



Rural Wellbeing Tourism: Motivations and Expectations

**Juho Pesonen and
Raija Komppula**

University of Eastern Finland, Finland

The goals of this article are twofold: first, to investigate if rural tourism could be seen as a form of wellbeing tourism by comparing motivations; and second, to use motivation segmentation to find out how the wellbeing segment differs from other segments. A questionnaire was developed based on literature on wellness and rural tourism motivations. Data were collected on a Finnish rural tourism website during the summer of 2009. A total of 727 responses were analysed using k-mean cluster analysis to create segments. The results show that among Finnish rural tourists a segment of rural wellbeing can be distinguished. The segment members want to relax away from the ordinary, escape from a busy everyday life, have a hassle-free vacation, get refreshed, have a sense of comfort and have an opportunity for physical rest more than members of other segments. A typical rural wellbeing tourist is a 45–54-year-old female who has lived her childhood in the countryside. She travels with her spouse less than once a year to a rural destination. The wellbeing segment wants to feel relaxed. It values privacy, does not want schedules, likes a calm atmosphere and wants to spend time outside in nature more than other segments.

Keywords: wellness tourism, wellbeing tourism, rural tourism, tourist motivation, tourist segmentation

Centuries ago, tourism destinations developed around unique natural features such as mineral healing waters, beach and mountain resorts and sacred sites (Sheldon & Park, 2009). Today, wellness tourism comprises a broad range of tourist motivations and benefits of the product. According to Smith and Puczko (2009) the concept of wellness contains elements of lifestyle, physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing, and one's relationship to oneself, others, and the environment. Several concepts, such as wellbeing, happiness, quality of life, holistic practice and spiritual beliefs relate to the concept of wellness (Smith & Puczko, 2009, p. 12).

Wellbeing tourism is mentioned by Sheldon and Bushell (2009) as being one of the types of wellness tourism. Wellbeing refers to a connection with community or nature, inner and outer beauty therapy, massage, spas, sauna, relaxation, energy balancing, art, music and diverse treatments (p. 10). As wellness tourism is usually connected to luxury products and five-star hotels, the concept of wellbeing tourism is often used instead and contains products and services from a wider scale than the concept of wellness. It can include pampering, activities and experiences of luxury, but it does not necessarily

require high-class hotels (Konu, Tuohino, & Komppula, 2010). According to Park and Reisinger (2009) luxury may refer to uniqueness, excellence, sensuality, dream or superior quality and high price, but it may also refer to being difficult to obtain, a means to reach happiness, personally rewarding, providing emotional benefits or intrinsically rewarding. Luxury is dependent on the subjective and situational perceptions of consumers and is also understood differently across cultures (Park & Reisinger, 2009).

In several countries, wellness or wellbeing tourism establishments are often located in a rural environment. Nature experiences are an essential part of the wellbeing experience in the context of Alpine Wellness (e.g., in Austria), and in Finland — Konu et al. (2010) have presented a concept of Lake-Wellness, based on lakes and forests. Wellness tourism often happens in rural areas, and in this sense could be regarded as rural tourism, but could rural tourism be regarded as a form of wellness or wellbeing tourism?

Rural tourism typically refers to tourism outside densely populated areas and tourism centres. In some countries, the term farm tourism (agritourism, agrotourism) is synonymous with rural tourism. In many countries, rural tourism is understood to be more or less synonymous with nature tourism or at least travelling in nature. Rural tourism, in general, refers to small family enterprises and lifestyle entrepreneurship (Komppula, 2007). A typical Finnish rural holiday includes accommodation in a cottage, local food, sauna and some kind of

Correspondence

Juho Pesonen, Centre for Tourism Studies, University of Eastern Finland, P.O. Box 86, FI-57101 Savonlinna. E-mail: juho.pesonen@uef.fi

nature activities: swimming, rowing and walking in the forest. Rural tourism establishments are often located in the remote countryside, far away from neighbours. Villages and services (shops, restaurants etc.) are often in a distance of several kilometres from the site. Most common is a holiday in a self-catering cottage, but also accommodation in B&B establishments is available as well as half-board or full-board holidays with versatile services. In general, rural tourism is not connected with luxury, like wellness, but with nature, peace and quietness, like wellbeing tourism.

