

**WELLNESS TOURISM IN HIMACHAL PRADESH:  
ANALYSIS OF TRAVEL DETERMINANTS AND  
MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS OF RETREAT VISITORS**

Thesis Submitted for the Award of the Degree of

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

in

**Tourism management**

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*Transforming Education Transforming India*

**LOVELY PROFESSIONAL UNIVERSITY, PUNJAB**

**2023**

## **DECLARATION**

I, hereby declared that the presented work in the thesis entitled “Wellness Tourism in Himachal Pradesh: Analysis of Travel Determinants and Motivational Factors of Retreat Visitors” in fulfilment of degree of **Doctor of Philosophy (Ph. D.)** is outcome of research work carried out by me under the supervision Dr. Parvinder Kour, working as Assistant Professor, in the School of Hotel Management and Tourism of Lovely Professional University, Punjab, India. In keeping with general practice of reporting scientific observations, due acknowledgements have been made whenever work described here has been based on findings of other investigator. This work has not been submitted in part or full to any other University or Institute for the award of any degree.

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## CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the work reported in the Ph. D. thesis entitled “Wellness Tourism in Himachal Pradesh: Analysis of Travel Determinants and Motivational Factors of Retreat Visitors” submitted in fulfillment of the requirement for the reward of degree of **Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)** in the School of Hotel Management and Tourism, is a research work carried out by Rajashree Sutar, 11916693, is bonafide record of his/her original work carried out under my supervision and that no part of thesis has been submitted for any other degree, diploma or equivalent course.



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## **ABSTRACT**

Wellness tourism is considered a subset of health tourism. It is a special interest or niche tourism, where tourists' primary purpose is to enhance their health and well-being while on vacation. It encompasses a wide range of pursuits and activities, including yoga, meditation, spas, beauty treatments, physical exercise, personal development, outdoor activities, and much more.

Wellness tourism has received sizeable attention from both academics and professionals in recent years. These provide an insightful glimpse of the wellness tourism product and its offer system, as well as the different wellness tourist types, their travel preferences, and their engagement in wellness activities. However, research on wellness tourism (with an emphasis on Ayurveda), spa tourism, yoga tourism, and other topics have been carried out in countries all over the world, including some Indian locations like Kerala, Rishikesh (Uttarakhand), Goa, Tamil Nadu, and Rajasthan. In Himachal Pradesh, there have been few studies on spa tourism and scant research on wellness tourism (Yoga and meditation). As a result, the present research aims to examine the travel-related motivations and factors that influence tourists to wellness retreat centres in Himachal Pradesh. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to identify the travel motivations of tourists to choose to visit wellness retreats in Himachal Pradesh as well as their experiences, level of satisfaction, quality of life, and revisit intention. Additionally, this study explicates the role of quality of life as a mediating factor between satisfaction and revisit intention. Overall, this study makes an effort to comprehend the relationship among the aforementioned factors and, eventually, the general travel behaviour of retreat visitors.

To achieve objective of the study quantitative methodology was used. The data was collected at the selected wellness retreat centres of Himachal Pradesh using simple random sampling technique. Total 388 complete and reliable responses were collected via a self-administered questionnaire. The software packages SPSS 22.0 and AMOS 16.0 were used to run several statistical techniques, producing results that were then further interpreted and explained.

The findings revealed that wellness tourism plays a significant role for the improvement of holistic wellbeing of tourists. Total four travel motivational factors identified that

influenced retreat visitors' decision to take wellness vacations. Furthermore, this study identified a significant relationship across all the five constructs (travel motivation, experience, satisfaction, quality of life, and revisit intention) and also identified the role of quality of life as a mediator in defining revisit intentions of retreat visitors. Further, this study provides a conceptual framework and make suggestions and implications that are beneficial for strategic planning, travel agents and policy-makers to develop strategies for advertising and branding to boost and promote wellness tourism destinations in Himachal Pradesh.

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**Rajashree Sutar**

Date:

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>Abbreviations</b>	<b>Full form</b>
AGFI	Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index
AMOS	Analysis of Moment Structures
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
AVE	Average Variance Extracted
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
CR	Composite Reliability
EFA	Exploratory Factor analysis
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GFI	Goodness of Fit Index
GWI	Global wellness institute
HPTDC	Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation
IFI	Incremental Fit Index
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin
NFI	Normed fit index
PCLOSE	Probability of Close Fit
QOL	Quality of Life
RFI	Relative Fit Index
RI	Revisit Intention

RMR	Root Mean Square Residual
RMSEA	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
SAQ	Self-Administered Questionnaire
SD	Standard Deviation
SEM	Structural Equation Modelling
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TCM	Traditional Chinese Medicine
TLI	Tucker-Lewis index
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
WHO	World Health Organization
WOM	Word-Of-Mouth
WTO	World Tourism Organization
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Research

Over the past few decades, the tourism industry has displayed continued growth to emerge as one of the world's biggest and most rapidly expanding industries (Cohen et al., 2017). To make modern tourism a crucial component for socio-economic extension, more and more new tourist destinations are established. In fact, they are making investments in the expansion of the industry called tourism (Uysal et al., 2012). Even as society advances and disposable incomes increase, societal travel patterns have shifted (Kim & Batra, 2009). Nowadays tourists are capable to improve his/her life quality by engaging in a variety of travel activities at intriguing tourist destinations. That is one of the principal causes why tourism has become a significant industry in almost all parts of the world (Chen et al., 2008).

Consistently, tourism has served as an economic driver for raising living standards in destination countries (Dimova, 2020). It shared 10.3% of the total worldwide GDP (Gross Domestic Product) in 2019. As reported by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2020), international visitor has increased by 4% in 2019, reaching 1.5 billion worldwide. However, due to the unexpected coronavirus pandemic (Kumar & Nafi, 2020), the rate of growth has slowed and following a decline of 85% at the end of 2020, foreign visitor advent dropped by 87% in January 2021 (UNWTO, 2021). In December 2019, the worldwide Covid-19 pandemic first appeared (Kuo et al., 2021) as a consequence numerous nations reinforced travel restrictions (UNWTO, 2021). This instigated a complete halt in the global tourism industry (Say, 2022) among other industries, and fetched the tourism economy to a freezing point (Qiu, 2021), which is regarded as the largest industry in the globe worldwide (Szromek, 2021).

The Covid-19 pandemic has not only influenced the country's economy (Kuo et al., 2021), education, and transportation (Hao et al., 2020; Zhong et al., 2021), but it also had significantly influenced social and psychological health of the individuals

(Saleh & Mujahiddin, 2020). The virus has caused significant physical and psychological health problems throughout the human population (Roman et al., 2020) like stress, anxiety, panic attacks, sleep disturbances, loneliness, frustration, denial, and despair (Tillu et al., 2020). As stated by the Indian Psychiatrist Society, 20% of psychological illness has increased since the outbreak (Jasti et al., 2020), while self-reported stress and depression have increased by 8% and 28%, respectively (Tanoue et al., 2020). People seek relaxation, physical and mental rehabilitation for enhancement of their quality of life (Dar & Kashyap, 2022; Roman et al., 2020), thereby increased the demand for wellness tourism amongst tourists.

However, wellness tourism is always seen as a concept of special interest tourism (Vasileiou et al., 2016). It is deemed as the largest segment of health tourism (Koncul, 2012; Lenka, 2017) whose ultimate focus is to safeguard or take care of health (Damijanić & Šergo, 2013; Kim & Batra, 2009; Mueller & Kaufmann, 2001). However, health tourism comprises both medical and wellness activities (Damijanić, 2019). But there an ambiguity in terminology used by destination authorities and governmental organizations, and promotion firms (Dini & Pencarelli, 2021). And even concepts are occasionally confused—not just by customers but also by those in the destination marketing industry. Therefore, it would be vital to comprehend the difference between these two terms “medical tourism and wellness tourism” (Yeung & Johnston, 2018).

Medical tourism refers to people travelling for medical treatment or betterment for a wide range of diseases, or chronic conditions (Jamin et al., 2020). It includes everything from open-heart surgery to dental care (Smith & Puczko, 2008). In contrast, wellness tourism features healthy individuals traveling to improve their well-being (Jamin et al., 2020). They are engaged in a various type of activities to enhance their (tourists) physical, mental, spiritual well-being and life quality (Widarini, et al., 2022). One of the reasons behind its popularity is that it offers natural and herbal cures, mind-body interventions, detox and nutritional programs, mindfulness, and holistic retreats (Kemppainen et al., 2021; Deesilatham, 2018).

Wellness tourism has evidenced a substantial development throughout the pre-pandemic era (Dillette et al., 2021) and in fact increasing in post pandemic era

(Choudhary & Qadir, 2022). Despite the current pandemic (Hakmat et al., 2022; Kazakov & Oyner, 2021), it expanded every year (Pyke et al., 2016). In fact, the epidemic also provides global awareness among individuals on the importance of health and wellness (Choudhary & Qadir, 2021; Wen et al., 2020). It is perceived as a massive opportunity for the global tourism industry, as wellness tourism attracts tourists in the midst of the Covid-19 epidemic (Widarini et al., 2022) and substantially expedites these trends (Azara & Foster, 2021). The Global Wellness Institute predicted that the wellness economy would grow to US\$919 billion by 2022 (Yeung & Johnston, 2018). However, in 2020, global GDP fell 2.8%, while the wellness economy shrank 11.0% to \$4.4 trillion (Yeung & Johnston, 2022) and as per the new report by Vision Research Reports, wellness tourism is estimated to be valued at approximately US\$ 1.10 trillion by 2028 (Vision Research Reports, 2021).

Moreover, the economic downturn necessitates a strong industry preparedness for a wellness-centered and tenacious new beginning (Chhabra, 2020). Wellness tourism is becoming increasingly prevalent amongst the well-educated and both upper and middle-class tourists wishing to unwind and keep themselves healthy while travelling exotic locations (Chang, 2017), like as wellness retreats (Cohen et al., 2017). People have become more responsible towards their health and well-being during the pandemic” (Choudhary & Qadir, 2022). Additionally, baby boomers are also drawn to numerous different wellness destinations (Voigt et al., 2010). Furthermore, with the recent rise in community health issues such as obesity, goods, and services targeted at improving personal health have turned popular (Kim & Batra, 2009). Many tourists tend to select wellness retreats, spa resorts, wilderness stays, hot springs, and cycling vacations to rejuvenate the body as well as the mind, acquiring knowledge about a healthier life at tourist attractions (Kim et al., 2017; Ali-Knight, 2009). Moreover, the stress of work and fast-paced nature of life have greatly accelerated anxiety-related disorders and psychological illness and to escape from those stress and tiredness and to relax and convalesce again tourists opt for wellness holidays (Karari, 2019).

The Asia Pacific region, which includes countries like Japan, India, China, and Thailand, among others, witnessed 152 million wellness tourism visits every year from both foreign and domestic tourists, with 32 million visits added each year (Kim et al.,

2017). Asia has made the greatest number of gains to exceed the current wellness tourism leaders, such as Europe (216 million visits per year), and North America (176 million visits per year) (Lee et al., 2013). India ranked 23rd in the world in 2019 with 10.93 million foreign visitors, and 6.4% travelled for health and wellness tourism (Ministry of Tourism, 2020).

In accordance with the latest Global Wellness Institute research report (2022), as shown in Table 1.1, the Asia-Pacific region had the largest regional market, accounting for 90% of the global wellness economy, with a market size of \$1.5 trillion, ahead of North America (\$1.3 trillion) or even Europe (\$1.1 trillion). Further, the world's leading wellness economy, North America (2017–2019) with an annual growth rate of 8.4%, dropped in 2019–2020 to -13.4% due to the greatest impact of the pandemic. Similarly, Europe's wellness economy declined to -11.4%. However, Asia-Pacific regions that had annual growth of 8.1% from 2017 to 2019 decreased by -6.4% from 2019 to 2020. It declined less in terms of wellness economy than North America and Europe due to better pandemic restrictions that were less restrictive or sporadic in 2020. Furthermore, according to this report (table 1.2), in 2020, China had the maximal net worth (\$682.7 billion), next to Japan (\$303.6 billion), South Korea (\$94.1 billion), Australia (\$84.4 billion), and India (\$77.6 billion) (Yeung & Johnston, 2022).

**Table 1.1 Global Wellness Economy by Region, 2017, 2019, 2020**

	Wellness Economy				Average Annual Growth Rate	
	US\$ billions			Per Capita	2017-2019	2019-2020
	2017*	2019	2020	2020		
<b>Asia-Pacific</b>	\$1,370.5	\$1,602.8	\$1,500.2	\$360	8.1%	-6.4%
<b>North America</b>	\$1,288.1	\$1,514.0	\$1,310.8	\$3,567	8.4%	-13.4%
<b>Europe</b>	\$1,168.3	\$1,288.6	\$1,141.5	\$1,236	5.0%	-11.4%

<b>Latin America-Caribbean</b>	\$311.7	\$302.1	\$235.4	\$360	-1.5%	-22.1%
<b>Middle East-North Africa</b>	\$104.7	\$120.9	\$107.7	\$215	7.4%	-10.9%
<b>Sub-Saharan Africa</b>	\$74.0	\$81.7	\$73.7	\$65	5.1%	-9.8%
<b>WORLD</b>	<b>\$4,317.3</b>	<b>\$4,909.9</b>	<b>\$4,369.3</b>	<b>\$563</b>	<b>6.6%</b>	<b>-11.0%</b>

*Source: The Global Wellness Economy: Country Rankings, February 2022*

**Table 1.2 Wellness Economy: Top 10 Markets in Asia-Pacific (2020)**

	<b>US\$ billions</b>
<b>China</b>	\$682.7
<b>Japan</b>	\$303.6
<b>South Korea</b>	\$94.1
<b>Australia</b>	\$84.4
<b>India</b>	<b>\$77.6</b>
<b>Taiwan</b>	\$38.4
<b>Indonesia</b>	\$36.4
<b>Philippines</b>	\$33.0
<b>Thailand</b>	\$29.0
<b>Malaysia</b>	\$24.4

*Source: The Global Wellness Economy: Country Rankings, February 2022*

Wellness economy is projected to reach nearly \$7.0 trillion in 2025, where wellness tourism is acting as a significant sector for contributing about \$436 billion (Global Wellness Institute, 2023). Wellness service centres have already been



established in numerous foreign nations, and the introduction of wellness products and services into the global marketplace is steadily growing day after day (Callaghan et al., 2021). However, a large number of foreign visitors are eager to learn more about the practice's origins and enthusiastic to participate in treatments and body purification procedures (Subathra, Kumar & Ramachandran, 2019). Interestingly, all of India's various agroclimatic zones contribute to the need for medicinal plants with their region-specific species, needed for various wellness practices (Subrat et al., 2020).

## **1.2 Wellness Tourism in India**

As far as the Indian scenario is concerned this has constituted a new niche for wellness tourism in India (Tuzunkan, 2018). It attracts tourists worldwide for Indigenous or traditional wellness activities (Bowers & Cheer, 2017) like Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani, Naturopathy, Meditation, and Yoga (Sneha, 2018). Moreover, the alluring nature of India soothes the eye and mind, and its health system draws a large number of tourists every year (Dixit & Sheela, 2016). And the most amazing fact is India has successfully attained 12<sup>th</sup> rank amongst the top 20 wellness tourism markets (Global Wellness Institute, 2023). As stated by the Ministry of Tourism report (2019-20), India attained 23<sup>rd</sup> rank in the World and 10.93 million international tourist arrivals out of which 6.4% of tourists visited as medical and wellness tourists (Ministry of Tourism, 2020). India is like heaven for medical tourists as it provides high-quality treatment with food and lodging facilities and marketing and sightseeing excursions at a low price (Dawn & Pal, 2011). Moreover, India is a paradise for wellness tourism (Mishra & Panda, 2021). Wellness services and products originated in India; however, it is still lagging far behind other developed or even developing nations (Jammu, 2016). Wellness service centres have already been established in numerous nations around the world, and the trade of wellness products and services to the world market is expanding at an ever-increasing rate. Even so, a majority of international visitors are enthusiastic to learn about the practice's origins in order to receive treatments and undergo body detoxification procedures (Subathra, Kumar & Ramachandran, 2019). Indigenous or traditional wellness activities like Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani, Meditation, Naturopathy, and Yoga provide uniqueness (Sneha,

2018). Since ancient times India has been found an utmost destination for wellness tourism as it provides yoga, Ayurveda, and meditation and also spiritual and healing practices (Manhas, Charak & Sharma, 2019).

