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A destination's gastronomy as a means for holiday well-being

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A destination's gastronomy as a means for holiday well-being

Purpose

To provide insights to holiday well-being, this study examines two inevitable traveller activities related to destinations' gastronomy: pre-trip food information sourcing and the daily meals consumed.

Design/methodology/approach

A survey was carried out among 243 Finnish travellers. The findings are based on univariate analysis (t-test, ANOVA and regression analysis).

Findings

Pre-trip behaviour to ensure holiday well-being is based on travellers' interests in food, an emotional desire for a sense of safety and a functional desire for convenience, while they collect information from the Internet and guidebooks about recommended food places and local food as well as food safety and price level. Travellers' place the highest importance on dinner for their holiday well-being, especially foodies — those travellers with a keen interest in food. Breakfast is the second most important meal contributing to holiday well-being.

Practical implications

These findings inform destination marketing organisations about what food dimensions they should emphasise in destination gastronomy-related marketing communication for tour operators and hotel and local restaurants about the essence of dinner and breakfast for holiday well-being.

Originality/value

The study provides insights into the role of destinations' gastronomy in holiday well-being, which deserves to be studied in the current era of experiences and food interest.

Keywords: destination gastronomy; local food; information sources; meal; tourist behaviour; well-being

Introduction

The topic of well-being has entered a diverse set of fields with different interpretations, such as economics and national well-being (e.g., Everett, 2015), management and organisational well-being (e.g., Koopman et al., 2016), education and child well-being (e.g., Bernal, 2015), and quality of life and subjective well-being (e.g., Magyar-Moe et al., 2015).

A comprehensive view on subjective well-being includes ‘all of the various types of evaluations, both positive and negative, that people make of their lives’ (Diener, 2006, p. 153). Well-being is explained by a number of internal aspects, such as personality traits, demographics, moods and emotions, and relates to a number of external aspects, such as health, housing, safety, the social environment and holiday (e.g., Diener et al., 2006; Ferrara and Nisticò, 2013).

This study focuses on the role of food on travellers’ holiday well-being. While the construct of leisure well-being provides means to understand well-being experienced during the time remaining after work (Sirgy et al., 2016) and the construct of food well-being extends the effect of food from that of health to a holistic individual well-being (Block et al., 2011; Bublitz et al., 2013), the purpose of this study is to provide insights into the construct of holiday well-being and food as a means of such well-being. Related constructs, such as health tourism, wellness tourism and well-being tourism, comprise a specific type of tourism in settings staged by organisations (e.g., spas and water parks), which serve travellers’ long-term desire for quality of life by preventing maladies and maintaining or improving health (e.g., Konu and Laukkanen, 2010). By contrast, holiday well-being relates to a traveller’s short-term desire for well-being — a sense of contentedness — which is perceived during a trip and potentially also affects individual’s overall well-being. The fact is that a destination’s gastronomy provides experiences and experiential activities, and many studies have shown that today’s traveller longs for such experiences (e.g., Björk and Kauppinen-Räsänen,

2016a). Researchers contend that when experiences are perceived as desirable and valuable, these emotional interpretations are most likely encoded into one's life as well (Diener et al., 2006). At its best, a holiday to a specific destination — domestic or international — contributes positive and pleasurable experiences and perceptions of quality resulting in satisfaction with the particular trip (Björk and Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2016a) or holiday (Chen et al., 2016; Gilbert and Abdullah, 2004) and with a sense of quality and satisfaction with one's life in general (e.g., Nawijn et al., 2010; Ferrara and Nisticò, 2013; Simpson et al., 2016). Even though adaption theory may explain that the effect is short-lived (e.g., Diener et al., 2006), the role of experiential activities and services are recognised for the sake of one's well-being (e.g., Tokarchuk et al., 2015). Hence, with the selected focus the study responds to the request calling for more research on the external well-being aspects like holiday (e.g., Ferrara and Nisticò, 2013), which has only recently attracted scholarly interest (Pyke et al., 2016). Thereby, the role that a destination's gastronomy has on holiday well-being has yet to be revealed.