According to several studies on rural tourism, many of the rural tourists are motivated by the same factors as wellbeing tourists: they seek relaxation, escape from busy jobs, peace and quiet, sports, and healthy gastronomy. A rural holiday as a product means peace and quiet, an easygoing and warm atmosphere, nature, scenery and activities related to nature. Interestingly, a new Finnish website <http://www.hyvinvointimatkailu.fi> (wellbeing tourism) presents a wellbeing tourism network of one traditional spa and a fitness centre, one college of physical education and five rural tourism enterprises. This is an example of the growing interest of rural tourism enterprises in developing their services towards wellbeing offering. But do the facilities of rural tourism companies fit for wellbeing tourists?

In this article, our aim is first to compare rural tourist motivations to the existing research on motivations of wellbeing tourists. Second, the aim is to investigate, based on rural tourism motivations, if a segment of rural wellbeing can be distinguished, and if yes, which destination- and site-specific attributes this segment does appreciate. The purpose in the end is to investigate if rural tourism could be seen as a form of wellbeing tourism.

Even though there are many segmentation studies conducted using either benefit- or motivation-based segmentation, they have never been used to find and describe a wellbeing or wellness segment. Based on the literature review presented above, three research goals for this study are as follows:

- Is there a segment among rural tourism customers valuing wellbeing-related motivations?
- What is the sociodemographic profile of this segment?
- What are the attributes of the rural tourism destination and the site that the wellbeing segment values more than other segments?

This article is structured into three subsequent sections. In the first section destination attributes and tourist motivations in wellbeing and in rural tourism are examined through the literature review. In the second section the results of the study are presented. In the third and last section the results are discussed and implications for further research are suggested.

Motivations and Expected Destination Attributes of Rural Tourists

Tourists are pushed by their own motivation towards the places where they expect their needs will be satisfied

(Leiper, 1990). The push motivations have been seen to be useful in explaining the desire for travel, as they are recognised as the starting point of understanding tourists' behaviour (Crompton, 1979). Pull factors are destination-specific attributes that attract people to a specific destination once the decision to travel has been made.

A few rural tourism segmentation studies have tried to find out what motivates the traveller to take a rural tourism holiday. Popular have been motivation segmentation (Park & Yoon, 2009) and benefit segmentation studies (e.g., Frochot, 2005; Kemperman & Timmermans, 2006; Sarigöllü & Huang, 2005), in which tourists are distinguished according to the benefits they seek. Leisen's (2001) study on image segmentation and the study of Kemperman and Timmermans (2006) also handle benefits that are sought in a rural type of destination. Push and pull factors are also studied in several studies referring to customer value in tourism (Duman & Mattila, 2005; Gallarza & Gil, 2008; Komppula, 2005; Sánchez, Callarisa, Rodríguez, & Molinar, 2006; Tapachai & Waryszack, 2000). In several studies push and pull factors (motivations and destination attributes) have been included in a single-factor analysis. In this study, the advice from Snepenger, King, Marshall and Uysal (2006) is followed and, to avoid unstable motivational structures, push and pull factors are calculated separately.

Studies on motivations of rural tourism are more common than those of wellness tourism. According to Cai and Li (2009) several earlier studies indicate that rural tourists are most often motivated by opportunities to learn and explore nature or different cultures, participate in outdoor activities or search for peace and solitude. They may expect peace and quiet, friendly reception, change from routine and good food. In Frochot's (2005) study of two Scottish locations, one of the four rural tourist segments, which were based on the desired benefits, was Relaxers, who were mainly seeking relaxation and had a lower participation rate in most activities. They took shorter holidays than the other segments but had a higher recurrence of countryside holidays. These findings are also supported by Royo-Vela's (2009) results in the Spanish context.

According to the results of Park and Yoon (2009) in Korea, rural tourism is an extremely diverse sector leading to a wide range of visitors' needs and expectations. Relaxation represented a central distinguishing motivational theme among rural tourists, reflecting an intrinsic emotional element. The relaxation factor consisted of items like getting refreshed, escaping from a busy job, relaxing away from the ordinary, having no rush, being physically active and feeling at home away from home. Molera and Albaladejo (2007) also share the notion of rural tourists being a heterogeneous segment with diverse motivations. In their study, push and pull motivations were included in the same factor analysis. Items like calm atmosphere, non-crowded place, relaxation, attractive landscape, and independency and flexibility formed the factor 'Nature and peacefulness'. In their cluster analysis 25% of respondents put a high value on this factor, giving a low value to activi-

ties. This result is congruent with the findings of Frochot (2005).