In order for wellness tourism to expand successfully in a location, it is necessary to possess a number of key characteristics (Dada et al., 2023). Although most Indian destinations provide wellness facilities, some important destinations include Kerala, a popular destination that offers 'Ayurveda'. It involves one of the popular indigenous traditional healing practices and is a perfect destination for Ayurveda therapy as well as mind and body rejuvenation (Bandyopadhyay & Nair, 2019). Goa is a holistic living destination that offers a relaxing environment for yoga and meditation (Goyal & Taneja, 2022). Rajasthan, with its heritage living and spas, is one of India's most well-known destinations for wellness tourism (Singh & Dhakne, 2021). In the context of the overall concept, the Himalayas, which encompasses tropical, subtropical, temperate, alpine, and sub-alpine regions, have a diverse range of medicinal plants. This is consistent with the proponent of Ayurveda's statement in the Charak Samhita, "Aushadhinam parabhumi himwan shaila sattana," which means "the Himalayas are a storehouse of medicinal wealth." Even though the Himalayas are known as a centre of spirituality, they can assist tourists in a variety of ways (Singh, 2004). They provide a natural environment for relaxation. The Himalayan stone has special rejuvenation qualities and healing properties, and it is good for the nervous system and brain, which helps the tourist get away from the gluttony and hurry and busy life of modern cities (Manhas & Kour, 2014). Tourists prefer cities like Rishikesh (Uttarakhand) for meditation and yoga practices as it is known as the 'Yoga capital of the World' (Sinha et al., 2021). In contrast, Himachal Pradesh's forests, located in the central Himalayas, are believed to be the birthplace of ayurveda. They are renowned for meeting a sizable portion of India's medicinal plant demands, accounting for approximately 80% of all ayurvedic medications (Aryal 1993; Mushtaq et al., 2016).

Himachal Pradesh, on the other hand, offers tourists a tranquil environment where they can practice yoga and meditation (Viassone, 2012). Considering this, there

is a requirement for understanding the wellness tourism approaches and potentiality to motivate tourists towards Himachal Pradesh.

### **1.3 Wellness Tourism in Himachal Pradesh**

Tourism activities in Himachal Pradesh were prohibited till the 19<sup>th</sup> century and only counted destinations around the hills (some pilgrimage and spiritual destinations) were allowed at that time (Gardner et al., 2002). After the announcement of Shimla as the summer capital of India by the British Government tourism, this state flourished and never stopped. Moreover, during the mid-80s and 90s, the tourism sector was boosted fully. Tourism of under-explored places developed and more initiatives were taken to develop infrastructure and other facilities after Shimla was declared “A Destination for all Seasons and all Reasons” (Department of Civil Aviation & Tourism, 2019). The report from the Himachal Pradesh State Tourism Survey for the period of April 2011 to March 2012 evidenced that, Shimla, Kullu Valley in Kullu, Manali in Kullu, Dharmshala in Kangra and Chamba are the top International and national tourist arrival destinations in Himachal Pradesh. As stated in the India Tourism Statistics-2022, a total of 5,637,202 numbers of both domestic and foreign tourists visited between 2020-21 (Ministry of Tourism Government of India, 2022). There is an excellent scope for spas, health resorts, wellness centres, etc. all over the state (ACNielsen ORG-MARG, 2012).

Tourism Policy for 2019 for Himachal Pradesh (Department of Tourism & Civil Aviation Government of Himachal Pradesh, 2019) has also considered the concept of wellness tourism development in its promotional agenda (Fig 1.1). Adding to this Respected Prime minister of India has announced Himachal Pradesh has announced it as a destination for 'Jeevan Suraksha' because of its potential environment, modern health facilities, and herbs (Economic Times, 2022).

**Figure 1.1: Promotional Themes of Himachal Pradesh**



(Source: Department of Tourism & Civil Aviation Government of Himachal Pradesh, 2019. Retrieved from: <https://himachaltourism.gov.in/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Himachal-Pradesh-Tourism-Policy-2019.pdf>)

In this regard the wellness tourism in India has been identified and recognized with wellness retreat centres (Meditation, Yoga and Ayurveda retreats) (Global Wellness Institute, 2018) (figure 1.2). And the wellness retreat centres in Himachal Pradesh include different Indian therapy namely; yoga, Ayurveda, meditation, sarvanka abhyanga (general rejuvenation therapy), Shiro Dhara (supposed to be third eye-opener), kizhi (herbal bun therapy), Kati vasthi, herbal steam bath, etc. (ACNielsen ORG-MARG, 2012).

**Figure 1.2: Destinations and Their Unique Wellness Offerings**



Source: Global Wellness Institute, *Global Wellness Tourism Economy*, November 2018



(Source: Global Wellness Institute (2018). Retrieved from: <https://globalwellnessinstitute.org/what-is-wellness/what-is-wellness-tourism/>)

### 1.4 Understanding Wellness Retreat Centres and Its Offering System

According to Meikassandra, Prabawa and Mertha (2020), yoga and meditation are the physical and mental activities offered at wellness retreats to enable individuals to achieve balance in their body, mind, and spirit and improve their quality of life. Ayurvedic centres, hotels, cruises, spa resorts, spiritual retreats, wellness retreats (meditation retreats and yoga retreats) and wellness centres are prime locations for wellness tourism in India (Manhas, Charak & Sharma, 2019). Besides, wellness retreats or retreat centres are gaining popularity nowadays (Norman & Pokorny, 2017). Moreover, the term "retreat" is predominantly associated with religious groups, where members of the groups travel to particular locations operated by specific criteria for a period of time deliberately designed to reunite one's belief or faith (Kelly, 2012). Furthermore, retreats in the context of wellness tourism are typically special venues where visitors or tourists can stay and participate in a program of activities aimed at maintaining their body, mind, and spiritual well-being and rejuvenation (Thal, Smith

& George, 2021). This gives visitors or tourists a chance to regain good health, either alone or in a group (Ardell, 1977). Additionally, the wellness retreats are geographically situated in pleasant surroundings, where physical and social environments are merged with different points of view to form a setting that could facilitate human healing (Moreno-González et al., 2020). Yoga and meditation retreat centres also offer a healthy lifestyle, unique services (Gordon, 2022), natural settings, and organic food (Schedneck, 2021). In general, retreat centres are placed in silent and pleasant places and they are found near mountains, oceans, and fountains or it may be called close to the natural settings or calm and peaceful environment (Kelly, 2010). Activities such as meditation, sessions with a spiritual mentor/guide, walking in the natural environment, spending time in silence and doing some creative work, educate about culture provide peace to the soul. Furthermore, taking part in a seven-day Vipassana meditation retreat shrinks the ego, changes one's self-concept, reduces stress, and provides enlightenment (Ashton, 2018).

### **1.5 Profiles of Retreat Visitors/Tourists**

Retreat visitors are categorized as special interest tourists or visitors who have a spiritual interest, are willing to practice yoga and meditation, and spend one night or more at the retreat centre to rejuvenate the body, mind, and spirit (Heintzman, 2013). They are willing to reside in tranquil and pleasant surroundings and desire rest, relaxation, personal growth, or transcendental pursuits (Kelly, 2012). Voigt, Brown and Howat (2011) acknowledged that spiritual retreat visitors belong to a different profile and they desire to meet and interact with the same kind of people and want to experience beyond the normal or physical level through spiritual and psychological alternation. They want to relax, be free from stress and fatigue, balance their own life, do exercise or yoga, stop overeating and unhealthy eating and control negative thinking or overthinking, meditate in a natural and peaceful environment, and also wanted to improve their physical, spiritual and mental condition. These above spiritual retreat tourists are also known as Yoga tourists, Spiritual tourists, Meditation tourists, new age tourists, or religious tourists (Buzinde, 2020). Furthermore, this kind of tourism is performed by spiritual retreat tourists who are internally motivated and

participate in both religious and non-religious activities in natural and green surroundings (Ashton, 2018).

### 1.6 Need of this Research

As far as the various renowned destinations in India are concerned like Uttarakhand, authorities have continuously been marketing the destination for wellness and health (See fig. 1.3) on numerous platforms and even proposed the developmental strategy for the promotion of health and wellness tourism in the state in Uttarakhand Tourism Policy, 2030 (Uttarakhand Tourism Government, 2023). Department of Kerala Tourism, Government of Kerala has been continuously marketing the tourists for health and wellness tourism to their state on their website and every possible platform like youtube, facebook, etc (fig. 1.4 and 1.5). And similar efforts and practices are visible with the Department of Rajasthan Tourism, Government of Rajasthan (fig. 1.6 and 1.7).

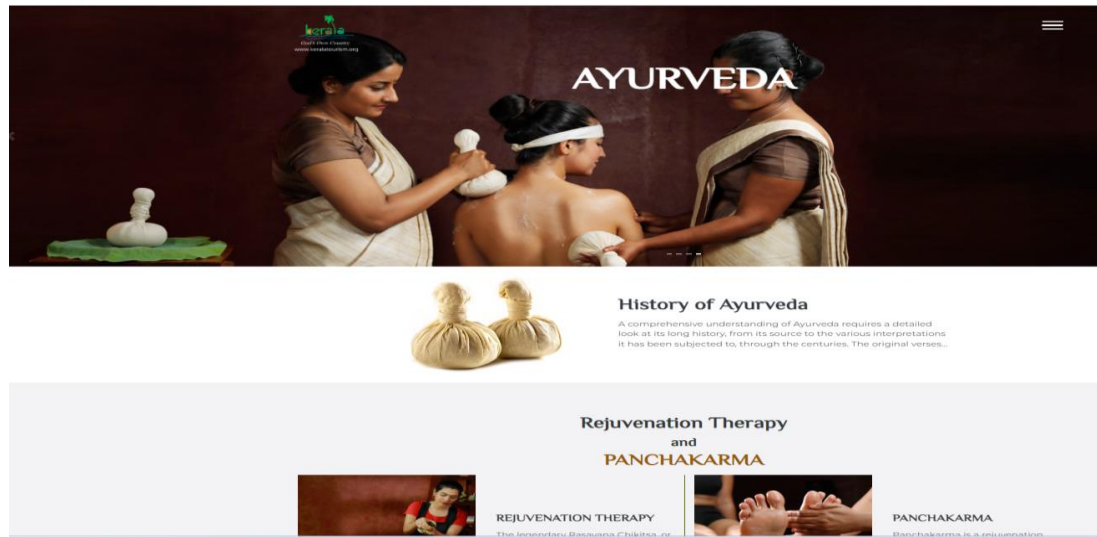
**Figure 1.3: Youtube Advertisement of Wellness in Uttarakhand by Uttarakhand Tourism**



(Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=72m3FyyOsQ4>)

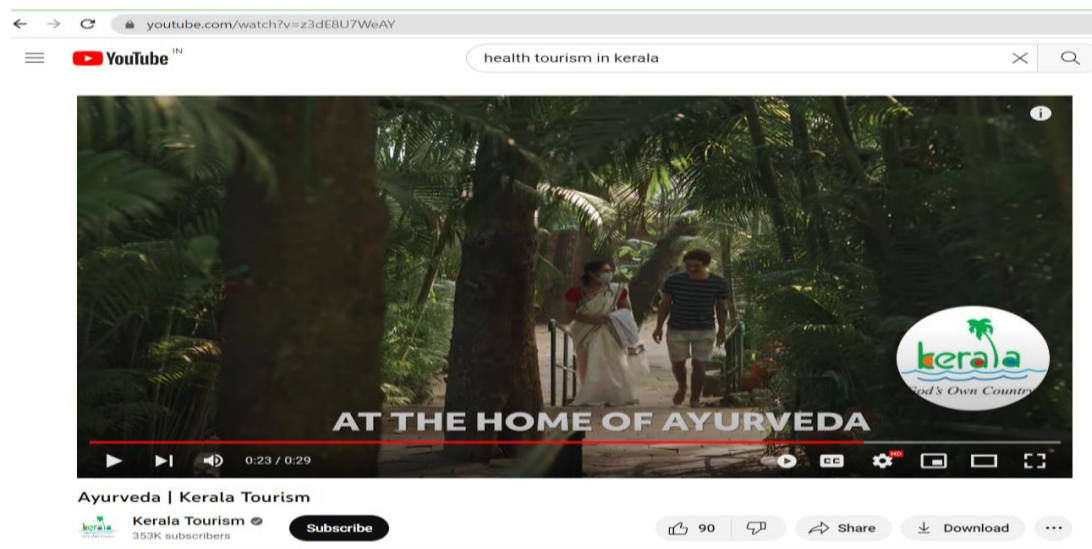


**Figure 1.4 Advertisement of Ayurveda on Official Website of Department of Tourism, Government of Kerala**



(Source: <https://www.keralatourism.org/ayurveda>)

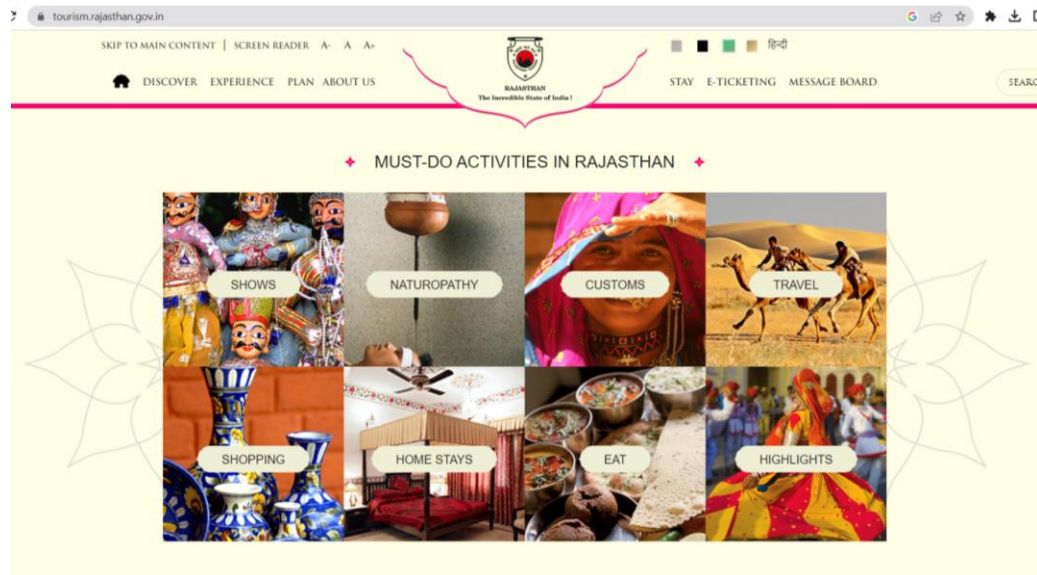
**Figure 1.5: You tube Advertisement of Ayurvedic treatments by Kerala Tourism**



(Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z3dE8U7WeAY>)

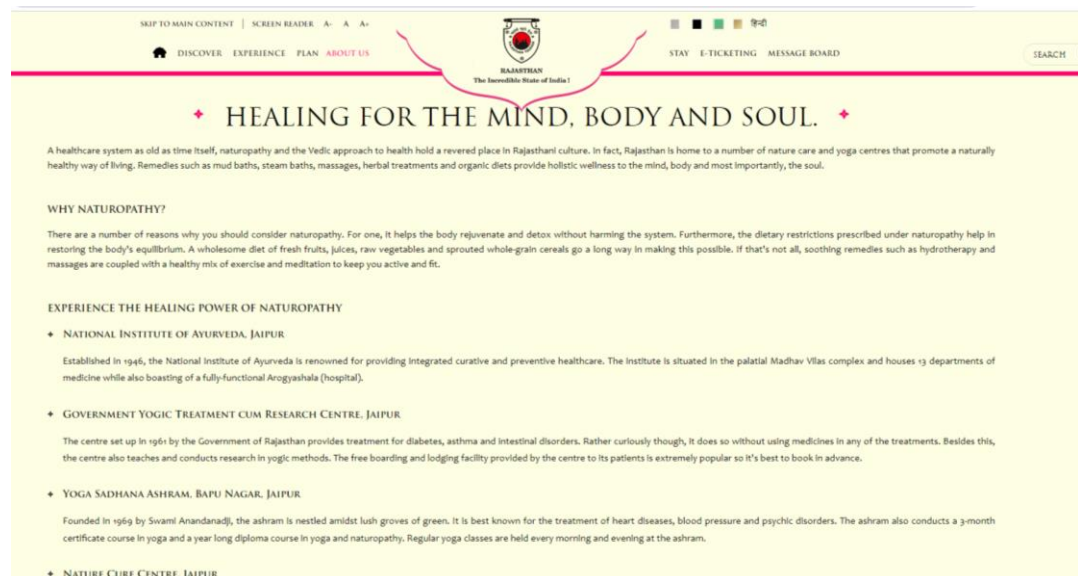


**Figure 1.6: Promotion of naturopathy as a travel activity by Official Website of Department of Tourism, Government of Rajasthan**



(Source: <https://www.tourism.rajasthan.gov.in/>)

**Figure 1.7: e-Information of naturopathy as a travel activity by Official Website of Department of Tourism, Government of Rajasthan**



(Source: <https://www.tourism.rajasthan.gov.in/content/rajasthan-tourism/en/naturopathy.html>)

Department of Tourism & Civil Aviation, Government of Himachal Pradesh in Himachal Pradesh Tourism Policy, 2019, has considered wellness retreat centres as significant source of wellness tourism in Himachal Pradesh. Ayurveda spas, Yoga retreats, meditation retreats, and wellness centres of Himachal Pradesh are surrounded by a natural and pleasant atmosphere, and these centres are mainly situated in Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh (Himachal Pradesh Tourism Policy, 2019, p.14), and the most visited centres are located in Dharamsala, Bhagsu, McLeod Ganj, Dharmakot (Singh, 2019) and Palampur (DeFelice,2018) destinations.

