product and service offerings to cater to customers from lower socioeconomic levels. All cosmetics and medications should be required to be natural, as it is an authentic wellness tourism destination. The use of natural products shouldn't be compromised by service providers. The cancellation policy will be clearly stated on the website, but if some organizations fail to follow the policy, customer loyalty will be negatively impacted. Despite the fact that cross-massages are restricted in Kerala, there are still some issues that guests have with instructors of the opposite gender. For the comfort of the visitor, some wellness centres have a policy that all services must be rendered by the same gender.

These types of policies could help the organization to stand away from negative comments. Recovery from COVID-19 has become a research priority for the tourism industry, and building resilience is essential to developing a swift and efficient response. This is why it is an important component of on-going study. Research and innovation in tourism are made possible by the changes in visitor behavior brought on by the epidemic. It is normal to favour secure and wholesome situations. Additionally, a shift away from overcrowded locations toward less crowded ones that emphasize rural and nature tourism is already evident. It may be possible to use this as a chance to promote the growth of more isolated areas while also reducing the negative consequences of over tourism in other areas, as was the case before the epidemic.

References

1. Dillette, A. K., Douglas, A. C., & Andrzejewski, C. (2021). Dimensions of holistic wellness as a result of international wellness tourism experiences. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 24(6), 794–810. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2020.1746247>.
2. Kozinets, R. V. (2002). The field behind the screen: Using netnography for marketing research in online communities. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 39(1), 61–72. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkr.39.1.61.18935>.
3. Roy, N., Gretzel, U., Waitt, G., Yanamandram, V. K., & Yanamandram, V. (2015). Reflecting on Ethics in Netnographic Research. *Innovation and Growth Strategies in Marketing*, 347–353. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/331318707>.
4. Jiang, Q., Chan, C. S., Eichelberger, S., Ma, H., & Pikkemaat, B. (2021). Sentiment analysis of online destination image of Hong Kong held by mainland Chinese tourists. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 24(17), 2501–2522. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2021.1874312>.
5. Lam, J. M. S., Ismail, H., & Lee, S. (2020). From desktop to destination: User-generated content platforms, co-created online experiences, destination image and satisfaction. *Journal of Destination Marketing and Management*, 18(September), 100490. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2020.100490>.
6. Kim, H., & Chen, J. S. (2016). Destination image formation process: A holistic model. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 22(2), 154–166. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1356766715591870>.
7. Xiang, Z., & Gretzel, U. (2010). Role of social media in online travel information search. *Tourism Management*, 31(2), 179–188. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2009.02.016>.
8. Gössling, S., Scott, D., & Hall, C. M. (2020a). Pandemics, tourism and global change: a rapid assessment of COVID-19. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 29(1), 1–20.
9. Hall, C. M., Scott, D., & Gössling, S. (2020). Pandemics, transformations and tourism: be careful what you wish for. *Tourism Geographies*, 22(3), 577–598. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616688.2020.1759131>.
10. Csirmaz, É., & Pető, K. (2015). International Trends in Recreational and Wellness Tourism. *Procedia Economics and Finance*, 32(15), 755–762. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s2212-5671\(15\)01458-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/s2212-5671(15)01458-6).
11. Andreu, M. G. N. L., Font-Barnet, A., & Roca, M. E. (2021). Wellness tourism—New challenges and opportunities for tourism in Salou. *Sustainability*, 13(15), 8246. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13158246>.
12. Koncul, N. (2012). Wellness: A new mode of tourism. *Ekonomika Istrazivanja*, 25(2), 525–534. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1331677X.2012.11517521>.
13. Kuqi, B., Elezaj, E., Millaku, B., Dreshaj, A., & Hung, N. T. (2021). The impact of COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2) in tourism industry: evidence of Kosovo during Q1, Q2 and Q3 period of 2020. *Journal of Sustainable Finance and Investment*, 0(0), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1080/20430795.2021.1883986>.
14. Vasudevan, S. (2021). Advances in Managing Tourism Across Continents. *Advances in Managing Tourism Across Continents*, July. <https://doi.org/10.5038/9781955833004>.
15. Goffman, E. (2020). In the wake of COVID-19, is glocalization our sustainability future? *Sustainability: Science, Practice, and Policy*, 16(1), 48–52. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15487733.2020.1765678>.
16. Wen, J., Kozak, M., Yang, S., & Liu, F. (2021). COVID-19: potential effects on Chinese citizens' lifestyle and