According to Komppula (2005) Finnish rural tourists also expect to have a peaceful, quiet and rush-free country holiday. For Finns, nature, particularly lake and forest scenery, is a self-evident part of a rural vacation. For both target groups, families and those travelling with other adults, the destination should be such that it is possible, on the one hand, to enjoy peace and quiet on one's own, and on the other hand, to have interaction with the other visitors. The choice of rural tourism as the type of holiday seemed to be related to the respondent's own background: the countryside was felt to be part of one's own roots and the countryside brought back positive childhood memories in the respondents (Komppula, 2005). Zamora et al. (2004) also propose that the rural origin of a tourist has a positive effect on his willingness to pay for a rural holiday, despite the current settlement in the city.

Many studies have measured what kind of attributes rural tourists want from a rural destination. According to a literature review of Cai and Li (2009), rural tourists expect family togetherness, peace and quiet, friendly reception, change from routine and good food. Beautiful landscapes, opportunities for outdoor activity and hassle-free environments are also important pull factors for rural tourists. But there are also differences between rural tourists, especially in relation to expectations towards farming activities, heritage or other destination attributes.

Johns and Gyimóthy (2002) used three series of items relating to attitudes, values and behaviour. These were amenities to be found on the island, vacation activities and attractions offered by the island. In Kastenholz, Davies and Paul's study (1999) the benefits of visiting rural areas in Portugal included items referring to traditional way of life, architecture, culture, events, entertainment, opportunities for sports and peaceful and quiet atmosphere. Kemperman and Timmermans (2006) used benefit statements referring to enjoying nature, family fun, pleasant environment, accessibility and a list of facilities needed. Molera and Albaladejo (2007) have also used benefit segmentation to profile tourists in rural areas. In addition to the aforementioned items their items included things such as calm atmosphere, noncrowded place, rural life activities, traditional food and opportunities for children.

Motivations and Expected Destination Attributes of Well-being Tourists

Despite the remarkable interest in wellness tourism, the motivations influencing consumers' desire to make a wellness holiday is almost an unexplored phenomenon (Bushell & Sheldon, 2009; Chen & Prebensen, 2009). Studies showing empirical evidence of wellness tourist motivations are few, mostly referring to spa-goers or spiritual tourists (Smith & Puczkó, 2009). Out of the 17 wellness tourism case studies in the book by Smith and Puczkó (2009) the great majority is about spas. Their profiling of wellness visitors also has a strong emphasis on spa-goers, differentiating types of wellness into four different types of spas (traditional spas, hotels and day spas, purpose-built recreational spas, seaside resorts and thalassotherapy centres) and five other types of wellness, namely holistic retreat centres, yoga centres, meditation retreats and medical centres (p. 134).

sotherapy centres) and five other types of wellness, namely holistic retreat centres, yoga centres, meditation retreats and medical centres (p. 134).

A study by Mak, Wong and Chang (2009) examines the underlying factors that motivate travellers to search for spa experiences. Based on the findings from a focus group interview and a review of literature, an instrument consisting of 21 motivating items was developed and used in a survey of Hong Kong spa-goers. From the individual items Seek Physical Relaxation, Pamper Oneself, Reward Oneself For Working Hard, Seek Mental Peacefulness, Get Away From the Pressures of Work and Social Life and Improve Overall Health were the most important motivators. According to Mak et al. (2009) luxury does not seem to be an indispensable attribute of a spa experience, Since Indulge in Luxurious Experience was rated only the 10th important motivating factor after Seeking Spiritual Refreshment and Getting Away From Daily Routine. Of the five factors identified, Relaxation and Relief had the highest mean score and was considered as the most important of the motivating factors of spa-goers. The Escape factor got the second highest **what does grand mean here?** grand mean.

In a study conducted by Koh, Yoo and Boeger (2010) the purpose was to identify market segments among spa-goers, based on a set of 21 important reasons for visiting a spa. These benefit variables were identified through a three-stage process and a pilot study. Four factors were identified, namely Social, Relaxing, Healthy and Rejuvenating. The Social factor illustrates the desire to share a special, pleasant experience with family and friends while relaxing and meeting other health-conscious people in a spa setting. The Relaxing factor indicates the desire to relieve stress in a tranquil setting and to escape the daily routines. Healthy equates the spa experience with improving mental and physical health, and Rejuvenating focuses on experiences that renew the spirit. The results of a cluster analysis showed that spa-goers could be grouped into three distinct segments according to benefit variables. One group was named Hedonists due to their extreme responses: for this group social rated 4.36, relaxing 4.78, healthy 4.65 and rejuvenating 4.78 on a 5-point Likert scale. In contrast, Escapists want to relax and rejuvenate. The third group, Neutralists, only want to relax and are not concerned with socialising, improving their health or rejuvenating.