**Table 1.3: Table Highlighting the Potential Destination for Various Themes**



*Table 1: Theme wise performance of districts and potential areas*

S.No.	THEME	EXISTING WELL PERFORMING DISTRICTS	POTENTIAL DISTRICTS
1	Eco Tourism	Lahaul-Spiti	Kinnaur, Kangra, Chamba, Mandi ( Janjehli, Barot Valley), Kullu, Shimla (Chansal)
2	Agro/Organic Tourism	Chamba, Shimla, Kinnaur	Sirmour (Rajgarh),Mandi (Karsog Valley), Bilaspur (Ghumarwin), Lahaul-Spiti (Spiti), Chamba and Kullu
3	Snow Tourism	Kullu	Shimla (Narkanda and Chanshal), Kinnaur, Lahaul-Spiti, Chamba
4	Lake Tourism	Lahaul-Spiti, Kangra	Chamba, Mandi, Bilaspur,Una
5	Adventure	Kullu, Chamba, Lahaul-Spiti	Kinnaur, Mandi, Sirmour, Kangra and Shimla
6	Pilgrimage	Promotion and Marketing through Religious Circuits in all districts of HP	
7	Cultural & Heritage	Kullu, Shimla, Kangra, Lahaul Spiti	Chamba, Sirmour (Nahan), Kinnaur, Mandi and Hamirpur
8	Health & Wellness	Kangra	Solan (Chail), Kullu, Kinnaur, Lahaul-Spiti, Mandi
9	Film Tourism	Shimla, Kullu	Lahaul-Spiti, Kangra (Palampur), Kullu (Manali), Chamba (Priungal), Shimla (Fagu)
10	MICE Tourism	Shimla, Solan, Kangra	Solan, Kangra, Kullu & Sirmour

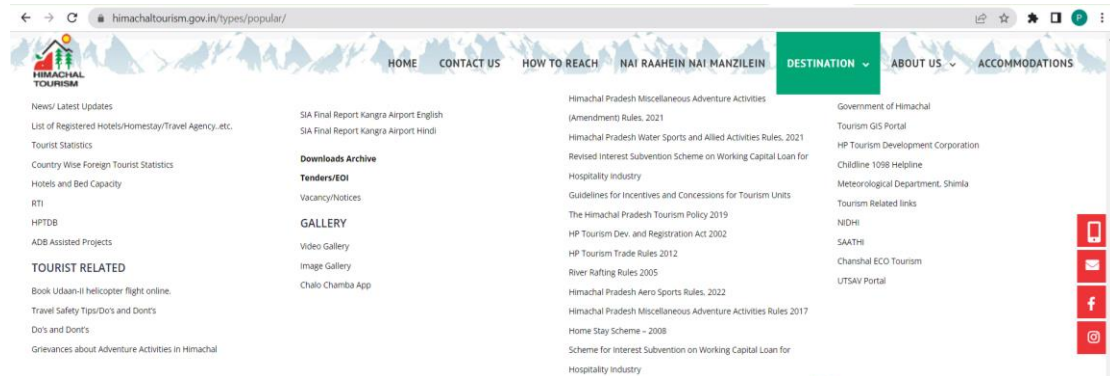
Source: Tourism Infrastructure Sustainable Development Plan for HP, 2019

(Source: Department of Tourism & Civil Aviation, Government of Himachal Pradesh Retrieved from: <https://himachaltourism.gov.in/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Himachal-Pradesh-Tourism-Policy-2019.pdf>)

But surprisingly there is lack of marketing approaches by the authority that can highlight the state as significant source for wellness tourism. There is no such advertisement or further amendments have been done in this regard. And this can be even clearly seen on the HPTDC (Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation) website and their other social media platforms (see fig. 1.8). However,

understanding the various reasons for travel is essential for travel businesses to market amongst potential travelers (Kozak, 2002; Kim,2008).

**Figure 1.8: Official website of HPTDC**



(Source: Department of Tourism & Civil Aviation, Government of Himachal Pradesh,2023. Retrieved from: <https://himachaltourism.gov.in/types/popular/>)

In addition, the successful execution of tourism marketing programs is believed to start with an understanding of travellers' motivations (Yousefi & Marzuki, 2015). "That's because a tourism paradigm is perpetually associated with individuals and their nature, investigating the reasons why individuals travel and what they want to enjoy is a complicated proposition" (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). However, the promotion of a healthy lifestyle and its contribution to the global economy make wellness tourism a prominent research area in tourism studies (Romanova et al., 2015; Cassens et al., 2012). "Understanding both push and pull factors can assist destinations to satisfy the needs of specific travellers from various markets" (Mohammad & Som, 2010). Moreover, understanding the driving factors behind tourists' travel decisions is essential for forecasting future travel trends and empowering destination marketers to create and implement successful marketing plans. Utilizing a destination's push and pull factors to its advantage gives the travel industry a competitive edge (Jang et al., 2009). Consequently, a destination can profit by using the right amalgam of push and pull factors to draw in and keep tourists.

According to this viewpoint, travel motivation and involvement are crucial factors in comprehending students' decisions and personal significance to travel to

particular travel destinations for pleasure or vacation (Josiam, Smeaton, & Clements, 1999). While it is important to thoroughly examine both of these factors of travellers' psychology in order to encourage travel, there is a lack of data on a scientific model that incorporates these aspects and other relevant factors (such as satisfaction and revisit intentions) in order to more accurately predict students' demand for travel. Accordingly, tourist motivation and overall satisfaction have been considered as significant determinant of tourist behavioral intentions future behavior (Bayih & Singh 2020).

Furthermore, the expansion of wellness tourism was influenced by the quest for a high standard of living (quality of life) (Deesilatham, 2018). In recent health-related studies, researchers have paid greater attention to the QOL (Ferreira et al., 2021; Park et al., 2021; Zhang & Ma, 2020; Graziani & Tsakos, 2020; Haraldstad et al., 2019), and best interpreted as an individual's perception of well-being, whether happy or unhappy with life, satisfaction or dissatisfaction with life, and the absence of feelings of depression and anxiety (Eslami et al., 2019; Valikhani et al., 2019). Furthermore, satisfaction and dissatisfaction are two of the strongest effective psychological consequences of a tourism experience (Luo et al., 2018), and the tourist's motivation influences the tourism experience (Suhartanto, 2020). As a result, this research is needed to identify the factors that influence tourists' motivation to visit wellness retreats (Kessler et al., 2020). Comprehend the impact of travel motivation on the wellness tourism experience, as well as the additional psychological impact of experience on tourist satisfaction. Finally, reveal how a tourist's life satisfaction influences a tourist's revisit intention, as well as how the mediating role of quality-of-life influences a tourist's revisit intentions.

The direct and indirect links between motivations, satisfactions, and visitor revisit intentions are therefore not widely agreed upon in the tourism literature (Huang and Hsu, 2009). The current research was motivated by the previously contradictory findings of previous studies and the lack of structural investigations on the aforementioned components/determinants in the perspectives of wellness tourism. Despite the paucity of prior research on the aforementioned dimensions as well as the lack of studies on wellness retreat centres (meditation retreats and yoga retreats) in the

Himachal Pradesh region. Therefore, this research must fill this gap while also developing a conceptual model for future studies.

### **1.7 Justification of this Research**

The following are the rationales for conducting this research:

A comprehensive literature review in the area of wellness tourism has become clear that, like wellness travel, wellness is a multifaceted phenomenon that encompasses spiritual, mental, emotional, environmental, and social well-being. This includes a wide range of pursuits and activities, such as meditation, spas, beauty treatments, exercise, personal development, yoga, outdoor activities, and much more (Ministry of Tourism Government of India, 2021), each of these includes wellness travel. However, there has been research on spa tourism, yoga tourism, wellness tourism (emphasizing Ayurveda), along with other topics in various countries all over the world, including some Indian locations like Kerala, Rishikesh (Uttarakhand), Goa, Tamil Nadu, and Rajasthan. In Himachal Pradesh, very few studies have been conducted on spa tourism (Manhas, Charak & Sharma, 2019; Charak, 2019). This study contributes to the study of wellness tourism (Yoga and meditation) in Himachal Pradesh.

- This study also clarifies the distinctions between various forms of wellness travel and between medical travel and wellness travel.
- The scope of wellness tourism (including yoga retreats and meditation retreats) in the Himachal Pradesh region is explored in this study.
- Helps us to understand the demographic profile and motivational factors of retreat tourists.
- This study provides new insights about psychological factors i.e., motivational factors of retreat visitors which might influence their level of satisfaction with their retreat experiences, quality of life, and revisit intention.
- This study illustrates how the quality of life defines the revisit intentions of retreat visitors of wellness retreats of Himachal Pradesh.

- The framework proposed through this study can assist service providers in comprehending the current market and exploring unrealized prospects.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Development of the Wellness Concept

The concept of wellness was first popularized by American physicians and intellectuals during the 19th century, and it had a significant influence on the advancement of modern wellness concepts (Deesilatham, 2018). According to the researcher Dunn (1959) "Wellness is a dynamic state of change in which the individual moves ahead, go up towards a higher prospect of functioning". Global wellness institute (GWI) (2018) defined, it as a good state of health where one can make choices towards healthy and satisfactory life. In addition, the World Health Organization describes wellness as “a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity” (WHO, 2022).

There are two major aspects of wellness; firstly, wellness is a proactive endeavor that involves choices, aspirations, and deeds, and secondly, it is connected to holistic health, which exceeds mere physical well-being and has a variety of divergent aspects that should work in harmony (Stará & Peterson, 2017). Due to its complex nature, it is difficult to define wellness however, the multidimensional approaches of wellness were first conceived by “Hettler” and after that, it was adopted by many other researchers and they define wellness as physical, psychological, emotional, spiritual, intellectual and social dimensions (Hettler, 1984; Adams, 1995; Corbin & Pangrazi, 2001). However, wellness mustn't be jumbled by health tourism, since wellness aims to promote balance in all aspects of general health—physical, psychological, spiritual, or biological—and to prevent illness (Koncul, 2012). Whereas, health tourism refers to activities where people travel for health and physical health-related activities like sauna, massage, cure, and medical treatments (Ashton, 2018).

The timeline for the emergence of wellness tourism has been explained in table 2.1.

**Table 2.1 Timeline of the Development of the Wellness Concept**

<i>Timeline</i>	<b>Development of Wellness Concepts</b>
<i>Ancient Antecedents of Wellness</i>	
3000-15-- BC	<b>Ayurveda</b> is believed to be the world's oldest treatment approach. It began as an oral tradition before being written down in the four sacred Hindu texts known as the Vedas. The Ayurvedic regimens originated in India and gradually spread to contemporary western countries.
3000-2000 BC	The oldest known medical system in the world, <b>Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM)</b> , was influenced by the ancient philosophies of Taoism and Buddhism. TCM does not only recognize and treats diseases but also focuses on health and well-being, and sustains lives. It is concerned with individualized treatment and therapies that include tai chi, qi gong, herbal medicine, and acupuncture. It is still used today and is becoming more prevalent in modern Western medicine.
500 BC	The first physician to emphasize illness prevention rather than just treating disease was <b>the ancient Greek physician Hippocrates</b> . He argued that environmental, dietary, and lifestyle factors all contribute to disease.
50 BC	<b>Ancient Roman medicine</b> adopted practices from Greek medicine and emphasized on prevention of disease rather than curing it. Romans believed that a person's diet and way of life had an impact on their health.
<i>19<sup>th</sup> Century Intellectual and Medical Development</i>	
1970s	German physician Samuel Christian Hahnemann created <b>homeopathy</b> in the 1790s. The main goal of



homeopathic treatment is to activate the body's natural ability to heal itself. The medications are prepared from natural substances i.e., plants, animals, and minerals.

1860s

Sebastian Kneipp, a German priest, developed the **Kneipp Cure** (1821-1897). It combines hydrotherapy with other modalities like herbal remedies, physical activity, good nutrition, and spirituality (states that a healthy mind leads to a healthy person). Also known as one of the pioneers of naturopathic medicine.

**The New Thought Movement** was a spiritual movement that emerged in the 19th century and placed a strong emphasis on the connection between spirituality and health, operating under the premise that disease has a connection to the mind. Phineas Quimby, regarded as the founder of the New Thought Movement, developed a novel theory of "mentally-aided healing" during this time.

1870s

Mary Baker Eddy founded **Christian Science** (1821-1910). She carefully considered Phineas Quimby's suggestions and put them into practice using her own conception of Jesus Christ's healing power. In 1857, she also published a book titled "Science and Health."

1880s

Swiss doctor **Maximilian Bircher-Benner** is known for developing muesli cereal. In his view, a healthy diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and nuts, along with regular physical activity and employment that promotes the coexistence of man and nature, is the key to healing.

One of the oldest health organizations in the world is presumably **the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA)**. The YMCA was first established as a Christian organization in London in the year 1844. In the middle to end of the 19th century, it began

advocating for physical fitness and sports, then spread across the entire country. The initials "mind," "body," and "spirit" are imprinted on the YMCA logo, which is still in use today.

1900- the  
1940s

During the 19th century, **naturopathy** developed in Europe, particularly in Germany. With the aid of dietary and lifestyle modifications, as well as by utilizing herbs, massage, and joint manipulation, it is a holistic healing approach that is focused on promoting health rather than treating disease.

### *20<sup>th</sup> Century Blooming of Wellness*

1950s

Jerome Irving Rodale launched **Prevention Magazine** in 1950. He was among the earliest practitioners of organic farming in the country. He started publishing prevention magazines in order to advance alternative/preventive health, which is a systematic strategy for averting illness rather than treating it.

1959s- 1960s

The wellness movement is credited with having its roots in the work of physician **Halbert L. Dunn** (1896–1975). He spent his entire career tracking health trends. In a set of 29 lectures, Dunn introduced the idea of "high-level wellness" for the first time in 1950. In this book, Dunn described wellness as “an integrated method of functioning which is oriented to maximizing the potential of which an individual is capable, within the environment where he is functioning”, which is published in the year 1961. In addition to the physical aspect of wellness, Dunn's theory also emphasized the mental and spiritual aspects.

1970s

**Dr. John W. Travis** founded the first wellness center in the world, known as "The Wellness Resource Centre," in Mill Valley, California, in 1975, after reading Dunn's writings. He emphasized the value of accepting self-responsibility for one's wellness. In 1977, he wrote and released "The Wellness

Workbook" and developed "Wellness Inventory," a 12-dimension wellness assessment tool, in 1975.

**Don Ardell**, was a Ph.D. scholar who emphasized positive health, also inspired by Dunn’s writing and published “High-Level Wellness: An Alternative to Doctors, Drugs, and Disease” in 1977. That was the best-selling book at that time and after that, he wrote other 12 books, including “14 Days to a Wellness Lifestyle” and “Die Healthy” etc.

*Late 1970s & Early 1980s*

**Workplace wellness programs** first appeared in the US with the intention of improving employee health.

*1990*

**The German Wellness Association and the European Wellness Union** were the first wellness organizations established in Europe to officially represent and promote the wellness movement.

*1990s- 2000s*

The industries of **fitness and health clubs, spas, and workplace wellness** initiatives have developed. The 1950s to 1970s saw the emergence and spread of the wellness movement, which has persisted in recent years. Because of the rise in chronic health issues and the downfall of healthcare systems, more focus has been placed on preventive approaches to health and wellbeing.

***21<sup>st</sup> Century the Tipping Point of Wellness***

*2008*

The pursuit of **Gross National Happiness** is one of the goals outlined in Bhutan's constitution, which states that "the state shall strive to promote those conditions." Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuck, the Fourth King of Bhutan, gave a briefing on the notion that the 1970s-era GDP alone could bring happiness and well-being to society. Later, in 2011, the UN General Assembly adopted "Resolution Happiness: towards a holistic approach to development" and urged member countries to emulate Bhutan in

	measuring happiness and well-being, referring to happiness as a "fundamental human goal."
2011-2018	<b>Legislation to curb obesity and diabetes</b> was constructed from 2011-2018 all over the world. To decrease skyrocketing obesity and diabetes, most nations formed new laws taxing soda and other sugary beverages.
2012	<b>World Happiness Report</b> was released by the United Nations for the first time on April 1, 2012. This report was the publication of "The United Nations Sustainable Development Solution Network" which is publishing annually since then. The report used "Gallup World Poll" Data and measured the state of happiness in 155 countries. It specifically measures the major factors that influence happiness and misery, as well as the effects these factors have on global policy.
2013	<b>Global Wellness Tourism Economy Report</b> was prepared by SRI International in agreement with the Global Spa & Wellness summit. This study examined wellness tourism and its extensive global effects. It also uncovered the spa industry's function in the wellness tourism market.
2014- 2022	<b>The Global Wellness Institute (GWI)</b> was founded in 2014 and has since published the Global Wellness Economy Monitor report, which highlights research findings as well as the burgeoning wellness market segments and their annual global expansion.