Against this background, the study examines travellers' pre-trip information sourcing about a destination's gastronomy and on-site meals. Information sourcing is considered a means to ensure the occurrence of travellers' experiential expectations that contribute to holiday well-being (e.g., Li et al., 2009; MacInnis and Price, 1987), while the construct of the meal represents an essential daily activity in which the destination's gastronomy is consumed and holiday well-being is realised. Pre-trip information sourcing behaviour is examined by uncovering which characteristics of a destination's gastronomy contribute to holiday well-being, why people are motivated to perform information sourcing behaviour and what information sources are used to ensure holiday well-being. On-site meals are examined by revealing their importance for travel satisfaction and holiday well-being.

Through these aforementioned approaches, the study provides insights not only into travellers' holiday well-being but also into the development of local residents' well-being as actors in a destination's foodscape.

A destination's gastronomy

A destination's gastronomy is a socio-cultural element of a destination's cultural heritage that defines and mirrors the local culture, traditions and natural environment (Long, 2004). It is also an inherent element of each traveller's holiday (e.g., Quan and Wang, 2004). A destination's gastronomy thus has the potential to affect travellers' holiday well-being, which is considered to have multidimensional elements in this study, including physical, functional, emotional and social well-being aspects. Physical well-being is here perceived to derive from aspects such as convenience, nourishment and healthiness, but also food safety (Cohen and Avieli, 2004), which refers to food-related practices and food hygiene for preventing foodborne illnesses and diseases. Functional well-being is about what allows humans to function well (Magyar-Moe et al., 2015) and refers here to the daily meals that structure the holidaymakers' days for regular food intake and for gathering with family members and friends (e.g., Rozin et al., 2002). Emotional well-being is about what makes the human feel well and includes positive feelings, such as happiness, issues related to how the individual experiences various aspects of one's life and cognitive interpretations of how satisfied one is with the various aspects of life in general (e.g., Avi-Babad, 2010; Diener et al., 2006; Magyar-Moe et al., 2015). Emotional well-being relates to the emotional aspects of happiness and satisfaction gained by a destination's gastronomy. Social well-being comes from dining with family and friends, which is a major social activity, and from other social activities, such as social food preparation and co-cooking (e.g., Magyar-Moe et al., 2015).

Gastronomy as an integral aspect of a destination's culture

Gastronomy is a widely accepted concept that includes food and drinks and culinary traditions, such as food preparation, cooking and eating, as well as advice, rules and norms about what and how to eat and drink (Santich, 2004). Gastronomy also involves cuisine innovations, haute cuisine and fine dining, but it more closely relates to the culture, locality and local food-related lifestyle and is acknowledged as an upholder of the culture (Hegarty and Mahony, 2001).

Gastronomy is very much an identification mark of a destination (Sims, 2009). Many geographical regions, countries and local areas are associated with gastronomy. For example, Mediterranean gastronomy is known for being fresh: fresh fish, fresh fruits and fresh vegetables; Mexican gastronomy is famous for tortillas, beans and corn; and gastronomy in Yangshuo, Southern China is known for its signature dish called Pijiu Yu or beer fish. Thus, many tourism destinations are identified and defined by their gastronomy (Björk and Kauppinen-Räsänen 2014), which can refer to the quality or type of ingredients or to their local specialties and iconic dishes.

The characteristics of destinations are the particularities that attract holidaymakers. For example, many travellers are attracted to destinations that are perceived to be iconic due to their historical heritage, such as Machu Picchu in Peru; destinations that hold generic flagship attractions, such as the midnight sun and the Northern Lights in the Finnish Lapland; and destinations that provide regular hallmark events, such as München's Oktoberfest. However, some peripheral locations that lack such attractions rely more heavily on their gastronomy and related culinary heritage, which are inherently part of each destination's uniqueness. For these destinations, gastronomy has been suggested as a means to develop and sustain tourism and to build an identity to attract travellers (Sims, 2009).

Therefore, a destination's gastronomy comprises characteristics that contribute to the visitors' holiday experiences and well-being on the one hand, and to the well-being of the local residents on the other, thus benefitting the local economy and its wide range of stakeholders, including agriculture workers and farmers, food producers and retailers, food service providers and restaurateurs, and cafe owners and stallholders, among others.

Gastronomy as a trigger to holiday well-being

A destination's gastronomy has considerable potential because, as a basic human element, it is embedded in everyone's holiday and holiday activities (e.g., Quan and Wang, 2004).