The results of Chen and Prebensen's (2009) study in three upscale Taiwanese wellness resorts showed that beyond body pampering, wellness seekers are interested in pursuing other leisure activities as well. Relaxation, recreation and experiencing nature were popular motivators for Taiwanese wellness tourists. In addition, Smith and Puczkó (2009) present a review on the few findings about motivations of holistic tourists, yoga tourists, New Age tourists, spiritual tourists and medical tourists. They conclude that there is a clear need for more research on various subsectors of wellness tourism.

Smith and Kelly (2006) present dimensions of wellness tourism, where tourists with certain motivations seek location and activities to fulfil those motivations. According to Smith and Kelly (2006), the destination in wellness

tourism is often an alternative space in which one can engage in self-analysis without the stresses and distractions of home. For example, tourists motivated by escapism and relaxation may prefer beach, spa and mountains, and those with existential and psychological motivations may be interested in holistic centres focused on self-development and philosophical contemplation. According to Kulczycki and Lück (2009) a substantial number of tourists highlight the importance of a specific location on their travels.

Method and Data

In this empirical study the aim is to find out if it is possible to distinguish a special wellbeing segment among customers interested in rural tourism in Finland. The target group of the study was potential rural tourism customers in Finland, which were supposed to be found among visitors to the website of Finnish Cottage Holidays, the oldest, biggest and best-known intermediary organisation on rural tourism services in Finland.

Data were collected on the Finnish Cottage Holidays website <http://www.lomarengas.fi> during the summer of 2009. Respondents were asked to state their interest in rural holidays and provide information on what kind of rural holiday they are planning to have or would like to have. A wide range of questions on travel motivation were also asked. Altogether 1,043 questionnaires were completed by users of the website, of which 316 had to be deleted because of missing answers. That left 727 completed questionnaires that were suitable for the analysis methods used in this study.

This study used k-means cluster analysis to create segments based on 31 motivation statements (scale: 7-point Likert, ranging from *not at all important* to *very important*) based on the literature on tourist motivation and customer value in tourism, especially in a rural tourism context. The respondents were asked to assess how important they find the statements when considering a holiday in the countryside. The variables were based on a literature review on aforementioned rural tourism segmentation studies as well as studies on customer value and experiences in tourism (Duman & Mattila, 2003; Gallarza & Gil, 2008; Komppula, 2005; Otto & Ritchie,

1996; Sánchez, Callarisa, Rodríguez & Molinar, 2006; Tapachai & Waryszack, 2000; Williams & Soutar, 2000).

In the analysis phase, attention was paid to motivations usually connected with wellbeing tourism, namely items that refer to family togetherness, hassle-free time, escape from a busy everyday life, getting refreshed and pampered, relaxing away from the ordinary, having opportunity to physical rest and activities, having a sense of comfort, and having a chance to meet interesting people. It can be argued that tourists motivated by these items are potential customer groups for wellbeing products and services.

A typical problem with cluster analysis has been that respondents' answering pattern affects the formation of clusters (see e.g., Laukkanen, 2007). To avoid this, the mean score across all motivation statements was calculated for each respondent and it was used to calculate relative importance of each item for each respondent. The final number of clusters was determined by examining graphical results (dendrogram) and the best discrimination result between the groups. Clusters were compared using ANOVA. Because multiple tests were computed based on the same datasets, p-values had to be Bonferroni corrected (Boksberger & Laesser, 2009).

To investigate what kind of pull items potential wellbeing tourists think of as important, 43 items based on earlier literature were developed. Items measured important destination attributes, rural activities and host company and accommodation attributes. The wellbeing segment was compared with other segments using independent samples *t* test with equal variances not assumed.

Results

Different cluster solutions using k-means clustering were used to find the correct number of segments. Altogether 31 different travel motivations based on earlier literature were measured. Trials with two to seven clusters were executed. A final cluster solution of four clusters proved to be the most meaningful based on the results of the cluster formation and discriminant analyses.