(Source: Global Spa Summit and SRI International (2010); Global Wellness Institute- <https://globalwellnessinstitute.org/what-is-wellness/history-of-wellness/>)

## **2.2 Types of Health Tourism**

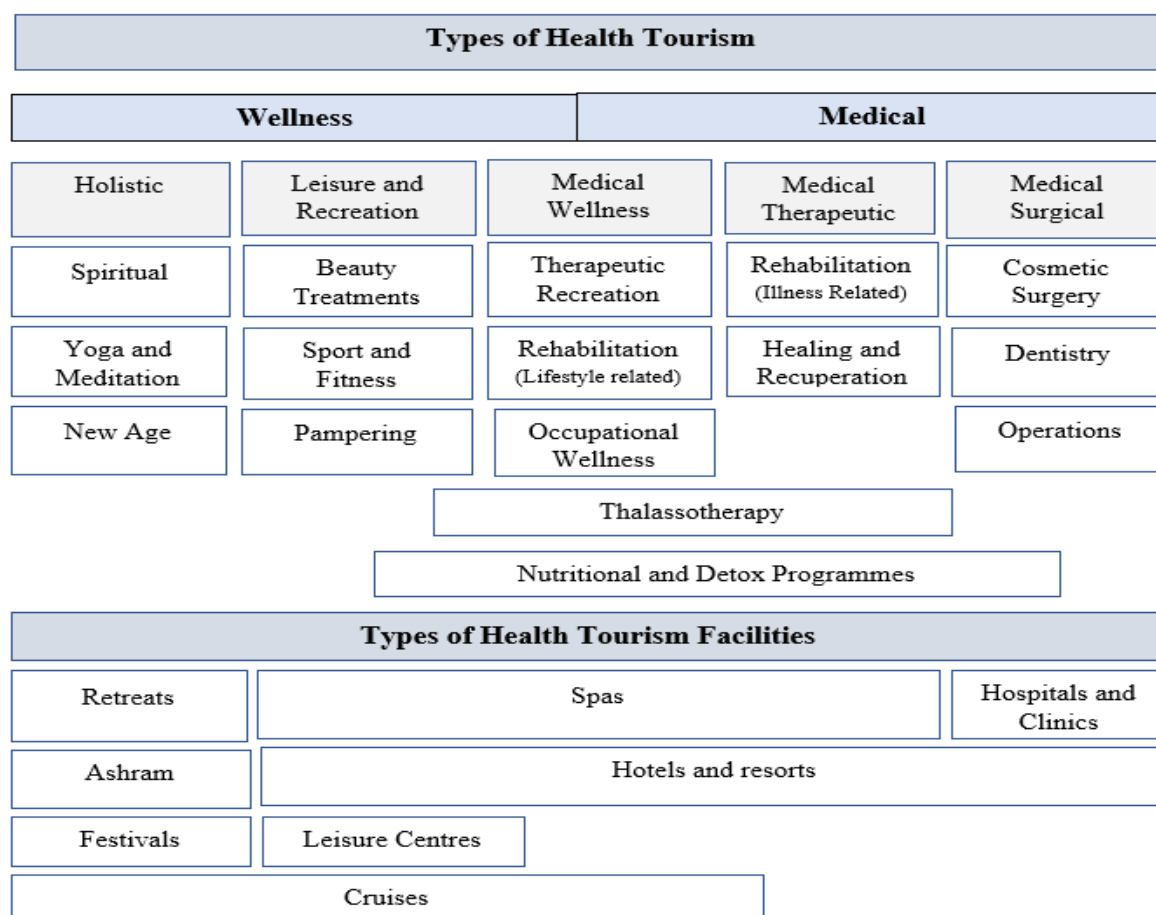
The World Tourism Organization (WTO) defined health tourism as the degree to which "an individual or a group is able to realize aspirations and satisfy needs, as well as alter or cope with the environment." (Lade et al., 2020; Smith & Puczko, 2014). However, the term "health tourism" is more comprehensive and encompasses the two subcategories of "medical tourism" and "wellness tourism" (Romanova et al., 2015). Medical tourism refers to tourists or people traveling to different countries with the primary goal of receiving treatment for an ailment, diagnosed disease, sickness, or cosmetic surgery, with a preference for low-cost care, excellent care, and higher quality service that they could not obtain at home (GWI, 2018). Conversely, wellness tourism is a special type of tourism whose principal travel motive is the promotion and maintenance of one's health and well-being and it mainly seeks to balance body, mind, and spirit (Ashton, 2018).

Furthermore, health tourism is used to describe a variety of medical and wellness products and services, including dental treatment to surgical intervention and spa services to holistic health retreats, which furthers the confusion (Yeung & Johnston, 2018). Eventually, these two sectors persuade separate roles to meet different tourist needs. The main difference between "wellness" and "illness" is somehow compatible with previous definitions and their types as most of pursuits improve overall health in certain ways (Mitzner et al., 2013). Basically, a medical tourist's primary or main purpose for travel is to cure or get treatment for immediate problems and certain illnesses (Musa et al., 2012; Hall, 2011) whereas, a wellness tourist's primary purpose for travel is to take a holiday in order to enhance their overall health and psychological wellbeing (Voigt et al., 2011). Major wellness tourism activities include yoga, thermal swimming pools, body massages, various baths, beauty treatments spa, rest and meditation, fitness, and beauty (Tuzunkan, 2018). However, major medical tourism activities involve orthopedics, cosmetic procedures, heart surgery, oral care, and others (Dawn & Pal, 2011).

According to the Global Wellness Institute (2018), the success of medical tourism is largely determined by the state of a nation's overall healthcare system, the

availability of better medical institutes, suitable or proper government rules and regulations, patient protections, the standard of training, travel restrictions, visa requirements, insurance systems, and other significant factors that influence patient experiences and treatment outcomes. Whereas, successful wellness tourism depends upon a fully divergent set of factors like business models, mindsets of tourists or consumers, industry culture, as well as the availability of staff members, additionally, it is strongly associated with relaxation, recreation, and accommodation (Yeung & Johnston, 2018).

**Figure 2.1 Types of Health Tourism**



(Source: Smith & Puczko, 2009)

### **2.3 Concept of Wellness Tourism**

Aside from the apparent lack of health issues, wellness includes being physically healthy, content, and actively pursuing behaviours, choices, and lifestyles that lead to holistic well-being (Corbin & Pangrazi, 2001; Hettler et al., 1980).

Wellness tourism, as per **Smith and Kelly (2006)**, is one of the ancient types of travel. Instead of aiming for a final destination, it is a journey toward wellness. In wellness tourism, the destination is frequently a different location where visitors can conduct self-examination free from stress and disruptions from home or daily life. In some cases, the locality also lends support to the traveller's quest for self-discovery. Although rest, relaxation, and escapism are the primary goals of tourists, it is likely true that all wellness tourists are self-aware, proactive seekers of improving well-being, health, and happiness.

**Voigt (2010)** defined wellness as a favorable assert of psychological well-being attempted to bring on by facilitating a wellness lifestyle and holding oneself responsible for one's physical and mental health.

**Kelly (2010)** mentioned that wellness tourism not only carries a diverse range of responsibilities, such as travel, accommodation, or hospitality, but also aids in maintaining one's health and personal development, reducing stress, bringing about mental pleasure, and enhancing one's quality of life. By offering yoga and meditation, wellness travel also looks after the physical health and well-being of its customers as well as their mental well-being. In this study, the researcher also explained how new types of wellness centres, yoga retreats, and destination wellness centres are quickly emerging to satisfy tourist demand and also described that hotels and resorts also offer wellness facilities to boot wellness tourism.

According to **Dimitrovski and Todorovic (2015)**, wellness is a specific condition of well-being that includes improvement of the body-mind-spirit depending on the environment or surroundings. Although older travellers and those with higher incomes are the primary target demographic for wellness tourism, younger travellers have started to be drawn to it because of their hectic schedules. Additionally, wellness

tourism refers to the exertion of individuals to maintain a healthy life by doing some activities like, mental activity, physical fitness activity, and eating a healthy diet.

In accordance with the **Global Wellness Tourism Economy Report (2018)**, wellness travel contributes to the maintenance and enhancement of holistic health, which is lacking in some other types of vacations. Wellness travel helps tourists maintain and improve their health and well-being, as they seek a healthy living, authentic experiences, relief from stress and fatigue, or to manage their poor lifestyle habits.

However, according to **Luo, Lanlung, Kim, Tang, and Song (2018)**, wellness tourism is a collection of physical pursuits that visitors partake in to enhance their psychological as well as physical well-being. Physical fitness, meditation, mental activities, yoga, beauty care, healthy nutrition, relaxation, diet, and cultural and religious education are examples of wellness tourism activities.

**Mishra and Panda (2021)** describe wellness tourism as such travel activity that promotes individuals' overall wellness, along with their body, mind, spirit, and quality of life. Furthermore, after hours of work, stress, and exhaustion, one's body wants to flee; in this case, wellness vacations are an excellent way to rejuvenate and relax the body. Essentially, wellness tourism is a vacation for people who need a break from their occupations and want to enhance his\her physical as well as mental well-being.

Along with the above-mentioned concepts, all definitions of wellness in the literature share the following recurring themes (Global Spa Summit & Sri International, 2010):

- **Wellness is multidimensional:** The concept of wellness used in literature is multifaceted. However, it is frequently used in wellness tourism for physical, spiritual, mental, occupational, environmental, social, and cultural dimensions.
- **Wellness is a holistic aspect:** Wellness emphasizes overall health rather than focusing on just one health of the individual, such as physical or mental health. It reinforces that an individual's body- mind-



spirit are all in perfect alignment because it is a broader approach and not just the absence of physical disease.

➤ **Environment's effect on people's wellbeing:** People can pursue wellness by establishing beneficial routines and habits that enhance their own well-being. The environment or circumstances in which a person lives can also have an impact on their level of personal wellness. As environmental issues garner more attention today, the environmental, cultural, outer, and worldwide features of wellness are also receiving greater attention as well.

## **2.4 Typologies of Wellness Tourism**

Health is wealth for the human being to live everyday life and it is not a thing of living life (Alonso Fernandez, 2021). A health-conscious person's desire is to live without any stress, disease/illness, or obesity (Williams, 2003), such kind of person looks for different types of therapies, spas, medical facilities, healthy diets, and other types of facilities (Kamenidou et al., 2014). Numerous tourists are still unable to understand the concise meaning of the spa industry and they are not able to engage themselves in such practices. They engaged in health rejuvenation/health-related activities, prohibition of disease, and relaxation but still, they were unable to understand the relationship that the spa and beauty industry is a branch of the wellness tourism industry (Esfandiari & Choobchian, 2020; Peris-Ortiz & Álvarez-García, 2014). Wellness destinations are expanding day by day in the tourism sector. So many spa sectors have been desperate to meet consumer needs and develop an association with traditional medical clients (Dimitrovski & Todorovic, 2015). On the contrary, many individuals place a high value on their spirituality. Because the majority of individuals believe that a greater supernatural force shapes his\her lifestyle, it is thought to be necessary for a peaceful life as well as doing so will improve one's life quality (Coppola et al., 2021). Additionally, individuals' physical and mental health is encouraged by their faith and religious beliefs (Nicolaidis & Grobler, 2017). Overall, wellness appraises as a holistic mode of travel that amalgamates spiritual health, physical health,

beauty, connection with the community, nature, religious education, and spa (Salehi-Esfahan et al., 2021).

Overall, it is found that wellness tourism is spread into three different sectors, and they are beauty Spa, lifestyle resorts, and spiritual retreats (Ashton, 2018).

#### ***2.4.1 Beauty Spa***

The term wellness is not perfect without the term beauty spa (Erfurt-Cooper & Cooper, 2009). It is a crucial sector in the wellness tourism industry (Smith & Kelly, 2006). The spa includes diverse types of treatments using water or springs and other natural resources (Charak, 2019). The spa has a long tradition in Europe that offers rehabilitation by using mineral, natural and thermal springs or water (Gómez Pérez et al., 2019). Spa service in Europe is mainly associated with the rejuvenation and healing of health (Smith & Puczkó, 2018). On the contrary in the US, spa services are mostly used for maintaining a healthy lifestyle or an easy lifestyle (Han et al., 2020). Nowadays visitors prefer spas and beauty not only for the improvement of physical health, relaxation, body, and beauty treatment, body massages, and appearance but also to make new friends and become socialize, and define a special status (Dimitrovski & Todorovic, 2015). These types of visitors mostly travel with their friends, spouse, and relatives or with family members (Voigt et al., 2011).

There are various types of spa services namely, destination spa service (Sangpikul, 2022), which helps tourists to maintain and develop healthy habits, fitness-related activities, and so on (Tabacchi, 2010). Secondly, the medical spa service is overseen by a licensed medical doctor (Huh et al., 2019). Thirdly, the Mineral spring spa service provides different water-related treatments by using thermal, mineral, or natural springs/water (Derco et al., 2020). And lastly, resort or hotel spa (Ahani et al., 2019) provides numerous spa facilities like fitness and wellness services. Thailand, China, Malaysia, Europe, and the USA are the most visited places for spa tourism (Charak, 2019).

### ***2.4.2 Lifestyle Resort***

Motivation to visit lifestyle resorts mainly includes self-transformation (Patterson & Balderas-Cejudo, 2022). Tourists usually are engaged in a series of programs/activities which are systematically designed (Voigt et al., 2010). Mainly lifestyle resorts offer healthy nutrition (Bennett et al., 2004), fitness-related seminars (Hamed, 2015), and counselling sessions about stress management and weight management (Smith & Puczkó, 2014). Generally, lifestyle resorts focus on the healthier lifestyle of tourists (Voigt et al., 2011).

### ***2.4.3 Spiritual Retreat/Retreat***

Retreats are usually centres or specific places which aim to provide a set of activities, therapies, or treatments to keep a balance at a physical, mental, and spiritual level in a natural environment. Moreover, the term holistic tourism means retreat tourism. Traditionally, the word retreat has been related to religious groups, where tourists visit religious places to be enlightened and re-energised. In the wellness tourism context, retreats can be defined as secular places where visitors can stay and take part in various activities which help to gain good health and rejuvenate and also get spiritual well-being to balance body, mind, and spirit (Kelly, 2012).

According to Nicolaides and Grobler (2017), most of the retreat centres are located near mountains, seaside, and green surroundings and they are specifically landscape based that provide various types of services like yoga, spiritual education, meditation, and healthy diet for the healthy transformation and focuses on body-mind-spirit. As the word retreat means rest, refuge, and respite, retreat centres provide therapies, yoga classes, meditation classes, treatments, and dietary programs to improve the mental, spiritual as well as physical health of visitors (Patterson & Balderas-Cejudo, 2022).

## **2.5 Theories and Approaches Related**

### **2.5.1 Travel Motivation**

Motivation is the innate stance of a person or traveller that enables them to take specific actions in order to satisfy their inner desires (Velayuthan et al., 2019; Wendri et al., 2019). It is considered a continuous process of internal psychological elements i.e., needs and wants which cause tension or instability within individuals (Crompton & McKay, 1997). According to Dann (1981), “Tourism motivation is a significant mental condition that effectively equips an individual or group of individuals to travel and consequently can be interpreted by others as a valid explanation for such a decision”.

Additionally, several researchers defined motivation as, the internal desire of a person which implies action (Baniya & Paudel, 2016; Hudson, 2008). Hsu, Tsai and Wu (2009) postulated that travel motivations are the inner drives that compel someone to travel and take a vacation in order to find happiness, relieve tension and fatigue, get close to nature and a tranquil atmosphere, take in breath-taking scenery, and acquire knowledge. Damijanac (2021), argues that travel motivations are the internal propel of an individual for taking an action to fulfill one’s desires and needs. It is believed as one of the important variables to describe the travel behaviour of tourists/visitors. It helps to understand why an individual wanted to do something but not others (Yousefi & Marzuki, 2012). Furthermore, it is considered crucial to have knowledge about tourists’ motivation and its relation with the selection of a destination for forecasting the future travel behaviour of tourists (Jang & Cai, 2002). Knowing the travel motivation of tourists helps to better understand tourists’ choices, needs, desires, and selections. Understanding tourist behaviour is also vital for selecting the tourist desired destination (Chan & Baum, 2007). However, tourist motivation differs from destination to destination, according to tourists’ socio-demographic characteristics (Pereira et al., 2019), from person to person, and also from one country to another (Yuan & McDonald, 1990). It is also considered a beginning point for understanding tourist attitudes. (Khuong & Ha, 2014). Some major travel motivational factors of tourists include;

novelty, escape, self-realization, natural and physical splendour, safety (Pereira et al., 2019), and peaceful environment (Ashton, 2018).