However, even if food consumption is merely a daily routine, what travellers consume on a holiday is influenced by the changed environment. By taking a holiday away from home, potentially abroad, the traveller is exposed to new influences. Hence, a destination's gastronomy provides experiences for which today's traveller longs (e.g., Björk and Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2016a; 2016b; Richards, 2002). As a response to travellers' desire for unique food, specific types of food-related tourism have evolved, such as gastronomy tourism, culinary tourism and food tourism (e.g., López-Guzmán and Sánchez-Cañizares, 2012; Qiu et al., 2013). These constructs relate to tourism that provides staged services for travellers searching for a destination's culinary heritage. Travellers attracted to this type of tourism may explicitly search for extraordinary food and drinks provided by unique gastronomy, even at the expense of pleasantness and enjoyment (e.g., Arnould and Price, 1993; Keinan and Kivetz, 2011).

For some travellers — foodies, food lovers or food experiencers — food is often the major reason to travel, while for some, food is merely a source of nutrition, and others appreciate casual food experiences (Björk and Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2014; 2016a). Evidence from previous research

on food's multifarious influences has shown how travellers' food interests in general (Björk and Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2017) and destinations' food in particular affect travel motivation (e.g., Henderson, 2009; Kivela and Crofts, 2005) and destination choice (e.g., Hsu et al., 2009; Kozak and Rimmington, 2000).

In the current era of experiences, the value of experiences has increased, thus gaining an essential role in attracting travellers. It is therefore acknowledged that, through its experientiality, food nourishes not only the body but also the soul and mind (e.g., Gyimóthy and Mykletun, 2009). Previous studies have shown how a destination's gastronomy contributes to lived experiences (e.g., Kivela and Crofts, 2006; Long, 2004) and adds to the overall travel experience (e.g., Neild et al., 2000). Previous studies have also shown how these food-related experiences affect travel satisfaction (Björk and Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2014; 2016a), intentions to revisit a destination (Kim et al., 2011; Quan and Wang, 2004) and long-lasting memories (Kauppinen-Räsänen et al., 2013). Hence, as satisfaction is proven to be linked to well-being (Sirgy et al., 2011) and as food as a multifarious experiential trigger affects satisfaction, it is justified to imply that food might contribute to travellers' holiday well-being and might thus boost a sense of subjective well-being (e.g., Tokarchuk et al., 2015).

Information sourcing to ensure holiday well-being

Travellers often engage in pre-trip information searches (e.g., Choi et al., 2007; Tsang et al., 2011). Information sourcing research has shown that information sourcing is an ongoing process (Moore et al., 2012) occurring at various stages (e.g., Choi et al., 2012); thus, travellers' engage in a pre-trip information search before and after a travel decision is made (e.g., Bieger and Laesser, 2004).

The reasons for such activities may vary. For functional reasons, information sourcing is conducted to gain knowledge (Bettman, 1979), and it serves as a psychological means to decrease the sense of risk, increase the sense of safety (Quintal et al., 2010) and bolster the decisions made (e.g., Björk and Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2015). The act of information sourcing may lead to immediate experiential pleasure, but it essentially anticipates the forthcoming experiences and ensures the occurrence of the experiential expectations (e.g., Li et al., 2009; MacInnis and Price, 1987). Hence, pre-trip information sourcing precedes many travellers' decision-making processes (Molina and Esteban, 2006) and affects their decisions and choices (Grønflaten, 2009). Travellers search for a wide range of information about hotel standards, destination security, and available activities and services (e.g., Choi et al., 2007; Tsang et al., 2011), which influence not only their experiential expectations but also their quality (Devezer et al., 2014), convenience and safety (e.g., Avni-Babad, 2010) expectations.

Travellers search for information about a destination's food from internal and external sources (Kozak and Kozak, 2008). Internal insights include the traveller's experiences or recalled knowledge (Lehto et al., 2006). External sources include the Internet, related blogs, and travel sites, the printed tourism literature (e.g., guidebooks and travel magazines), human sources (e.g., travel agencies and consultants), and family and friends (Kozak and Kozak, 2008). Notably, destination-specific sources, such as official government publications and guidebooks, are perceived as the most credible sources, while promotional activities (e.g., advertisements) are viewed as the least trustworthy sources (Money and Crofts, 2003; Nolan, 1976).