Results of the discriminant analysis reveal that the travel motivations 'I would like to relax away from the ordinary', 'I would have a feeling of romance' and 'I could visit places my family comes from' have most discriminat-

Table 1
Cluster Analysis Results

Travel motivation	Overall mean	Cluster				F-value
		A (N = 213)	B (N = 164)	C (N = 148)	D (N = 202)	
That I would have a hassle-free vacation	1.204	0.402	2.256 ^{a,c,d}	1.549 ^{a,d}	0.891 ^a	92.783
That I would like to escape from a busy everyday life	1.143	0.505	2.281 ^{a,c,d}	1.401 ^{a,d}	0.921 ^a	115.212
That I would have a feeling like I was being pampered	0.081	0.148	-0.079	0.164	0.079	1.09
That I would get refreshed	1.4	0.792	2.268 ^{a,c,d}	1.509 ^{a,d}	1.253 ^a	106.18
That I would have an opportunity for physical rest	0.979	0.397	1.860 ^{a,c,d}	1.259 ^{a,d}	0.673	56.978
That I would have an opportunity to be physically active	-0.121	-0.274	0.049	-0.045	-0.153	2.153
That I would like to have a sense of comfort	1.369	0.674	2.323 ^{a,c,d}	1.509 ^{a,d}	1.222 ^a	171.679
That I would like to relax away from the ordinary	1.598	0.862	2.646 ^{3a,c,d}	1.820 ^{a,d}	1.362 ^a	253.106
That I would have a chance to meet interesting people	-0.425	0.482 ^{b,c,d}	-1.366	-0.944 ^b	-0.238 ^{b,c}	78.848

Note. Superscript in the mean value of a cluster denotes those clusters that have significantly lower mean score

Table 2
Profile of the Wellbeing Segment

Age	N (%)
Under 25	5 (3.4%)
25–34	33 (22.4%)
35–44	39 (26.5%)
45–54	46 (31.3%)
55–64	21 (14.3%)
65 or older	3 (2.0%)
Education	N (%)
University degree	40 (24.8%)
Technical/Trade school/Vocational	94 (58.4%)
Upper secondary school	11 (6.8%)
Elementary school	16 (9.9%)
Annual income of the household	N (%)
Less than 15 000 €	8 (5.1%)
15,000–29,999 €	39 (24.7%)
30,000–44,999 €	40 (25.3%)
45,000–59,999 €	30 (19.0%)
60,000–74,999 €	25 (15.8%)
75,000–89,999 €	11 (7.0%)
At least 90,000 €	5 (3.2%)
Who would you travel with?	N (%)
Spouse	67 (40.9%)
Family with children under 12 years	32 (19.5%)
Family with children in several age groups	29 (17.7%)
Friends	18 (11.0%)
Alone	7 (4.3%)
Other	11 (6.7%)
Number of annual visits to rural holiday destinations	N (%)
Less than once a year	68 (41.5%)
Once a year	58 (35.4%)
Two or three times a year	36 (22.0%)
More than three times a year	2 (1.2%)
Rural origins	N (%)
I lived during my childhood and/or adolescence in a rural area	85 (52.8%)
I did not live during my childhood/ adolescence in a rural area, but I visited rural areas often to see my relatives	52 (32.3%)
I have no roots in the countryside	24 (14.9%)
Gender	N (%)
Male	15 (9.3%)
Female	146 (90.7%)

ing power between all clusters (in descending order). Three discriminant functions were generated. Function 1 explains 72.3% of variance with eigenvalue 3.668, function 2 explains 18.2% of variance with eigenvalue 0.924 and function 3 explains 9.5% of variance with eigenvalue 0.481. Based on the classification matrix, 95.0% of all cases are correctly classified.

The results of the cluster analysis for the items related to wellbeing tourist motivations are presented in Table 1. Two motivations, ‘I would have a feeling like I was being pampered’ and ‘I would have an opportunity to be physically active’ do not differ statistically across clusters. The other wellbeing motivations, however, do differ. Cluster B clearly values wellbeing-related motivations more than other segments, not including statements ‘I would have a chance to meet interesting people’, which segment A values more than any other segment. Members of clusters C and D also think wellbeing-related motivations to be important, but not as much as respondents in cluster B, which is the third biggest segment, containing 22.6% of all respondents.

This construct was presumed to present the importance of wellbeing. Reliability was measured using Cronbach’s alpha. Alpha value for the nine items above is 0.730, which is, according to Hair, Black, Babin and Anderson (2010), above the generally agreed lower limit. Removing items ‘I would have a feeling like I was being pampered’, ‘I would have an opportunity to be physically active’ and ‘I would have a chance to meet interesting people’ would increase the alpha value to 0.797. Thus, it can be said that the items measure the same thing.