Nevertheless, several researchers have approached tourists' motivation in a variety of ways (Dann, 1981), for instance, psychometric and allocentric (Plog, 1974), push and pull (Dann, 1977), escape and seeking (Ross & Iso-Ahola, 1991) and travel career pattern (Pearce & Lee, 2005). However, push and pull motivations are well understood in the tourism industry (Lim et al., 2016; Chan & Baum, 2007; Crompton, 1979; Dann 1977). Push motivation, also known as psychological forces (Khuong & Ha, 2014) or intrinsic motivation (Kim et al., 2020), is the socio-psychological needs and internal desire of the tourist for making a decision to travel to a destination (Yousefi & Marzuki, 2012) while, pull motivation, also known as destination factors (Joseph et al., 2022) or extrinsic motivation (Moura et al., 2023; Kim et al., 2020), are the outer motivations of tourist to select a specific destination (Chan & Baum, 2007), and that comprises both tangible and intangible resources of that particular destination which pulls individual towards it (Hsu et al., 2009). In short, push motivations are the internal feelings of an individual that desires to vacation, whereas, pull motivations are the expressions to choose a vacation spot (Kanagaraj & Bindu, 2013). However, push motivational factors are considered the first and foremost step and important tool to explain the need and desire for travel and also useful to understand tourists' attributes (Crompton, 1979). According to Haldar (2021), exploration of nature (Heung et al., 2001), cultural experience (Jonsson & Devonish, 2008; Kozak, 2002), prestige and social status (Crompton, 1979), escape (Azman & Chan, 2010), pleasure-seeking, achievement/ self-reward (Yoon & Uysal, 2005), physical activities (Awaritefe, 2004), self-actualization and cultural education (Hallab, 2006), away from home/ isolation and nostalgia (Konu & Laukkanen, 2009), relaxation/ physiological-tension reducing and healthy-living (Mak et al., 2009) are some of the tourists' push travel motivations. On the other hand, facilitation of social interaction, heritage, and culture (Crompton, 1979), outdoor nature/resources/ rural/inexpensive areas, different cultures (Madden et al., 2016), nightlife, and local cuisine (Yoon & Uysal, 2005), cleanness /hygiene (Amato, 2016) and the environment and health and fitness (Hallab, 2006) are some of the pull travel motivations.

Furthermore, push and pull motivation theory is also utilized to scrutinize wellness tourists' overall motivation (Kessler et al., 2020; Hashim et al., 2019; Mueller & Kaufmann, 2001). The term "push" and "pull" motivation factors in the wellness tourism context, explain how tourists are pushed to travel by their internal motivations and drawn into a trip by the attraction of the desired location (Halder, 2021). Though some researchers utilized both pull and push motives in their studies (Azman & Chan, 2010; Aleksijevits, 2019), others solely examined push motivations (Kessler et al., 2020; Konu & Laukkanen, 2009).

Krishnamoorthy and Venkatesh (2015), investigated the pull and push factors that influence international tourists' decisions to visit India for wellness tourism. The study revealed that tourists travel to India to meet their psychological prerequisites (Io, 2021), like rest, relaxation, and escape (push motivation), while destination features or services offered by wellness centres act as a pull factor in that direction (pull motivation). It was also noted that travellers considered wellness services to be a significant pull factor while being pushed by a desire to experience the attributes of the destination, engage with locals, unwind, and escape daily routine life.

Furthermore, Kessler, Lee, and Whittingham (2020) looked at the factors that motivate wellness tourists to travel for wellness vacations by analyzing qualitative data from respondents who went on wellness vacations in 2019, they validated a wellness tourist motivation scale by testing twenty-eight statements of motivation with 2,267 survey participants, 93 percent of whom were from North America. The findings provide a broad understanding of the motivations of North American-based wellness tourism visitors, which comprise seven motivational dimensions: wholesome eating, movement and fitness, mindfulness practice, nature and disconnect, rest and relaxation, wellness education, and self-care.

According to Blesic, Kovacic, Syromiatnikova and Freinkina (2019), wellness tourists are not homogeneous and vary in terms of sociodemographic profile and travel behaviour. Tourists were motivated to participate in wellness activities for three reasons: recreation, relaxation, and mental therapy. Additionally, it has been revealed that age and gender are significant factors in classifying them based on their motivation

for visiting wellness centres. However, Chen, Liu and Chang (2013) encountered eight pull motivators, such as environments, health promotion techniques, personnel services, exposure to distinctive tourist resources, healthy eating, relaxation, social activities, and mental learning, that attract tourists to wellness destinations. The other pull-motivating factors include First, "natural settings" (Pesonen & Komppula, 2010) is a motivating variable that takes into account how natural settings provide people the chance to appreciate nature, feel at peace, and promote spiritual healing throughout nature. Second, "nature-based activity" takes into account how activities inspired by nature make people feel more connected to the natural world and wholesome for their well-being and soul (Clark-Kennedy & Cohen, 2017). Thirdly, "local culture" (Viet et al., 2020) refers to how this location enhances tourists' interaction with the local population and facilitates experiencing diverse local cultures as well as their traditional foods. The fourth concept is "peaceful atmosphere" (Heung & Kucukusta, 2013), which includes how silence and a tranquil environment help people understand themselves. Fifth, the "authenticity experience" (Chen et al., 2013) is a motivational factor that takes into account how retreat centres give visitors unique experiences in addition to more in-depth yoga and meditation. Sixth, "historical relevance" (Baniya & Paudel, 2016) provides the traveller with real historical meaning, which makes them believe that the location is a spiritual one. Last but not least, "far from customary areas," which integrates how beneficial it is to live away from one's regular home and how this location gives one the feeling of being able to do anything in life (Ashton, 2018).

Recently, Zailani, Albattat, Nazri and Zuraimi (2021) conducted research on the motivational factors of 400 local tourists toward health and wellness tourism in Malaysia. The findings from this research showed that motivational factors for wellness tourists include relief and relaxation, health and beauty, escape, and self-development (push motivation), with escape serving as the main driver of tourists to Malaysia. Dimitrovski and Todorović (2015) studied 165 wellness tourists' motivations in Serbia and discovered six push factors for motivation, including "rejuvenation," "socialization," "hedonism," "obsession with health and beauty," "escape from routine," and "relaxation." Additionally, it was reported that wellness tourists' motivations vary by age, gender, earning potential, quest, and ambition. Additionally, the push

motivational factors comprise, “escape” (Chan & Baum, 2007), which incorporates how a retreat centre gives the feeling of being away from daily life and how that destination gives a lively life experience that tourists desire. It also includes how tourists forget all the anxiety in daily routine life after visiting a retreat centre. "Relaxation" (Chen et al., 2016) is another motivating factor that takes into account how visitors feel energized or rejuvenated, how they reduce stress and weariness, and how they regenerate themselves after visiting a retreat centre. Further, Kumar (2019), identified "transcendence" as another motivation that explains how retreat centres give visitors time and space for reflection, how a location offers something special to help visitors learn more about their inner selves and gain a deeper understanding of themselves, and how a location aids visitors in their quest to find the meaning of life (Rahmani & Carr, 2022). On the other hand, "novelty", includes how visitors gain new experiences in a new setting and satisfy their personal interests as well as how they interact with other visitors, discover people from various cultures, and learn about new traditions. The motivational factor also includes "physical health and attractiveness" (Fu et al., 2015), which defines how the retreat centre encourages self-activity to improve physical appeal as well as health and well-being. Petroman (2021), added "self-esteem" to this list which is concerned with practices available in retreat centres for increasing social status and recovery from negativity and attainment of wide self-confidence (Meera & Vinodan, 2019).

In most of the earlier studies, push motivation or intrinsic motivation was utilized to gauge wellness tourists' travel preferences. Travelers visit wellness destinations to improve their state of physical, psychological, and spiritual well-being as well as life quality, which they choose for themselves before embarking on holidays. In line with earlier research, this study also only considered the push or intrinsic motivations of retreat visitors or wellness tourists.

### **2.5.2 Experience**

The word “Experience” can be defined as an action or observation and special participation in an event, a psychological, or emotional entertainment/ learning outcome (Hosany, 2012; Ek et al., 2008). It generally depends upon the individual’s



perception and feelings (Luo et al., 2018). On the other hand, experience is a process in which individuals are influenced by their environment, objects or aspects they come into contact with, and events that happen to them (Svabo et al., 2013). It is also a psychological journey that leaves behind memories of special enjoyable activities that people have engaged in and from which they have gained more knowledge (Sundbo & Hagedorn-Rasmussen, 2008).

In the tourism context, the tourist experience is a set of activities in which tourists engage on their own that includes unforgettable and pleasurable places which allow tourist to create their unique travel experiences (Ramos et al., 2016). Tourists' real experience depends upon what they see, feel, obtain and perceive at the destination (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). As tourism experience is subjective in nature, it is explained by specific tourists engaging in touristic activities and services in a specific destination to experience it (Jennings, 2006). Mainly, the tourist experience comprises everything a tourist experiences while traveling to a destination (Dillette et al., 2019). This is comprised of tourist perception, attitude, behaviour, cognition, and emotions, and these are either expressed or implicated (Oh et al., 2007). According to Jurowski (2009), the tourism experience is the tourist's mental and psychological gratification derived from participation in tourism activities and it is also regarded as the quintessence of tourism and also an important factor of travel (Pearce, 2013). Moreover, it is crucial to understand the nature of the tourism experience for effective management of tourism destinations (Stienmetz et al., 2021).

According to Prebensen, Woo, Chen and Uysal (2012), the tourism experience is divided into three phases, those includes the pre-trip experience (Joseph et al., 2022), the route trip experience (Richardson & Insch, 2021), and the destination on-site experiences (Qian et al., 2021). These phases are based on the motivations for why tourists choose to travel to a certain destination (Kim et al., 2020). Stamboulis and Skayannis (2003) defined "the destination on-site experience" as an interaction between the tourist and the destination that involves active participation and engagement with the destination and is interconnected to the tourists' emotional, physical, social, and cognitive aspects (Cutler & Carmichael, 2010). To improve the quality of their experiences, most travellers desired to emphasize the on-site attractions at the

destination (Prebensen & Foss, 2011). However, the pre-trip and en-route trip experience phase i.e., travel to the destination and return travel (Jennings & Weiler, 2006) are frequently viewed as a key path for improving the perceived quality of the on-site experience of the tourist (Prebensen et al., 2012).

However, existing research indicated that understanding the nature of tourism as well entire trip, depends on having extraordinary or unforgettable experiences (Cohen, 1979; Stienmetz et al., 2021). It has been observed that tourists' memories are the only thing that influences their experiences (Larsen, 2007). Jurowski (2009) proposed four dimensions of tourism experience: escape, extremity, compensation, and cognition. Furthermore, Schmitt (1999) concluded that the tourism experience includes five dimensions: sensory experience, thinking experience, emotional experience, operational experience, and related experience.

In contrast to mainstream tourism experiences, wellness tourism experiences are primarily concerned with promoting or improving individual's physical as well as psychological health and well-being (He et al., 2021). It also contributes to the spiritual health of tourists and promotes holistic health (Dillette et al., 2021). Additionally, the experiences one has while travelling for wellness tourism are classified as either hedonic or eudemonic experiences, depending on whether they portray one's actions toward "pleasure and happiness" or deeper meaning (Dillette et al., 2021). According to Voigt, Howat, and Brown (2010), the three distinct categories of wellness visitors or tourists, including those who visit beauty spas, lifestyle resorts, and spiritual retreats, exhibits both hedonic and eudemonic experiences (Dillette et al., 2019). Visitors to beauty spas have wholly hedonic outputs (Smith, 2021), visitors to spiritual retreats have entirely eudemonic outputs (Heintzman 2013), and visitors to lifestyle resorts are found largely eudemonic (Bloch, 2021).

Moreover, Pine and Gilmore (1998) asserted that the wellness tourism experience encompasses four sub-dimensions that include educational, entertainment, esthetic, and escapist experience (Xu et al., 2018; Pine et al., 1999). Especially, educational experience refers to tourists' active engagement in the wellness destination to increase one's knowledge and abilities (He et al., 2021). It comes under the absorption

category since it makes reference to “occupying a person’s attention by bringing the experience into the mind” (Pine et al., 1999). Entertainment experience again comes under the absorption category because tourists have a high concentration on attractive destinations/ events (Oh et al., 2007) and it is passive behaviour of tourists as they enjoy moments by seeing them without direct participation in the events (Pine et al., 1999). Esthetic experience refers to passive participation in the physical environment which surrounds them and tourists observe, listen, and enjoy it which may subsequently enhance their spiritual state of life (He et al., 2021). Lastly, in the escapist experience, tourists need to have an ardent attitude towards travel and enjoy life in a different environment. It includes the active participation of tourists and they escape from the boredom of everyday life to discover novelty and physical and mental relaxation (Hwang & Lee, 2019; Hwang & Hyun, 2016).

Fu, Tanyatanaboon and Lehto (2015) conducted research to comprehend the transforming visitor experience at retreat centres and to emphasize the feature that facilitates the transformations. It was revealed that factors such as tourists' pre-trip attitudes, their participation in retreat activities, their domains of change, and the stimuli in the service environment all have an impact on transformative retreat experiences. Additionally, the four main themes of perceived changes—physical, emotional, attitudinal, and skill change—were found. Activity programming, provision of services, and physical environments are among the factors that stimulate change in the service environment. Finally, this study identified three groups of retreat visitors: those looking for a spiritual upsurge, those seeking physical therapy, and those seeking physical and mental balance. (Heung & Kucukusta, 2013). Eventually, He, Liu and Li (2021) acknowledged the relationship between a wellness tourism experience, tourist inspiration, and tourist engagement. They found that a wellness tourism experience (educational, esthetical, and escapism) can elicit tourist inspiration, which in turn has a preferable impact on tourist engagement. Besides, studies are required to fully comprehend the relationship between wellness tourism experience and satisfaction. As a result, the intent of this research is to determine the association between the wellness tourist experience and satisfaction.

### **2.5.3 Satisfaction**

Satisfaction is based on two Latin terms, “Satis” which indicates “enough” and “Facere” which means “to make or do” (Oliver, 2000). In brief, being sufficient is the basic concept of satisfaction (Moe et al., 2010), it may be product satisfaction or service satisfaction, or something else (Oliver, 2000). Satisfaction is the psychological evaluation (Kim et al., 2003). It is the comparison of what a consumer expects and what the customer actually receives (Chen et al., 2015). For instance, if the service offered by the service provider meets or surpasses the customer's expectation level then the service is considered satisfactory (Parasuraman et al., 1988). Previous research studies revealed that customer or consumer service expectations both directly as well as indirectly influence customer or consumer satisfaction through perceived value (Wong & Dioko, 2013). In this image and service quality are considered principal contributors to satisfaction (Bigne et al., 2001; Chen & Tsai, 2007; Ranjanthran & Mohammed, 2010; Ngoc & Trinh, 2015).

Tourism, unlike any other industry, provides memorable experiences to tourists (Khuong & Ha, 2014) in terms of amenities, attractions, and service standards, and each of these factors affects how they perceive the location and how satisfied they are (Neal & Gursoy, 2008). Subsequently, the definition of tourist satisfaction in the context of tourism is the actual pleasure or enjoyment felt by the tourists as well as the fulfillment of their expectations, desires, or needs during the trip (Chen & Tsai, 2007). According to Beard and Ragheb (1980), tourist satisfaction is a positive perception of tourists after participating in recreational or pleasure activities and that can be estimated using different degrees of enjoyment (Bayih & Singh, 2020). However, destination satisfaction is crucial to the sustainability of tourism-related businesses (Khuong & Ha, 2014). Essentially, destination satisfaction is determined by comparing tourist expectations prior to travel, depictions of the destination, and travel experiences after visiting that destination (Chon, 1989; Chen & Chen, 2010). Transportation facilities and accessibility of the destination (Virkar & Mallya, 2018), the attractiveness of the landscape, accommodation, and hospitality quality at the destination, cleanliness of the destination (Lee, 2016), and finally, the weather or climatic condition of the destination (Štumpf et al., 2012), which provides overall satisfaction to tourists, are indeed

destination attributes (Vinh, 2013; Um et al., 2006). Moreover, overall tourist satisfaction is determined by both service quality and satisfaction of experiences at the destination (Prayag et al., 2013). It is defined as the overall delight perceived by tourists from their vacations in order to fulfill desires, expectations, and needs (Chen & Tsai, 2007). In accordance with the expectation-disconfirmation theory, if the real performance is superior to the customer's expectation, it results in positive disconfirmation and a high level of satisfaction and vice versa (Oliver, 1980).

Previous studies have highlighted that life satisfaction is primarily categorized into two types: top-down approach and bottom-up approach (Chen et al., 2018). Life satisfaction is depicted from the top down as a function of stable traits or attributes (Erdogan et al., 2012). Although, the top-down approach negates the importance of situational consequences, such as personal experiences on overall satisfaction with life (Diener, 1996). Contrarily, the bottom-up strategy asserted that satisfaction with life is a consequence of satisfaction from various life realms, such as subjective-wellbeing, work, and so on (Erdogan et al., 2012). This bottom-up perspective asserts that life satisfaction characterizes an individual's emotional condition as it gains in many stages of life (Chen & Yoon, 2019) such as work, social activities, leisure, pleasure, spiritual life, love life, and family (Petroman, 2021).

According to Neal, Uysal and Sirgy (2007), satisfaction isn't just a term; it is an expectation that is fulfilled. Non-leisure life satisfaction and Leisure life satisfaction are the two basic types of satisfaction (Neal et al., 2004). Job life satisfaction, spiritual life satisfaction, and family life satisfaction are a few instances of non-leisure life satisfaction (Uysal et al., 2012). Whereas, leisure life satisfaction (Kim et al., 2015) involves activities that affect satisfaction with both leisure life and life in general (Kruger & Petzer, 2008; Neal et al., 1999), and is predominantly found in students or youths to alleviate stress, and also found in couples and family members to enhance their social status (Wang, 2017).