Existing research shows that travellers search for various types of information. In terms of gastronomy, travellers typically search for information about a destination's food culture and traditions (Du Rand and Heath, 2006), food services (Björk and Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2016a) and

food safety (Lepp et al., 2011). Related to food culture and traditions, the uniqueness of a destination's gastronomy may attract a deeper search interest than, for example, restaurants providing the destination's gastronomy (Björk and Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2016b). Food information sourcing studies have shown a link between the travellers' food interests and the amount of information sought (Björk and Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2017). Hence, by revealing traveller segments based on their food attitudes, Björk and Kauppinen-Räsänen (2016a) found that foodies, food lovers or food experiencers—in other words, those who might be motivated to travel and choose a specific destination due to the forthcoming food experiences—are more intrigued by a pre-trip information search.

In addition to searching for food information, food lovers search for destination-specific information by talking with their family members and turning to television programs, newspapers, the Internet (blogs and travel companies' home pages), travel agencies, tourism brochures and travel guidebooks. By contrast, those who perceive food as a source of nutrition or merely appreciate casual food experiences turn to their friends, destination websites, tourism brochures and travel guidebooks (e.g., Björk and Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2016a).

Meals as a means to ensure holiday well-being

Eating is structured into three square meals a day — breakfast, lunch and dinner — as a normal eating pattern (Marshall, 2005), of which breakfast and dinner have become the main mealtimes (e.g., Albala, 2003). Many behavioural acts and routines change when on holiday — such as the food environment, which changes from the home setting to restaurants, and the food benefits searched for, which change from physiological value to experiential value. Regardless, eating continues to occur on a regular basis (Marshall, 2005).

A meal is a multidimensional construct defined within the field of nutrition science by its time, content, social aspects (e.g., Meiselman, 2008; Oltersdorf et al., 1999) and its context within the field of culinary arts (Gustafsson et al., 2006; Öström et al., 2008). Although the underlying motivations for consuming food at mealtimes vary (Henderson 2009) from nourishment to social pleasure (e.g., Rozin et al., 2002), the quality and pleasure derived from meals affects satisfaction and human behaviour (e.g., Türen and Çamoğlu, 2015). As a confirmation of family life and a symbol of family unity, the evening meal has become a “basic unit of socialization” (Gallegos et al., 2010, p. 243) providing an occasion for family members to meet and review “the day’s activities” and plan for the future (Fiese et al., 2006, p. 67).

Nevertheless, while the staged servicescape (Bitner, 1992), such as the restaurants and their menus, has attracted tourism scholars’ interests (e.g., López-Guzmán and Sánchez-Cañizares, 2012), few studies have focused on travellers’ meals. This study therefore examines daily meals as on-site experiences, which are believed to contribute to holiday well-being.

Method

This study benefits from a quantitative research approach (Veal, 2011) examining travellers’ pre-trip information sourcing about a destination’s gastronomy and on-site meals for vacation well-being.

Data collection

The current study focuses on Finnish people with an interest in traveling. Data were collected at the biggest annual travel fair in Finland, the MATKA Nordic Travel Fair, which is a three-day event attracting up to 70.000 visitors from all over Finland to Helsinki in January

(www.matka.messukeskus.com/b2b/). Visitors to this fair are attracted by the possibility of getting some good travel bargains and because of their interest in finding out the latest travel trends.

Collecting data at the MATKA Nordic travel fair is advantageous in terms of convenience and the opportunity to draw inferences from the Finnish population. The disadvantages are mainly linked to the sample framework used regarding whether differences exist between people who visit travel fairs and those who do not. Furthermore, from a reliability aspect, it is difficult to calculate the response rate. The up-front refusal rate for this study was 30%. Notably, compared to Finnish statistics, the sample used varies only in terms of gender distribution; the analysed sample has an over-representation of women, which must be considered when interpreting the findings. Based on a convenience sampling procedure (Veal, 2011), a final sample of 243 respondents was used for analysis.

The respondents were approached in the lounge area of the fair by two trained interviewers. The chosen area gave the respondents an opportunity to complete the questionnaire undisturbed. The interviewers explained the academic purpose of the study and were available to answer any questions the respondents had about the study or the questionnaire. As only a few respondents asked for assistance and all the questionnaires returned were well completed (no or very few questions unanswered), a high level of reliability was assumed. After completing the questionnaire, the respondents were given a lottery ticket as a reward. The prize was a hotel voucher for two persons.