A profile of rural wellbeing tourists is presented in Table 2. A typical representative of the segment is a female in the age of 45–54 with a college-level degree. She has lived her childhood in a rural area. The annual income of her household is 30,000–45,000 euros, which can be regarded as an intermediate level. She travels with her spouse less than once a year to a rural destination.

In Table 3 the importance of pull items for the wellbeing segment and other segments is presented. As can be seen, the wellbeing segment has generally lower mean scores than other segments. Altogether, in 29 different pull items the mean score of other segments is statistically greater than the mean score of the wellbeing segment. However, there were five items that the wellbeing segment valued more than other segments. The wellbeing segment wants to feel relaxed, they value privacy, they do not want schedules, they like calm atmosphere and want to spend time outside in nature more than other segments. Landscape is also important for them but so it is for other segments.

Discussion, Limitations and Further Research

The results show that among Finnish rural tourists a segment of rural wellbeing is clearly to be distinguished. For them the motivating factors relaxing away from the ordinary, escape from a busy everyday life, hassle-free vacation, getting refreshed, having a sense of comfort and having an opportunity for physical rest represent a significantly higher value than for the other segments. The profile of the segment shows that this group is quite homogenous in two aspects, namely 91% of the segment members are female and 85% have spent a remarkable part of their youth in a rural environment. It can be argued that this segment may have a rural place identity, which refers to dimensions of self that define the individual’s personal identity in relation to a physical environment (Kulczycki & Lück, 2009, p. 172).

Compared to other segments, the wellbeing segment wants to feel relaxed, they value privacy, they do not want schedules, they like calm atmosphere and want to spend time outside in nature more than other segments. Landscape is also important for them but so it is for other segments. Otherwise this segment is quite passive and does not generally value other benefits as high as other segments.

One of the major limitations of this study is the high proportion (83.0%) of female respondents. The manager or the website in which the data were collected estimated that around 60% of the site users are female, meaning that women are overrepresented. It would seem that women are more akin to filling in online questionnaires,

Table 3
Differences in Important Destination Attributes Between Wellbeing Segment and Other Segments

Item	Wellbeing segment mean (M1)	Mean of other segments (M2)	M1-M2	Sig.
I can feel relaxed there	6.77	6.45	0.32	p < .001
My privacy would be assured if I wanted it	6.73	6.38	0.35	p < .001
I do not need to rush according to schedules	6.62	6.29	0.33	p < .001
There is a calm atmosphere	6.53	6.25	0.28	p = .001
I can enjoy a landscape with lakes/rivers/sea	6.52	6.39	0.13	p = .103
I can enjoy beautiful landscapes	6.48	6.4	0.08	p = .260
I can spend time outside in nature	6.47	6.24	0.23	p = .007
The destination is not crowded	6.04	5.93	0.11	p = .290
I can make short walks	5.84	5.76	0.08	p = .531
The destination is safe for everybody in the family	5.83	5.99	-0.16	p = .227
I can enjoy the forest	5.82	5.84	-0.02	p = .899
I have an opportunity to go to the sauna every day	5.68	5.72	-0.04	p = .783
The hosting company is environmentally qualified (shows environmental responsibility)	5.62	5.8	-0.18	p = .131
I can experience original/unspoiled rural landscapes	5.57	5.75	-0.18	p = .176
The destination gives an opportunity to have good time together as a family	5.55	5.89	-0.34	p = .045
That your accommodation gives you an opportunity for full time self catering	5.24	5.07	0.17	p = .310
Bicycles, boats etc. for rent	5.1	5.64	-0.54	p < .001
I can learn about the local nature	5.06	5.47	-0.41	p = .002
I can make long walks and hikes	4.91	5.14	-0.23	p = .226
I can make daytrips to the neighbouring countryside	4.9	5.51	-0.61	p < .001
I can enjoy local traditional food	4.6	5.54	-0.94	p < .001
I can have a picnic in the countryside	4.52	5.27	-0.75	p < .001
I would have no language barriers	4.52	5.20	-0.68	p < .001
I can get familiar with the original rural lifestyle	4.44	5.33	-0.89	p < .001
I would have a feeling like I have some choice in the way things are done	4.43	4.99	-0.56	p < .001
There is local food available	4.35	5.36	-1.01	p < .001
The destination gives children an opportunity to have a good time	4.24	4.89	-0.65	p = .002
Half board (breakfast and dinner) available	4.11	5.18	-1.07	p < .001
I can visit historic sites	4.04	4.90	-0.86	p < .001
The hosts have pets (cats, dogs, rabbits etc.)	3.98	4.93	-0.95	p < .001
I can visit cultural attractions	3.85	4.80	-0.95	p < .001
In the destination there is a variety of things to see/do	3.84	5.3	-1.46	p < .001
A variety of restaurants available in walking distance	3.82	4.77	-0.95	p < .001
I can enjoy mountain landscapes	3.79	4.78	-0.99	p < .001
I can see traditional live-stock pasturing	3.7	4.53	-0.83	p < .001
I can participate in local festivals/events	3.57	4.88	-1.31	p < .001
I can experience a different culture	3.41	4.78	-1.37	p < .001
Organised trips and other packages available	3.27	4.61	-1.34	p < .001
I can meet local people	3.24	4.81	-1.57	p < .001
Full board available (three meals/day)	3.18	4.41	-1.23	p < .001
The destination gives an opportunity to socialize with other people	3.14	4.59	-1.45	p < .001
The destination is accessible by public transport	2.91	3.96	-1.05	p < .001
Daily organised program available	2.44	3.91	-1.47	p < .001
The hosts spend time with the guests/are available for the guests	2.41	4.05	-1.64	p < .001
I can make handicrafts	2.1	3.62	-1.52	p < .001