Moreover, satisfaction in the wellness tourism domain falls under the leisure life satisfaction sector (Argan et al., 2018), where tourists have an urge to improve their physical and spiritual or psychological health and quality of life (Steiner & Reisinger,

2006). According to Luo et al. (2018), both leisure and non-leisure life satisfaction have a significant impact on one's well-being or quality of life (Baker, 2007). In fact, four elements of recovery experience throughout the travel ascertain life satisfaction, including relaxation, control, detachment, and mastery experiences. (Lee et al., 2016). Additionally, short-term leisure trips assist tourists to recover from everyday life and work stress, but long-term leisure travels provide several opportunities for recovery experiences (Chen et al., 2016). Distinctive characteristics of the place, hospitality service quality, and the availability of enticing scenic views closer to the destination, as well as good accessibility and also pleasant climatic condition, cleanse, and calmness, are important facets for overall tourist satisfaction (Um et al, 2006; Som et al., 2012; Vinh, 2013; Bayih & Singh, 2020).

Chung and Petrick (2013) classified tourist satisfaction into three categories: information satisfaction, attribute-specific satisfaction, and overall satisfaction. Information satisfaction relates to a personal assessment of details supplied prior to selecting a destination and hospitality (Spreng et al., 1996). Destination-specific satisfaction is defined as a visitor's subjective judgment based on observations and experiences with destination attributes such as attractions or sightseeing, transportation, accommodations, amenities, and entertainment facilities (Oliver, 1993). And at last, the overall experience of the tourist or customer determines overall satisfaction (Chung & Petrick, 2013).

Furthermore, Argan et al. (2018) proposed a theoretical model by investigating the interconnections between wellness, leisure satisfaction, life satisfaction, and happiness. Accordingly, life satisfaction has a stronger impact on happiness than leisure life satisfaction. It was also found that satisfaction with life as well as leisure plays an important role in moderating processes between well-being and happiness. And lastly, happiness and life satisfaction can be increased by focusing on national well-being issues, such as improving democracy, security, and life expectations, as well as minimizing health, security, and other issues.

The existing literature sparingly acknowledged satisfaction as a multidimensional construct (Ruggeri et al., 2020; Slack et al., 2020) that encompassed

both supply-side (service quality) (Truong et al., 2018; He et al., 2021) and demand-side satisfaction (experience at the destination) (Keadplang, 2019; Dini & Pencarelli, 2021). In accordance with earlier studies, this study aims to ascertain satisfaction with both services offered at retreats as well as from the vacation experiences.

#### **2.5.4 Quality of life**

The term quality of life (QOL) encompasses a wider range of subjective assessments of both beneficial and detrimental facets of life (Group, 1998; Wei et al., 2022). It is fundamentally understood as the degree of well-being that a person or a community perceives (McCabe & Johnson, 2013). Quality of Life, however, has been widely studied across disciplines, including those in the social, economic, and health sciences (Santos-Júnior et al., 2020), since it was first recognized as a social indicator in 1960 (Uysal et al., 2012; Land et al., 2012; Land & Michalos, 2018). The World Health Organization (WHO, 1998) defines quality of life as people's thoughts or conceptions about their position in life in relation to their targets and achievements, along with their desires and expectations, as well as the living standards, culture, and state of beliefs in which they reside (Skevington et al., 2004; Aref, 2011). Moreover, Frisch (2000) explains, quality of life is the degree of subjective evaluation in which a person's utmost vital wants, needs, goals, and desires are accomplished.

According to Ena and Tanasoiu (2009), tourism has a positive impact on people's quality of life since it improves tourists' subjective well-being in a variety of ways, including rest, relaxation, leisure, enjoyment, knowledge development, and a sense of appreciation for elegance, aesthetic feelings, and so on. It is often characterized as a tourist's level of satisfaction or happiness in their lives (Sirgy, 2019). Besides this, the terms “quality of life”, “subjective well-being”, “happiness”, “perceived QOL” and “well-being” are all used interchangeably in the literature (Saayman et al., 2018; Uysal et al., 2016; Dolnicar et al., 2013; Kruger, 2012; Nawijn, 2011; Sirgy, 2011). According to Veenhoven (2005), a person's health, contentment, and overall sense of well-being, as well as the lack of illness, are crucial factors that determine their quality of life, which can be assessed by how long and how contented they live (Argyle & Lu, 1990). As per Kim (2000), quality of life is divided into five domains: emotional well-being,

community well-being, health wellbeing, safety wellbeing, and community well-being. Though, the emotional well-being of tourists' is seen as a vital component of the travel and tourism sector (Huang et al., 2019).

Besides this, objective and subjective well-being are the key factors that significantly impact tourists' life quality (Uysal et al., 2012). Quantitative indicators of life quality are used to assess objective well-being (Theofilou, 2013), which include society's life quality or happiness and are frequently evaluated through quantitative measurements of its economic (household income) (Oswald & Wu, 2010), leisure (total amount of recreational attractions and parklands for every thousand persons) (Baker & Palmer, 2006), environmental (Greenhouse gas emission levels), and well-being (Baker & Palmer, 2006). While physiological well-being, contentment, happiness levels, presumed life quality, and other subjective indicators are used to measure subjective well-being (Uysal et al., 2016).

It typically evaluates a person's experience of life in regard to their social, health, as well as economic-related domains (Lutz et al., 2021). Subjective measures, such as happiness or subjective well-being, are used, and they are collected from genuine and trustworthy consciousness (Costanza et al., 2007). Moreover, subjective QOL measures concentrate on how individuals are satisfied with goods or services. It is also observed that a number of tourism studies have concentrated on the evaluation of subjective well-being, examining how local residents view tourism's effects as well as how it impacts different aspects of their life quality through particular life factors and sub-factors, and also influences the overall life satisfaction (Woo et al., 2015; Santos-Júnior et al., 2020).

Similarly, Genc (2012) explained that an individual's quality of life is evaluated using both objective and subjective indicators. The objective indicators, for instance, the unemployment rate and life expectancies, are quantitative in nature and demonstrable/measurable by anybody. On the contrary, subjective indicators are distinct and unique and are highly personalized subjective assertions about an individual's life quality, including his/her personal perspective on safety, job satisfaction, and overall happiness. Additionally, the researcher discovered two distinct



tourist personalities, namely allocentric and psychometric. Allocentric tourists are more likely to participate in tourist activities on their own since they enjoy the adventure, whereas psychometric tourists are anxious and skittish and usually choose group activities. In accordance with earlier studies, this study aims to assess the retreat visitors' QOL.

### **2.5.5 Revisit Intention**

Revisit intentions are characterized as tourists' plans to return to a particular destination or geographic area in the future to experience a particular good, service, location, or brand that is associated with tourism (Tosun et al., 2015; Zeithaml et al., 1996). Revisit intention also known as behavioural intention or post-visit behaviour, or future behaviour is the judgment of the tourist about the possibility of visiting the same tourist spots again or readiness to recommend the tourist spot to others or positive word of mouth (Chen & Tsai, 2007). Word of mouth is the communication by tourists and the purpose is to share their travel experience with their family, friends, and relatives (Maxham III, 2001). Each and every vendor who provides travel packages always want to know the motivation of customers or travellers. In tourism studies, it is always a subject of curiosity to know the cause in the back of people to select a destination (Baniya & Paudel, 2016). An increasing number of visitors who have already visited the same destination and maintain their travel to the destination is a vital matter for tour operators or vendors (Han et al., 2020).

However, it is found that tourists or visitors recommended the same destination to their family, friends, or relatives if only their post-purchase intentions are high for the same destination (Bowen & Shoemaker, 2003). In the tourism industry, communicating word-of-mouth of visitors to others is known as a tool for understanding the revisit intentions of tourists (TaghiPourian & Bakhsh, 2015). According to Dedeoglu, Balıkcıoğlu, and Kucukergin (2015), emotional assessment of past experiences also has an important effect on tourists that accelerates their future behaviour. Additionally, it has been discovered that destination image influences revisit intentions (Tosun et al., 2015).

The theory of planned behaviour states that an individual's primary intent and the cognitive and affective aspects of their attitude have the greatest effect on how they behave (Ajzen, 1991). Therefore, forecasting a tourist's or visitor's revisit intention to a destination depends upon his/her emotional and intellectual components with regard to that location (Lin, 2013). However, it has been discovered that a relevant framework of tourist behaviour must support in determining whether visitors will return to a particular location (Assaker et al., 2011). Prior research on behavioural intention find out some major determinants of revisit intention which include, motivation (Li et al., 2010), satisfaction (Baker & Crompton, 2000), destination image (Lin & Morais, 2009), service quality, perceived value, and psychological well-being of tourist (Lin, 2014; Petrick et al., 2001). Moreover, it is found that revisit intention has different precursors which comprise destination maturity, familiarity with the visited destination, novelty or originality of the destination, number of previous visits to the destination, and perceived value (Li et al., 2010). Destination operators and marketers are also showing interest to acknowledge about revisit intention of tourists (Um et al., 2006). Therefore, tour operators and travel companies attempt to persuade visitors to return to the same destination by enhancing the satisfaction and reputation of the destination. Soleimani and Einolahzadeh (2018), described that a fully satisfied tourist with service quality is willing to recommend the unique attributes of the destination to their friends and relatives which affects tourist revisit intention.

## **2.6 Research Gap**

According to the Global Wellness Institute (2018), traveling for the sake of preserving or enhancing one's personal well-being is known as "wellness tourism." Considering the same, retreat visitors represent a potential group of people/tourists who desire to visit specific places and engage in unique activities such as yoga, meditation, relaxation, and rejuvenation, among others, to balance their body-mind-spirit and well-being (Kelly, 2015). They are the ones who are believed to be curious about exploring new natural environments and participating in various wellness activities (Manhas & Kour, 2014). According to SP Holiday (2020), travel industry professionals stated that after COVID-19, the awareness of health and well-being among individuals increased and people desired to unwind and rejuvenate to recover from the weariness and stress

caused by the pandemic. They also predict that in the future, travelers will prioritize wellness tours and rejuvenating vacations. Additionally, people preferred relaxation, physical and mental health rehabilitation, and enhancement of their quality of life as a result of Covid-19 (Dar & Kashyap, 2022), which negatively impacted their psychological, physical, emotional, and social health (Roman et al., 2020). This has seen a growing need for relaxation, and thus, wellness needs of individuals, which has increased tourist demand for wellness purposes and constituted a new niche in the tourism industry in India and across the world (Tuzunkan, 2018).

After reviewing the literature, it is found that more extensive research has been carried out on wellness tourism in recent years. Those provide a resourceful overview of the wellness tourism product and its offer system (Dini & Pencarelli, 2021; Chhabra, 2020), as well as the various wellness tourist types (Kessler et al., 2020; Kelly, 2012; Voigt et al., 2011), their travel behaviour patterns (Lee et al., 2020; Bristow & Yang, 2015; Kim & Batra, 2009), and their engagement in wellness activities (He et al., 2021; Kim, Chiang & Tang, 2017). Additionally, research on wellness tourism has been done globally and in several Indian states, including Rishikesh (Uttarakhand) (Dar & Kashyap, 2022; Jha, 2021; Charak, Sharma & Chib, 2021; Telej & Gamble, 2019; Charak, 2019; Pramod & Nayak, 2018; Pawan & Vyas, 2014), Goa (Sadekar & Pereria, 2018), Kerala (Romao et al., 2022; Nair, 2020; Bandyopadhyay & Nair, 2019; Lenka, 2017; Panchal, 2013; Ramesh & Joseph, 2011; Kelly, 2010; Jyothis & Janardhanan, 2009), Tamil Nādu (Chennai) (Krishnamoorthy & Venkatesh, 2015), Karnataka (Afza, 2019; Chavan & Bhola, 2014; Tharakan, 2014) and Pondicherry (Sibi & Abraham, 2017). Moreover, it was also discovered that there have been studies on wellness tourism in India, and few have been accomplished in the Himachal Pradesh region, even though it receives a large number of both international and domestic tourists throughout the year. Many of them come intending to maintain their body, mind, and spirit and enjoy uniqueness and tranquility. They mostly prefer retreat centers (yoga retreats and meditation retreats) that are situated in the Himalayan Dhauladhar Mountain range in the Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh that offer tourists a peaceful atmosphere for yoga and meditation (Viassone, 2012; Singh, 2019).

In light of the aforementioned concepts, this research intends to examine travel motivations as well as travel determinants of retreat visitors in Himachal Pradesh Wellness retreat centres. Therefore, this study aims to ascertain wellness tourists' travel motivations, experiences, satisfaction levels, quality of life, and, revisit intentions while visiting wellness retreats in Himachal Pradesh to give an insight to the potential tourists about the destination. Additionally, the present study explains mediation role of quality of life across satisfaction and revisit intention. It aims on identifying how the quality of life defines the revisit intension of wellness tourists. Due to the paucity of prior research on this subject, there is a particular interest in bridging this gap in the literature and developing a theoretical framework that will assist stakeholders, including policymakers, and service providers in promoting wellness tourism in Himachal Pradesh.

## **2.7 Hypotheses Development**

### **2.7.1 Relationship between Travel Motivations and Wellness Tourism Experience**

Previous studies have revealed an association between travel motivation and tourist experience, and experience is regarded as the fundamental component of travel in tourism research (Stienmetz et al., 2021; Uriely, 2005; Cohen, 1979). The core motivations of tourists are intense and can take many different forms, such as ego enhancement and showing off, mending broken relationships, and escaping the stresses of life (Pearce & Zare, 2017; McKercher, 2015). These needs are met at the destination by the services that are designed there, and the vacation experience that the traveller will remember as being special and memorable (Kim, Ritchie & McCormick, 2012). Moreover, the memorable experiences were determined to be crucial as they serve important aspects of the entire journey (Stienmetz et al., 2021). When visitors actively engage in the events/activities as a new self and are immersed in the environment, they experienced escape from their daily lives. Henceforth, tourists' primary motivation—to escape—fulfills the escapist experience (Lee, Jeong & Qu, 2020). By extending the literature, Moreno-González et al. (2020) proposed a framework that shows the development of a health-related destination image and its impact on tourists' desires for enhancing their health when visiting a destination. The framework took into account

health-related environmental factors, well-being resources, and experiences, and it was discovered that tourists' expectations for enhancing their health are significantly influenced by the destination. According to Luo et al. (2018), participants'/visitors' wellness experiences are determined by the degree to which they participate in and respond to an external stimulus. Moreover, the way a wellness tourist individually perceives transcendence influences their travel experience (Willson & Suhud, 2016; Kusumaatmaja et al., 2020). Additionally, retreat visitors are willing to travel for a good experience, in a tranquil environment, and in pleasant surroundings, with the intent of achieving rest, relaxation, personal development, or other wellness tourism engagements (Lim et al., 2016; Kelly, 2012). Consequently, the first hypothesis of the study is proposed:

***H1: Travel motivations have a significant relationship with wellness tourism experiences***

### **2.7.2 Relationship between Wellness Tourism Experience and Tourist Satisfaction**

According to Oliver and Swan (1989), a psychological state that develops as a result of various service experiences is known as satisfaction. However, customer satisfaction is determined by their perceptions and post-perceived quality, i.e., in order to determine whether a customer is satisfied, an analogy between their expectations and their actual experience must be made, which is generated through interactions with the service encounter (Kou et al., 2009). Consequently, satisfaction reflects people's positive attributes and conceptions of the services or products that providers offer (Lee et al., 2020). In accordance with a number of tourism literature, when expectations and perceived performance contradict, either a tourist will be satisfied or unsatisfied depending on whether their expectations were positive or negative (Yoon & Uysal, 2005; Bianchi, 2016). However, according to studies on the tourist experience, individual perceptions and perspectives about each aspect of the travel experience play a very important role in whether or not a tourist is satisfied or dissatisfied (Sari & Lestari, 2021; Thuy & Thao, 2019; Alegre & Garau, 2010; Chon, 1989). As a result, different aspects of the holiday experience often have varying levels of influence on tourists' satisfaction or dissatisfaction (Bianchi, 2016; Cutler & Carmichael, 2010). In

this context, Voigt et al. (2010) have examined the wellness tourism experience from a positive psychological perspective. Accordingly, it was found that the wellness tourism experience assists in the psychological and personal growth of tourists, as well as leads to holistic health (Dillette, 2021). Additionally, Chen et al. (2016) discovered that holiday experiences have a strong effect on tourists' satisfaction. It influences tourists' leisure satisfaction, which in turn influences their non-leisure satisfaction (Luo et al., 2018). Moreover, the service offered at retreat centres such as yoga, meditation, nutritious meals, quality interaction with staff, and alluring natural environments expedites a wonderful experience (Thal & Hudson, 2019), which leads to tourist satisfaction. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed in the current research:

***H2: There is a significant relationship between Wellness tourism experience and tourist satisfaction***

### **2.7.3 Relationship between Tourists' Satisfaction and Tourists' Revisit Intention**

According to earlier studies, tourists' satisfaction consequences from a comparison of tourists' experiences at the desired location they have visited and their preconceptions, which influence their behavioural intention (Berutu, Rohman & Sabil, 2022; Kozak & Rimmington 2000). Furthermore, pleased/satisfied tourists have a greater tendency to spread the word about their wonderful experiences and are more inclined to purchase products or visit the same location again on the contrary, the dissatisfied tourist does not evoke revisit intention (Wang et al., 2017; Liang et al., 2013). Positive word-of-mouth (WOM) (Farrukh et al., 2022), loyalty retention, recommendations (Han et al., 2020), making greater expenditures, and incurring greater costs are all indicators are all indications of travel intention that are frequently used in tourism research (Zeithaml et al., 1996). However, revisit intention has been identified as an important factor for describing loyalty, particularly in tourism research (Lee et al., 2020). Additionally, researchers explained that life satisfaction leads to loyalty and the intention to return (Backman et al., 2022; Deesilatham, 2018). Moreover, tourists are satisfied and return to the same destination after experiencing spiritual retreat tourism that is marvellous as well as far exceeds their expectations

(Ashton, 2018; Santouridis & Trivellas, 2010). on the basis of above literature, the following hypothesis is suggested:

***H3: Tourists' satisfaction significantly influences tourists' revisit intention***

#### **2.7.4 Relationship between Wellness Tourism Satisfaction and Quality of Life of Tourists**

According to Tokarchuk et al. (2015), taking a holiday can lower stress and enhance gratification or life satisfaction, all of which improve the life quality of tourists (Luo et al., 2018). According to Kim, Woo and Uysal (2015), people's quality of life will improve if they engage in more tourism-related activities. While according to Neal et al. (2004), tourists' overall quality of life is influenced by their level of satisfaction with the offerings and amenities made available by the tourism industry (Berutu et al., 2022). Furthermore, QOL refers to how people feel about or view their lives as well as their level of life satisfaction and fulfilment (Ventegodt et al., 2003; Taylor & Bogdan, 1990). In other words, the perception of individuals regarding their quality of life are formed based on their assessment of the positive and negative aspects of their existing circumstances (Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011). The degree to which people are satisfied with life overall and with various sub-domains, such as their living conditions, families, jobs, social lives, health, and so forth, determines how satisfied they are with their quality of life (Ouyang et al., 2019). Besides that, Berutu et al., (2022) discovered that satisfaction played a crucial part in establishing the quality of life for Indonesian tourists. Moreover, the literature on wellness tourism revealed that improving one's well-being, relaxing the body, bringing intrinsic satisfaction, treating dermatitis, bringing tranquillity, and reducing stress can improve visitors' quality of life. In particular, bringing intrinsic rewards impacts an individual's overall quality of life (Chen, 2007). In light of this, the third hypothesis of this study is proposed:

***H4: There is a significant relationship between Wellness tourism satisfaction and the quality of life of tourists***

### **2.7.5 Relationship between Quality of Life of Tourists and Tourist Revisit Intention**

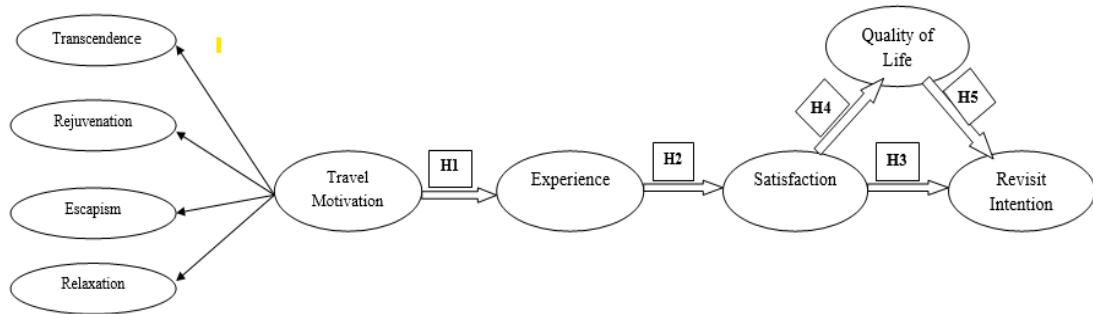
Prior literature described the quality of life as the pleasure and satisfaction of work (Susniene & Jurkauskas, 2009). The level of satisfaction with one's family, friends, leisure and recreational pursuits, health, job, finances, and vacations have a substantial effect on overall life quality (Berutu et al., 2022). According to Kim et al. (2015), a person's intention to return will depend on their level of satisfaction from their quality of life, which in turn will depend on how satisfied they are with their life's expectations. Hernández-Mogollón et al. (2020) further added the quality of life of tourists was crucial in fostering loyalty in the Spanish culinary tourism industry. Furthermore, Berutu et al. (2022) acknowledged that visitor loyalty has also been influenced by the quality of life. Moreover, Chen et al. (2016) made a suggestion that quality of life has a sizable effect on tourists' loyalty to China. QOL, therefore, influences the future behaviour of tourists (Kim et al., 2015). On the other hand, there have been extensive leisure studies on how QOL affects activity participation (García-Villamizar & Dattilo, 2010). According to leisure studies, QOL has an impact on engaging in leisure activities (Lloyd & Auld, 2002; Silverstein & Parker, 2002). Lin (2014) discovered through tourism research that visitors' intentions to return to hot springs were influenced by their cuisine experience and QOL. In particular, the study identified a significant correlation between QOL and revisit intention. Additionally, the majority of studies revealed that the quality of life predicts tourist loyalty and intent to return (Campón-Cerro et al., 2020; Kim et al., 2015). Considering the previous research, the fourth hypothesis of the research was proposed:

***H5: The quality of life of tourists has a significant relationship with tourist revisit intention***



In accordance with the research background, objectives, and reviewed literature the conceptual model for the present study is framed (refer figure 2.2)

**Figure 2.2 Proposed Model of the Study**



## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Introduction

As earlier chapter covers need as well as justification of the present study. This chapter, however, defines research approach and strategy, which incorporates various methods, procedures, and techniques for achieving the various research objectives and hypotheses. First section explains significance of the study along with research objectives and research hypotheses. Furthermore, this chapter describes the research design, research approach, questionnaire design, and scale development. Then it explains the source of data and sampling procedure which includes sampling design, research areas, pilot study, and a thorough understanding of the tools and techniques used in the final analysis and interpretation.

#### 3.2 Significance of the Study

The purpose of this research is to determine the factors that affects retreat visitors' motivation, experience, and satisfaction, as well as their quality of life and intention to return to the wellness retreats of Himachal Pradesh. However, this research also seeks to determine the role of quality of life in mediating the relationship betwixt tourist satisfaction and revisit intention. Furthermore, this study proposed a theoretical framework that will assist policymakers and service providers in designing their services, so that more tourists will flock to the targeted areas, thereby contributing to the region's economic development.

#### 3.3 Research Objectives

In light of the research gap identified through a comprehensive literature review, the study's objectives were established. The following list includes six key research objectives:

1. To find out the motivational factors amongst retreat visitors travelling to wellness retreats in Himachal Pradesh.
2. To examine the relationship between travel motivations and tourists' experience of wellness tourism.
3. To determine the satisfaction level of retreat visitors from wellness tourism in Himachal Pradesh.

4. To examine the relationship between wellness tourism experience and tourist satisfaction.
5. To examine the influence of satisfaction on the revisit intentions of retreat visitors.
6. To identify the role of quality of life in defining the revisit intentions of retreat visitors in Himachal Pradesh.

### **3.4 Hypotheses of the Study**

A hypothesis is a tentative presumption that can be empirically tested using data collected during the research process (Pandey & Pandey, 2021). The hypotheses that were developed after a comprehensive literature review and consideration of the study's objective are described in the sections below:

- H1: Travel motivations have a significant relationship with wellness tourism experiences
- H2: There is a significant relationship between Wellness tourism experience and tourist satisfaction
- H3: Tourists' satisfaction significantly influences tourists' revisit intention
- H4: There is a significant relationship between Wellness tourism satisfaction and the quality of life of tourists
- H5: The quality of life of tourists has a significant relationship with tourist revisit intention

### **3.5 Research Design**

A research design refers to a blueprint or strategy for carrying out research (Haydam & Steenkamp, 2020). It is essential to develop any research study by employing appropriate methodology and a set of research methods to address the study's objectives and research hypotheses (Singh, 2006). The successful completion of any research study is dependent on the correct selection of research methods, strategies, and procedures for gathering all necessary information, facts, and figures (Benbasat, Goldstein & Mead, 1987). To accomplish this, the researcher or expert must rely on field studies or primary sources as well as secondary sources such as scalable and published reports, records, periodicals, newspapers, journals and magazines, and so on.

**Table 3.1 Preparation of the Research Phase**

Aims	To achieve research objectives To test hypotheses
Research Approach	Quantitative
Research Design	Descriptive
Study Design	Cross-sectional
Data Collection Method	Self-administered questionnaire
Sampling Method	Simple random sampling
Target Population	Wellness retreat tourists (Both International and Domestic tourists) (TOTAL, N= 400)
Data Analysis methods	Exploratory Factor Analysis; Confirmatory Factor Analysis; Descriptive Statistics; Regression Analysis; Structural Equation Modelling
Outcomes	Descriptive Statistics Hypotheses testing results
Final Interpretation Phase Aims	To incorporate research findings and draw conclusions To list limitations and make recommendations for future research To explain the theoretical and practical implications

### **3.6 Research Approach**

A research approach is a method that a researcher chooses to collect, analyze, and interpret data (Byrne & Humble, 2007). Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods are the three types of research approaches (Williams, 2007). In quantitative research, numerical data is collected and analyzed to describe, explain, predict, and control particular phenomena under a study (Allwood, 2012). Comparatively, qualitative research involves gathering, analyzing, and interpreting extensive narrative and visual data to learn more about a specific subject of interest (Sandelowski, 2000).

Mixed methods research, on the other hand, encompasses both quantitative and qualitative approaches in one study (Terrell, 2012).

However, this study was carried out using the quantitative research methodology. Following a review of the relevant literature, several constructs were established. A substantial amount of information about wellness tourism and tourist travel determinants was then acquired from previously available literature, reports, magazines, official websites, and so on, which has been considered necessary for the research. Then the research framework was constructed. Again, extensive literature was reviewed to construct the questionnaire using the identified constructs, and a structured questionnaire with a 5-point likert scale was established to examine various constructs. Further, a pilot study was conducted with a small group of respondents who met the study criteria (Aung, Razak & Nazry, 2021), using a structured questionnaire. In the second stage, the derived constructs were used to assess the motivation, experience, satisfaction, quality of life, and revisit the intention of the targeted population. The final data from the designated research areas was collected, and a structured questionnaire was used to measure these constructs. The software packages SPSS 22.0 and AMOS 16.0 were used to run several statistical techniques, producing results that were then further interpreted and explained.

### **3.7 Source of Data**

Data to understand travel motivation and travel determinants of respondents in this study were gathered from primary sources, such as respondents from the study population who visited wellness destinations in Himachal Pradesh, specifically wellness retreat centres in Kangra. It contains information on the respondent's profile, holiday-related information, travel motivations, benefits, and personal feelings of the respondents who have shown their interest in participating in this survey. Secondary data was gathered from a variety of research journals, theses, articles, newspapers, magazines, and other sources. E-courses, wellness-related books, and wellness-related reports are reviewed, and these resources are also used for the ongoing research study.

### **3.8 Sampling procedure**

#### **3.8.1 Research Area and Target Population**

This study was conducted in selective wellness centres (particularly retreat centres/wellness retreats) in Himachal Pradesh in India. Ayurveda spas, Yoga retreats, meditation retreats, and wellness centres of Himachal Pradesh are surrounded by a natural and pleasant atmosphere, and these centres are mainly situated in Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh (Himachal Pradesh Tourism Policy, 2019), and the most visited centres are located in Dharamsala, Bhagsu, McLeod Ganj, Dharmakot (Singh, 2019) and Palampur (DeFelice,2018) destinations.

The respondents for this study are only the retreat visitors of wellness retreat centres who are enrolled for meditation and yoga and the other wellness tourists who came for spa, Ayurveda, and other wellness activities are excluded from this study. Moreover, the study population is not always the entire population of a given geographical area, but rather a predefined set of capability respondents (elements) in that area (White & Jackson, 1995). Therefore, tourists who travelled and enrolled in yoga and meditation programs of Himachal Pradesh's wellness retreat centres comprised the study's population.

#### **3.8.2 Sampling Frame**

Targeting the entire population is impossible for any researcher due to larger areas and limited time. So, while choosing the sample for this study, a careful strategy was used. In order to make the study efficient, Gray (2021) claims that if the entire population cannot be targeted, a sample may be selected from that targeted population. In order to assure the generalization of research findings a sample group with similar characteristics to those of the entire population should be selected (Acharya et al., 2013; Banerjee & Chaudhury, 2010).

The sampling frame represents the elements of the target population from which we can plausibly select a sample for the research (Zhengdong, 2011). According to the researcher's experience, and to avoid any biased responses the wellness retreat centres providing at least 5 to 7 days of wellness programmes to the retreat visitors in Himachal Pradesh, were selected for the research. The following table shows the list of wellness retreat centres for this study.

**Table 3.2 Details of Wellness Retreat Centres**

<b>SL NO.</b>	<b>Wellness Retreat Centre Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Services</b>	<b>Accommodations</b>
01	Osho Nisarga (a meditation Centre in the Himalayas)	Village: Shilla, Post Office: Pantehar, District: Kangra, Dharamshala, Himachal Pradesh - 176057, India	Active Meditation (yoga/some kind of physical exercise) and passive meditation (dhyana etc.)	Yes
02	Himalayan Shanti Ashram (Eco Retreat for Yoga meditation & Healing)	Village Manyana, PO Bhitlu, Tehsil, Dharamsala, Kangra, HP, 176047, India	Yoga and Meditation	Yes
03	Himalayan Iyengar Yoga Centre	Dharamkot, Dharamshala 176219 Himachal Pradesh - India	Yoga and Meditation	Yes
04	Kayakalp (Himalayan Research institute of	VMRT, Holta, Palampur, Himachal Pradesh 176062	Yoga, Pranayama and Meditation	Yes

	Yoga Naturopathy)			
05	Tushita Meditation Centre	McLeod Ganj, Dharamshala, Himachal Pradesh 176219	introductory Buddhist philosophy and meditation	Yes
06	Shivam Neelkanth Yoga Kendra	Upper Bhagsu Trail Bhagsunag Dharamsala, Himachal Pradesh India	Yoga Teacher Training and intensive Yoga Retreats, Meditation (offers 10-day and 5-day Yoga retreats)	Yes
07	Omm Yoga Ashram	Om Yoga Ashram Near Dal Lake Dharamsala, McLeod Ganj Dharamsala - 176219 (India)	Yoga Teacher Training, Yoga Retreat, Meditation, and Reiki	Yes
08	Dhamma Sikhara Vipassana Himachal Meditation Centre	Himachal Vipassana Centre -Dhamma Sikhara McLeod Ganj; Dharamsala 176 219 Dist. Kangra; Himachal Pradesh India	Vipassana Meditation	Yes

(Source: Singh, Upadhya & Jha, 2022; Panchal, 2021; DeFelice, 2018; Vaidya,2017)



### 3.8.3 Sampling Unit

A sampling unit is one of the units chosen for sampling purposes (Bhardwaj, 2019). For this study, retreat visitors at the previously stated wellness retreat centres who stayed and used the services were regarded as sampling units.

### 3.8.4 Sample size

As total population of the present study is 7350, which has been enquired and retained from the chosen wellness retreat centres through official websites and in-person visits, the sample size for the current study calculated to 382 (table 3.4) (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). Additionally, according to Ahmad and Halim (2017), a 10:1 ratio would be the more appropriate sample size. Since there are 34 variables in this study after factor analysis, the sample size is 340. According to Hair et al. (2011) and, Sekaran and Bougie (2016), about 500 or more samples should be taken for increased reliability of the research. So, to achieve reliable results and appropriate responses considering all the previous research 400 samples for research was targeted (Jackson, 2001).

**Table 3.3 Population Size for this Study**

<b>SL NO.</b>	<b>Wellness Retreat Centre Name</b>	<b>Avv. Footfall per Year (2018-19)</b>	<b>Source</b>
01	Osho Nisarga (a meditation Centre in the Himalayas)	1,100	Personal Visit
02	Himalayan Shanti Ashram (Eco Retreat for Yoga meditation & Healing)	250	Personal Visit
03	Himalayan Iyengar Yoga Centre	360	Personal Visit
04	Kayakalp (Himalayan Research institute of Yoga Naturopathy)	2000	Personal Visit
05	Tushita Meditation Centre	2,140	Official Website & Personal Visit
06	Shivam Neelkanth Yoga Kendra	100	Personal Visit

07	Omm Yoga Ashram	400	Official Website & Personal Visit
08	Dhamma Sikhara Vipassana Himachal Meditation Centre	1000	Personal Visit
<b>Total Population Number</b>		<b>7,350</b>	

(Source: Tushita's Annual Statistics Report 2009 – 2019-

<https://tushita.info/news/reports/yearly-report-2009-2019/>;

<https://www.omashram.in/> )

**Table 3.4 Table for Determining Sample Size from given Population**

<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	100000	384

Note.—*N* is population size.  
*S* is sample size.