Measurements and analysis techniques applied

A survey with four blocks of questions was used to examine Finnish travellers' food sourcing behaviour and the value they place on different meals. First, the respondents were asked

to complete five demographic questions (gender, age, social status, education and place of residence) and two questions related to their travel behaviour (number of domestic and international trips per annum). The second block consisted of nine items measuring why gastronomy information is sought. Informed by previous research on destination gastronomy (Chang et al., 2013; Kivela and Crotts, 2009), “local aspects” were emphasized, such as “I search information about local food specialities” and “I search for local restaurants”. The third block consisting of ten items measured the motivating reasons for collecting information about a destination’s gastronomy. First, a general question was posed asking the respondents whether they were “interested in food”. As travellers’ well-being is multidimensional, the succeeding nine questions were posed to measure the functional (Magyar-Moe et al., 2015), emotional (Avi-Babad, 2010), social (Magyar-Moe et al., 2015) and physical (Cohen and Avieli, 2004) dimensions which might affect travellers’ well-being. Questions asked in the fourth block explored the most important meal experience (breakfast, lunch, dinner and supper) and their effects on travel satisfaction.

In blocks 2 to 4, the respondents were asked to indicate, on a 4-point Likert-type scale (1 = not at all, 4 = extremely), how much they agree to each proposition, a method previously used by Björk and Kauppinen-Räsänen (2014). In constructing the research instrument and developing the scale items, inspiration from tourism destination gastronomy research (discussed in the previous sections) was sought. As a validity check, the research instrument was piloted (among a small group of potential respondents) and slightly modified before the final data collection. The findings, which mainly are of a descriptive nature, are based on univariate analysis (t-test, ANOVA, and regression analysis) (Hair et al., 2010).

Results

Demographics

The respondents' demographic profiles portray a sample of middle-aged people (mean age 45 years) with a traveling history matching that of the Finnish population, that is, with an average of two national and two international holiday trips annually (Statistics Finland) (Table 1). Furthermore, it can be noticed that of the respondents, 44.4% are from the southern capital region of Finland, 20.8% from the northern part of Finland, 26.4% from eastern Finland, and 8.4% from western Finland.

Insert **Table 1** here

Destination characteristics contributing to holiday well-being

Information sourcing is essential to ensure the occurrence of experiential expectations (e.g., Li et al., 2009; MacInnis and Price, 1987). Table 2 presents the type of gastronomy information the respondents seek, simultaneously revealing the characteristics that the travellers consider essential for holiday well-being. First, the findings show how recommendations conveying quality and security are important, as travellers' search for information about recommended staged service environments, that is, food places in general, not only local restaurants. Second, the peculiarities of the destinations' gastronomy are essential, as travellers' search for information about local food specialties, local eating habits and food traditions. The results indicate that the Finnish sample places importance on the reputation of the food served and the type of the destination's gastronomy.

Insert **Table 2** here

The findings imply that the destination's gastronomy also benefits the local economy and its stakeholders; the respondents' interest in local specialties, local ingredients, local habits and local restaurants highlight the importance of 'locality' for visitors.

Information sourcing as a means of empowering the holiday

Table 3 shows the motivating reasons for travellers to source food information, thus revealing indicators that contribute to well-being. Of the tested items, travellers' sourcing behaviour is mostly explained by their genuine interest in food and their desire to gain knowledge about a destination's gastronomy. The other nine reasons are categorised according to how they link to the different dimensions of well-being. In this context, while functional well-being refers to collecting price information (mean = 2.54) and saving time (mean = 2.45), emotional well-being relates to what makes the traveller feel well and is explained here by the travellers' desire to avoid surprises (mean = 2.6). Social well-being is explained by knowing how to behave (mean = 2.38), and physical well-being is explained by health reasons (mean = 2.42).

Insert **Table 3** here

The findings indicate that the travellers source information to avoid surprises, to acquire knowledge about the price level, to save time and to know how to behave once at the destination, which imply that holiday well-being derives from a desire to feel empowered, feel confident and to be in control in the changed environment.

Information sources used to ensure holiday well-being

The results prove that Finnish travellers use a variety of information sources, such as the Internet, brochures and travel magazines. Notably, travellers prefer to use destinations' official websites and tour agencies' websites compared to shared information found on company blogs (mean = 2.15) and private blogs (mean = 1.95) (Table 4).

Insert **Table 4** here

Evidently, there is still a desire for using print media, as Finnish travellers still use travel guides, travel brochures, tourism magazines, and general magazines and newspapers to collect food-related information, although some are accessed in a digital format. A more detailed analysis shows that elderly people, significantly, more often collect destination-specific food information from newspapers ($\beta = 0.011$, sig. = 0.005), magazines ($\beta = 0.008$, sig. = 0.042) and TV programs ($\beta = 0.009$, sig. = 0.019) before traveling. No significant differences were found between women and men in terms of information sources, and travel experience had no significant influence on the sources from which Finnish travellers collect information.