Note. Bolded numbers are statistically greater than normal numbers

but the topic needs further research. However, it is clear that women are more interested in wellbeing than men, even though the actual proportion of women in the wellbeing segment is not necessarily as high as this study suggests.

The results of this study support the findings of Park and Yoon (2009) as well as Molera and Albaledero (2007) by confirming the notion of rural tourists being a heterogeneous target group with diverse motivations, needs and

expectations. It also supports earlier results of Frochot (2005) and Royo-Vela (2009) by showing that among rural tourists there may be a special segment searching for a 'lazy' relaxing holiday without an emphasis on any special activities. As there is relatively little research of motivations and expectations of different types of wellbeing tourism, it is not possible to compare these findings with wellness tourism research.

Bushell and Sheldon (2009) call for further research on motivations behind wellness tourism. They distinguish between luxury forms of wellness tourism and more holistic attempts to create wellness for the individual (p. 221). We argue that there are several subsegments in wellness as well as in rural tourism. We assume that people seeking to escape and relax in luxury are a separate segment from those pampering themselves with a lazy holiday in a rural environment. They may be same people but behave in a different way depending on their life situation, and other internal and external situational factors.

As such, this study provides rural tourism companies with a description of what motivates wellbeing tourists to go on a holiday and in what kind of place they would like to spend their holiday. The pull factors the wellbeing segment values are particularly interesting, as only few destination attributes are more important for them than for other segments. However, there lies a dilemma in the factors the wellbeing segment is interested in. They want peace and quiet, as well as a possibility to spend time outside in the nature. This means that destinations they probably prefer are located far from most services. In Finland the most peaceful destinations can be dozens of kilometres away from the nearest towns. This is a challenge because most existing wellbeing services are located in or near towns and cities. But, on the other hand, rural destinations that have existing wellbeing services can target the wellbeing segment easily with marketing messages that, for example, assure customers that their privacy is respected and that there is absolutely no schedule during their holiday.

Both wellness and rural tourism concepts clearly mean different things in different contexts and countries. Nevertheless, one conclusion can be drawn from this study: rush-free rural settings with nature and beautiful landscapes offer an ideal environment for a wellbeing holiday motivated by search for relaxation, comfort and escape, not including any material luxurious elements. This study was conducted by using a Finnish sample of potential rural tourists, but for rural tourism companies targeting foreign customers research is needed. Can a wellbeing segment also be found also from foreign rural tourists and how does it possibly differ from the wellbeing segment among Finnish rural tourists? A topic of interest would also be to study what wellness or wellbeing services the wellbeing segment is interested in.