- travel. *Tourism Review*, 76(1), 74–87. <https://doi.org/10.1108/TR-03-2020-0110>.
17. Samarathunga, W. H. M. S., & Gamage, D. (2020). Alternative tourism as an alternate to mass tourism during the Post-COVID-19 recovery phase: The case of Sri Lanka. SageSubmissions. Preprint. <https://doi.org/10.31124/advance.12361301>, v1. <https://doi.org/10.31124/advance.12361301>.
18. Kim, J. H. (2010). Determining the factors affecting the memorable nature of travel experiences. *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, 27(8), 780–796. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10548408.2010.526897>.
19. Quadri-Felitti, D., & Fiore, A. M. (2012). Experience economy constructs as a framework for understanding wine tourism. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 18(1), 3–15. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1356766711432222>.
20. Thanh, T. V., & Kirova, V. (2018). Wine tourism experience: A netnography study. *Journal of Business Research*, 83, 30–37.
21. GWI (2018). Global wellness economy monitor. <https://globalwellnessinstitute.org/industry-research/2018-global-wellness-economy-monitor/>. Accessed on 28/June/2023.
22. Mueller, H., & Kaufmann, E. L. (2001). Wellness tourism: Market analysis of a special health tourism segment and implications for the hotel industry. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 7(1), 5–17. <https://doi.org/10.1177/135676670100700101>.
23. Damijanić, A. T., & Šergo, Z. (2013). Determining Travel Motivations of Wellness Tourism. *Ekonomika Misao i Praksa*, 1, 3–20.
24. Nair, B. B. (2019). Emerging trends in Wellness Tourism in Kerala. *Global Developments in Healthcare and Medical Tourism*, February, 220–235. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-5225-9787-2.ch012>.
25. Romão, J., Seal, P. P., Hansen, P., Joseph, S., & Piramanayagam, S. (2022). Stakeholder-based conjoint analysis for branding wellness tourism in Kerala, India. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Regional Science*, 6(1), 91–111. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41685-021-00218-3>.
26. UNWTO (2020). COVID-19 and Tourism 2020. <https://www.unwto.org/covid-19-and-tourism-2020>. Accessed on 30/June/2023
27. Cheer, J. M. (2020). Human flourishing, tourism transformation and COVID-19: A conceptual touchstone. *Tourism Geographies*, 0(0), 514–524. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616688.2020.1765016>.
28. Sivanandamoorthy, S. (2021). Exploring the impact of COVID-19 on the wellness tourism in Sri Lanka. *International Journal of Spa and Wellness*, 4(2–3), 160–172. <https://doi.org/10.1080/24721735.2021.1987001>.
29. Smith, M., & Kelly, C. (2006). Wellness tourism. *Tourism recreation research*, 31(1), 1–4.
30. Ivanova, M., Ivanov, I. K., & Ivanov, S. (2021). Travel behaviour after the pandemic: the case of Bulgaria. *Anatolia*, 32(1), 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13032917.2020.1818267>.
31. Lim, Y. J., Kim, H. K., & Lee, T. J. (2016). Visitor Motivational Factors and Level of Satisfaction in Wellness Tourism: Comparison Between First-Time Visitors and Repeat Visitors. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, 21(2), 137–156. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10941665.2015.1029952>.
32. Rageh, A., Melewar, T. C., & Woodside, A. (2013). Using netnography research method to reveal the underlying dimensions of the customer/tourist experience. *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*, 16(2), 126–149. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13522751311317558>.
33. Wang, C. Y., & Hsu, M. K. (2010). The relationships of destination image, satisfaction, and behavioral intentions: An integrated model. *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, 27(8), 829–843. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10548408.2010.527249>.
34. Lehto, X. Y., & Lehto, M. R. (2019). Vacation as a Public Health Resource: Toward a Wellness-Centered Tourism Design Approach. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research*, 43(7), 935–960.
35. Voigt, C., Brown, G., & Howat, G. (2011). Wellness tourists: In search of transformation. *Tourism Review*, 66, 16–30. <https://doi.org/10.1108/16605371111127206>.
36. Forlani, F., Dini, M., & Pencarelli, T. (2022). The importance of food and beverages in wellness experiences: a cross-continental analysis of tourists' perceptions. *British Food Journal*, 124(13), 520–540. <https://doi.org/10.1108/BFJ-05-2022-0430>.
37. Chen, K. H., Chang, F. H., & Liu, F. Y. (2015). Wellness tourism among seniors in Taiwan: Previous experience, service encounter expectations, organizational characteristics, employee characteristics, and customer satisfaction. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 7(8), 10576–10601. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su70810576>.
38. Abbas, J., Mubeen, R., Iorember, P. T., Raza, S., & Mamirkulova, G. (2021). Exploring the impact of COVID-19 on tourism: transformational potential and implications for a sustainable recovery of the travel and leisure industry. *Current Research in Behavioral Sciences*, 2(February), 100033.