On-site meals contributing to holiday well-being

While the type of food consumed changes on a holiday, travellers continue to eat at similar times to when they are at home; hence, the meals structure the day as a daily activity (e.g., Marshall 2005). The results show that 71.1% of the respondents rank dinner as the most important meal, thus making a strong contribution to their lived experiences. The second most popular meal is

breakfast (19.6%), followed by lunch (8.5%). Only a small fraction of the respondents (0.09%) reported that supper contributes to their well-being at a destination.

As dinner and breakfast are important for experiencing holiday well-being, they similarly contribute the most to travel satisfaction (Table 5).

Insert **Table 5** here

The findings reveal that lunch has a particular value-adding effect for those Finnish travellers who have a strong interest in food. Overall, the consumed meals are perceived to be influential, and only a few perceive that meals do not have an impact.

Discussion and conclusions

This study contributes to well-being research by providing insights to two inevitable traveller activities related to destinations' gastronomy: pre-trip food information sourcing and the daily meals consumed.

With a focus on a destination's gastronomy, this study shows how travellers search the Internet and guidebooks for information about recommended food places and local specialties before traveling. A destination's gastronomy effect on well-being is founded on local eating habits, traditions, safety, and locally produced food and drinks (wine, beer and juice) in line with the destinations' culture. Indeed, these findings resonate with an increased desire for authenticity and sustainability and the new trend of circular economy thinking (e.g., Morone and Navia, 2016; Pomponi and Moncaster, 2017). This study also shows how functional well-being is essential for travellers, and information sourcing is a means to ensure such well-being. While travellers are

motivated by locality, they also want to feel empowered while on holiday, whereby food safety and local prices play a role.

For food lovers, food may be the main reason for travelling (e.g., Björk and Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2014; 2016a). However, even though some travellers only consume food for survival, most food and eating activities contribute to holiday well-being (Björk and Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2016a; Tokarchuk et al., 2015), and these travellers find great pleasure in dining out. This study shows that Finnish travellers place most value on dinner and breakfast, in that order of importance. While past research has investigated the effects of food on travel satisfaction (e.g., Björk and Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2014; 2016a; Sirgy et al., 2011), this study contributes by revealing the effects of different meals (dinner and breakfast).

In addition to its scholarly contribution, this study offers two managerial implications. First, managers of destination marketing organisations should recognise pre-trip information sourcing as an activity that most travellers do to ensure holiday well-being. As a destination's gastronomy is an essential aspect of trips, travellers engage in food information sourcing (Choi et al., 2007; Tsang et al., 2011); destination marketing managers should therefore produce easily accessible and readable food roadmaps and recognise the role of food characteristics, such as locality, food traditions, safety and prices. Tour operators and hotel and restaurant managers should recognise the importance of breakfast, not only as a source of nutrition but also as a means of contributing to social well-being. In a similar vein, local restaurant owners should benefit from acknowledging the role of dining out, not only as a single experience but also for travel satisfaction and overall well-being. As mentioned, positive and pleasurable experiences related to food might affect traveller's intention to revisit a destination (Kim et al., 2011). The multidimensional aspects

of well-being can provide valuable knowledge to consider when providing customers with excellent service.

This study has several limitations, revealing a need for future research. First, this study does not investigate why the two meals (dinner and breakfast) are perceived as important. Forthcoming research could thus attempt to explain the importance of different meals, for example, by taking a cultural-historic or family identity approach or by examining experience-seeking motives. The fact is that eating on holiday follows a mundane habit practiced at home (Marshall, 2005), yet it is influenced by factors related to the changed environment, such as local culture, and provides an occasion for family members to meet and review “the day’s activities” and plan for the future (Fiese et al., 2006, p. 67). Then again, dinner, in terms of stimuli and expectations, seems to outshine all other meals, and as one of the last activities of the day, expectations on this meal seem high. Tourist experience theory explains how the inner processes influenced by external factors create memorable outcomes (Björk and Sfantla, 2014) and how dining out makes holidays special (Kivela and Crofts, 2009). This issue deserves additional attention, as it evidently contributes to holiday well-being.

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