References

- Boksberger, P., & Laesser, C. (2009). Segmentation of the senior travel market by the means of travel motivations. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 15(4), 311–322.
- Bushell, R., & Sheldon, P. (2009). Wellness tourism and the future. In R. Bushell, & P.J. Sheldon (Eds.), *Wellness and tourism. Mind, body, spirit, place* (pp. 218–230). New York: Cognizant Communication.
- Cai, L., & Li, M. (2009). Distance-segmented rural tourists. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 26(8), 751–761.
- Chen, J.S., & Prebensen, N. (2009). Wellness as tourist motivation. Case of Taiwan. In R. Bushell, & P.J. Sheldon (Eds.), *Wellness and tourism. Mind, body, spirit, place* (pp. 231–238). New York: Cognizant Communication.
- Crompton, J.L. (1979). Motivations for pleasure vacation. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 6(4), 408–424.
- Duman, T., & Mattila, A.S. (2005). The role of affective factors on perceived cruise vacation value. *Tourism Management*, 26(3), 311–323.
- Frochot, I. (2005). A benefit segmentation of tourists in rural areas: A Scottish perspective. *Tourism Management*, 26(3), 335–346.
- Gallarza, M.G., & Gil, I. (2008). The concept of value and its dimensions: A tool for analysing tourism experiences. *Tourism Review*, 63(3), 4–20.
- Hair, J., Black W., Babin B., & Anderson R. (2010). *Multivariate data analysis* (7th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Johns, N., & Gyimóthy, S. (2002). Market segmentation and the prediction of tourist behavior: The case of Bornholm, Denmark. *Journal of Travel Research*, 40(3), 316–327.
- Kastenholz, E., Davies, D., & Paul, G. (1999). Segmenting tourism in rural areas: The case of north and central Portugal. *Journal of Travel Research*, 37(4), 353–363.
- Kemperman, A., & Timmermans, H. (2006). Preferences, benefits and park visits: A latent class segmentation analysis. *Tourism Analysis*, 11(4), 221–230.
- Koh, S., Yoo, J.J-E., & Boeger, C.A. (2010). Importance–performance analysis with benefit segmentation of spa goers. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 22(5), 1–20.
- Komppula, R. (2005). Pursuing customer value in tourism: A rural tourism case-study. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism*, 3(2), 83–104
- Komppula, R. (2007). Developing rural tourism in Finland through entrepreneurship. In R. Thomas & M. Augustyn (Eds.), *Tourism in the new Europe*. (pp. 123–134, Perspectives on SME Policies and Practices. Advances in Tourism Research Series). Amsterdam: Elsevier.
- Konu, H., Tuohino, A., & Komppula, R. (in press). Lake-Wellness: A practical example of a new service development (NSV) concept in tourism industry. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*.
- Laukkanen, T. (2007). Customer preferred channel attributes in multi-channel electronic banking. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 35(5), 393–412.
- Leiper, N. (1990). Tourist attraction systems. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 17(3), 367–387.
- Mak, A., Wong, K.K., & Chang, R.C. (2009). Health or self-indulgence? The motivations and characteristics of spa-goers. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 11(2), 185–199.
- Molera, L., & Albaladejo, I. (2007). Profiling segments of tourists in rural areas of South-Eastern Spain. *Tourism Management*, 28(3), 757–767.
- Otto, J.E., & Ritchie, J.R.B. (1996). The service experience in tourism. *Tourism Management*, 17(3), 165–174.
- Park, D-B., & Yoon, Y-S. (2009). Segmentation by motivation in rural tourism: A Korean case study. *Tourism Management*, 30(1), 99–108.
- Park, K.-S., & Reisinger, Y. (2009). Cultural differences in shopping for luxury goods: Western, Asian, and Hispanic Tourists. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 26(8), 762–777.
- Pesonen, J., Komppula, R., & Laukkanen, T. (2009). Kesämatkailijoiden segmentointi: Savonlinnan seutu maaseutumatkailukohteena. *Maaseudun Uusi Aika*, 3, 5–19.
- Royo-Vela, M. (2009). Rural-cultural excursion conceptualization: A local tourism marketing management model based on tourist destination image measurement. *Tourism Management*, 30(3), 419–428.
- Sánchez, J., Callarisa, L., Rodríguez, R.M., & Moliner, M.M. (2006). Perceived value of purchase of a tourism product. *Tourism Management*, 27(3), 394–409.
- Sheldon, P., & Bushell, R. (2009). Introduction to wellness and tourism. In R. Bushell, & P.J. Sheldon (Eds.), *Wellness and tourism. Mind, body, spirit, place* (pp. 3–18). New York: Cognizant Communication.
- Sheldon, P., & Park, S.-Y. (2009). Development of a sustainable wellness destination. In R. Bushell, & P.J. Sheldon (Eds.), *Wellness and tourism. Mind, body, spirit, place* (pp. 99–113). New York: Cognizant Communication.
- Smith, M., & Kelly, C. (2006). Wellness tourism. *Tourism Recreation Research*, 31(1), 1–4.
- Smith, M., & Puczko, L. (2009). *Health and wellness tourism*. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.