*Source: (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970)*

### 3.8.5 Sampling Technique

It is a method of distributing the research instrument, namely the questionnaire, by utilizing sample units that were taken from the sample frame. The samples for this study were drawn using simple random sampling, a probability sampling technique. In

this sampling, every sample respondent does have an equal opportunity of being selected as part of the sampling technique (Sharma, 2017; Taherdoost, 2016). Therefore, each respondent from the above-mentioned wellness retreats is chosen randomly to conduct the survey.

### **3.9 Questionnaire Designing and Scale Development**

A structured and self-administered questionnaire (SAQ) was used to measure this study's theoretical framework (Leeuw, 2008) and various study constructs. The questionnaire was modified to fit the needs of the particular study after being adopted from a wide range of related literature. It was created solely for respondents to complete it without the involvement of researchers. To capture the respondents' interest and support, the survey questionnaire was accompanied by introductory lines that discussed the significance and intent of this study. Additionally, the respondent's information's confidentiality was ensured. The questionnaire is divided into two sections (Annexure I). Gender, nationality, education, employment, and income were just a few of the demographic characteristics of the respondent that were questioned in 'Section A'. It also contained some of the holiday details like the number of visits and stay duration etc. In "Section B," structured questions about different factors were asked using a 5-point likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree and 5 = Strongly Agree). The main goal of using a questionnaire to gather data was to produce a comprehensive and more representative sample for this study.

#### **3.9.1 Research Constructs, Variables, and Statements**

After a thorough literature review related to wellness tourism total of five constructs are derived which are travel motivation, experience, satisfaction, quality of life, and revisit intention. Then six variables of motivation factors were identified, namely, rejuvenation, escape, relaxation, re-establish self-esteem, self-indulgence, & transcendence, and all of those contained twenty-three items/statements. Similarly, experience had nine items, satisfaction had seven items, quality of life had nine items, and revisit intention had four items/statements. Moreover, all the items /statements below mentioned were adopted from the stated research papers and then modified by the researcher, all of which are described below.

**Table 3.5 Items/Statements Used for this Study**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Variables</b>	<b>Statements/Items</b>	<b>No. of Statements/Items</b>	<b>Sources</b>
Travel Motivation	Rejuvenation	To improve mental health	23 items	Kessler and Whittingham (2020); Fakfare et al. (2020); Tuzunkan (2018); Dimitrovski and Todorović (2015); Yousefi and Marzuki (2012); Voigt et al. (2011); Jönsson and Devonish (2008)
		To improve physical health		
		To be Pampered		
		Rejuvenate my appearance		
		To lose weight and improve my physical fitness		
		To treat my body well in order to improve my appearance		
	Escape	To escape from the demands of everyday life		
		Get away from the pressures of work		

		To reduce my stress level and let go of my worries		
	Relaxation	To experience calmness		
		To feel relaxed		
		To feel refreshed		
		To enjoy		
		To enjoy with friends		
	Re-establish self-esteem	To increase my self-esteem		
		To focus on myself and to gain more confidence in myself		
		To tell others where I have been		
	Self-indulgence	To feel healthier		
		To live energetically		
		To enjoy a variety of foods that fit my dietary needs		
		To find my inner self		

	Transcendence	To experience something new and exciting		
		To connect with nature		
Experience		This holiday helped me to improve my mental health	9 items	Dillette et al. (2021); Hwang and Lee (2019); Kim et al. (2015); Neal et al. (2004)
		On this vacation, I felt more satisfied with my life		
		This vacation made me more knowledgeable and stimulated my curiosity		
		I completely escaped from my daily routine during the holiday		
		This vacation met my overall well-being needs		
		This holiday was rewarding me in numerous ways		
		This holiday experience encouraged me to understand myself better		
		After this trip, my perception of life changed		
		I felt free from the pressures of life on this trip		

Satisfaction	Tourist services at the wellness centre (e.g., activities, attractions, accommodations , etc.) were high in quality	7 items	Su et al. (2020); Shavanddasht and Allan (2019); Chen et al. (2015)
	Tourist services provided at the wellness centre were problem-free		
	I am overly satisfied with my experience on this wellness holiday		
	My experiences on this holiday exceeded my expectations		
	I am happy about my decision to choose this wellness destination		

		I believe that I have taken the right thing by choosing this wellness holiday		
		I have enjoyed a lot myself this wellness holiday		
Quality of Life		This holiday helped me to enhance my life quality	9 items	Deesilatham (2018); Nicolaides and Grobler (2017); Neal (2007)
		After this holiday I feel much better about things and myself		
		This holiday helps me to enhance my mental and spiritual state of well-being		
		After taking this vacation I realized that the conditions of my life are excellent		



		This trip encouraged me to lead a purposeful and meaningful life		
		This vacation made me realize that I actively contribute to the happiness and well-being of others more than before		
		This trip made me realize that I live a good life		
		This trip encouraged me to become more optimistic about my future		
		My satisfaction with life, in general, increased shortly after the trip		
Revisit Intention		I will definitely recommend this wellness	4 items	Bayih and Singh (2020); Han

		destination to other people (e.g., friends, relatives, families, etc.)		et al. (2020); Deesilatham (2018)
		I will say positive things about this wellness vacation to other people (e.g., friends and relatives)		
		If I will decide again to go for a wellness holiday, I will choose this wellness destination again		
		I will revisit the same wellness destination in the near future		

### 3.10 Questionnaire Development and Administration

After the initial questionnaire was constructed through a review of the existing literature, it was presented to the academicians in the tourism industry and experts of the wellness retreat centre in order to conduct the content and face validity of the constructs that represent indicators/statements. Furthermore, experts' suggestions were

taken into consideration and some of the statements were removed, and modified to create a scale that serves the research objectives. A questionnaire with five constructs of 52 total items/statements and eleven demographic questions was finalized. Only 42 of the original 52 questions were kept after consulting with experts. After that, the questionnaire was distributed in order to collect the pilot data.

### **3.10.1 Pilot Study**

A pilot study also referred to as a "feasibility study," is a small-scale preliminary study that is essential for the accomplishment of any larger-scale study or main research (Whitehead et al., 2014). It entails selecting a small sample of participants and conducting the study on them to improve the questionnaire by determining and removing potential issues (if any). Before a questionnaire is finalized a pilot study must be conducted, as it allows the researcher to assess whether the questionnaire's content is clear and planned as intended (Johanson & Brooks, 2010). Many researchers, however, recommended performing pilot test or pre-test to validate the modified instrument (Nicholls et al., 2016). Even though the original instrument was used in the current study, the statements that were adopted and modified were established in a different culture and context; as a result, this study pre-tested the research instruments.

Pilot data were collected to identify any potential problems with the research questionnaire, which included responses from 10% of respondents (Johanson & Brooks, 2010) from three of our target research areas in Himachal Pradesh: Kayakalp (Himalayan Research Institute of Yoga Naturopathy), Osho Nisarga (a meditation centre in the Himalayas), and Himalayan Shanti Ashram (Eco Retreat for Yoga meditation & Healing). The aforementioned wellness retreats were chosen for the pilot study because they attract a significant number of tourists who wish to learn yoga or meditation. Henceforth, the final questionnaire was used after receiving the responses and making subsequent improvements to it (refer to Appendix I).

### **3.10.2 Reliability and Validity of the Questionnaire/Instrument**

To reduce measurement errors, it is critical to examine the questionnaire's reliability and validity (Bound et al., 2001). According to Kimberlin and Winterstein (2008), the efficiency and consistency of measurement instrument must be

demonstrated before it is confirmed for measurement. Therefore, in order to guarantee the questionnaire's accuracy, reliability and validity of the constructs have been examined.

Validity refers to the accuracy with which a questionnaire/instrument measures what it is supposed to measure (Letamendi et al., 2008). Similar to content validity, face validity demonstrated that the scale represents the measurement that it was intended to (Heale & Twycross, 2015). The content validity was done by extent review of relevant literature. Additionally, both the face validity and content validity have been tested by the experts who reviewed and verified the content of the questions and ensured that they are written clearly for the respondents. It also confirmed that all the statements under the constructs measure all the aspects for which it is obtained. Some statements were removed or modified based on expert recommendations.

Reliability refers as a measure's level of consistency (Thanasegaran, 2009) i.e., the tendency of a scale to generate consistent results on subsequent measurements while maintaining the same conditions (Stemler, 2004). Cronbach alpha was used to assess the instrument's reliability with the help of SPSS 22.0 (Statistical Package for Social Science) utilizing responses collected from 10 percent of the total sample being studied for a total of 42 items. The overall alpha value of the questionnaire was .869, and all dimensions or factors had alpha values greater than .750 (table 3.6), indicating that the questionnaire is reliable (Taber, 2018). As a result, it was determined that research instrument/questionnaire was reliable and valid for collecting data from respondents.

**Table 3.6 Overall Reliability of Pilot Study**

<b>Dimensions/Factors</b>	<b>No. of Indicators/Statements</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>
Travel Motivation	16 Items	.765
Experience	8 Items	.829
Satisfaction	7 Items	.878

Quality of Life	7 Items	.766
Revisit Intention	4 Items	.805
Overall, Alpha Value	42 Items	.869

### **3.11 Final Research Implementation**

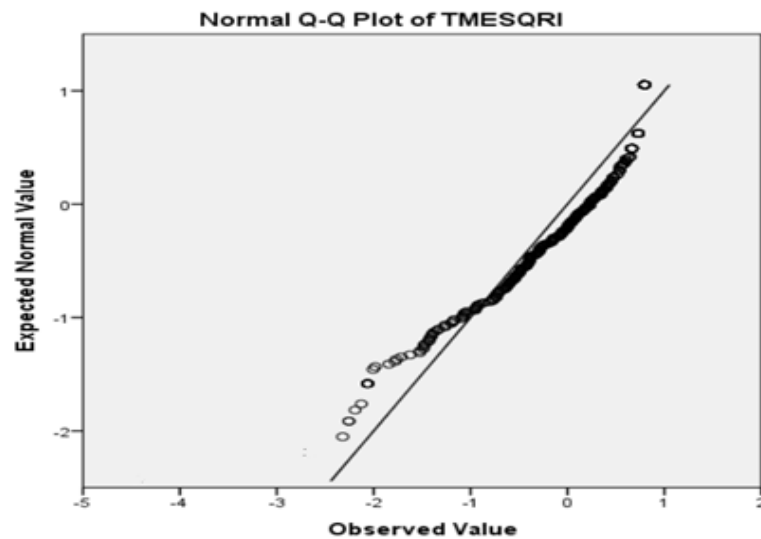
#### **3.11.1 Data Collection**

As mentioned above, the final data was collected from eight selected retreat centres in Himachal Pradesh. Total of 400 questionnaires were distributed. Out of these 400 fetched questionnaires, 12 questions had missing values or incomplete responses. For further analysis, a total of 388 responses were deemed complete and trustworthy. Further, the data was tested for its normality check.

#### **3.11.2 Normality Determination**

Kurtosis and skewness are two measures that can be used to analyze the normality of the data distribution. Skewness and kurtosis of each variable were assessed. IBM SPSS 22 was used to examine the skewness and kurtosis in this study. Skewness assesses data asymmetry and should be no greater than  $\pm 1$ , whereas kurtosis explains the peakedness or flatness of data and the ideal value of kurtosis is  $\pm 3$  (Cain et al., 2017; Fukui et al., 2018). Consequently, responses greater than  $\pm 1$  and  $\pm 3$  were removed. The 9 outliers were identified and removed. Then we used the “Q-Q plot” of the total of 379 responses for the final normality test (Ghasemi & Zahediasl, 2012). In the tests for the Q-Q plot, data provided be clustered close to the line and the data was finally considered normal to be used to research analysis.

**Figure 3.1 Quantile-Quantile(Q-Q) Plot**



### **3.12 Statistical Tools and Techniques Applied for the Study**

In terms of statistics, the data analysis for this study was carried out using both univariate and bivariate techniques. Utilizing univariate statistical techniques, such as percentages, means, and standard deviation, single variables have been examined. Furthermore, bivariate techniques are used to study the connection or correlation between the two (independent and dependent) variables, while multivariate techniques like regression and factor analysis are utilized to study the relationship among two or more than two variables (Hair et al., 2011).

#### **3.12.1 Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)**

EFA is a multivariate statistical technique (Watkins, 2018) which is used to condense data into a smaller set of summary variables (Auerswald & Moshagen, 2019). It is utilized to compress a greater number of variables into a smaller number of constructs or factors. It is usually performed without knowledge of the number of actual factors (if any), or which variables correspond to which construct (Goretzko et al., 2021). As a result, it depicts the primary factor structure that exists among the various variables being understood or identifies the common factors that account for the

order and structure of measured variables (Watkins, 2018) and verified unidimensionality (Gregory et al., 2022). Considering this, SPSS 22.0 was used to code and analyze the data obtained from the questionnaire. EFA was applied for the purpose of establishing factor structure as it is considered significant (Watson, 2017).

Besides this, SPSS provides five different rotational methods (Maskey & Nguyen, 2018). However, the factors in this study were extracted using the VARIMAX rotation (Shrestha, 2021; Abdi, 2003). This type of rotation is assumed to be the most simplified method of defining the factor structure and has proven to be quite effective in clearly separating the factors via their (factors') orthogonal rotation (Scharf & Nestler, 2019; Osborne, 2015).

### **3.12.2 Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)**

CFA is a multivariate statistical technique used for determining how well the number of constructs is accurately represented by the measured variables (Phakiti, 2018; Yang, 2005). It is a theory-driven approach that is based on the relationships between various observed and latent variables (Balaji et al., 2015). As a result, confirms factor structure of a set of observed variables. To estimate a population covariance matrix and compare it to the experimental covariance matrix, a hypothesized model is developed and the similarities between the two matrices confirm their relationship. Moreover, Confirmatory Factor Analysis is used to evaluate measurement models. The measurement relationships between the items and constructs, the correlations between the constructs, and the item error terms are all included in measurement model assessments (Deesilatham, 2018). Furthermore, CFA is employed to evaluate the validity and reliability of observed variable. The most well-known and widely used absolute fit indices such as,  $\chi^2$  or Chi-square, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI), and Comparative Fit Index (CFI), are used to assess model fit (ErturanIlker et al., 2014). At least three indices are used (Yu et al., 2002). Furthermore, a model is considered having a good fit if scores or values of the indices of Comparative, Good, Standardized, and Adjusted Good Fit are close to or above 0.90 and the value of RMSEA is less than 0.080 (Bektas & Kudubes, 2022).

### **3.12.3 Descriptive Statistics**

Means, frequency, and percentages are the most frequently used statistical techniques in descriptive statistics (Robinson, 2009). In this method of data analysis both numerical and graphical techniques (e.g., bar charts, pie charts histograms, and frequency polygons) are used to organize, present, and analyze the data (Fisher & Marshall, 2009). Essentially, it represents and describes the characteristics of a sample while also attempting to describe the midpoint of spread scores, known as the measure of central tendency (Mishra et al., 2019). Furthermore, descriptive statistics are the simplest to accomplish and interpret, and they are an effective way to summarise data (Marshall & Jonker, 2010). As a result, descriptive statistics will be used in this study to describe the characteristics of retreat visitors as well as to determine the means, percentage, and standard deviation.

### **3.12.4 Regression Analysis**

Regression analysis is a statistical procedure used to investigate the relationships among variables or factors. This method is used to estimate the relationship between a dependent variable and one or more independent variables. It can be applied to determine how strongly variables are related to one another as well as estimate future relations among variables (Gogtay et al., 2017).

### **3.12.5 Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)**

SEM is a multivariate statistical technique that uses a single technique to test theoretical relationships (Lowry & Gaskin, 2014). This method combines factor analysis and multiple regression analysis to examine the structural relationship between observed variables and latent variables (Schreiber et al., 2006). Utilizing SEM is significant because it can handle a variety of relationships in which independent variables in one relationship become dependent variables in another (Cheng, 2001). These indices (absolute fit index), as previously stated, serve as the basis for SEM, which allows researchers to understand how well a model they've proposed fits the sampling-data results (McDonald & Ho, 2002). Furthermore, a larger sample yields



more reliable results, therefore, a sufficient sample size (at least 200 or 400) must be used to estimate the SEM model (Ahmad & Halim, 2017).

On the other hand, path analysis in SEM is a multivariate process that enables a researcher to investigate the relationship between two or more variables (Novack et al., 2001). It is supported and represented by the path diagram, which consists of various circles and boxes connected by arrows. Rectangles and squares represent the observed variables, whereas ellipses or circles represent the unobserved or latent factors (Ramadevi et al., 2016). Additionally, a single-headed arrow denotes a causal relationship (dependence relationship), while a double-headed arrow denotes a correlation or covariance. As a result, the path diagram illustrates comprehensible hypotheses about the factor's structure. The indicators, also known as observed variables, measured variables, or manifest variables, are advised to be four or higher, with three indicators being generally acceptable (Gallagher et al., 2008).

**CHAPTER 4**  
**DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

**4.1 Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)**

As briefly stated in the preceding chapter, EFA enabled extraction of factor structure, identification of which variables fall under which underlying construct, and verification of sample adequacy. Therefore, KMO and Bartlett's Test was used to determine whether the sampling unit is sufficient for further analysis. In order to determine the principal component matrix and factor loadings and verifying the reliability of the data for additional analysis, varimax rotation was selected.

**Table 4.1 KMO and Bartlett's Test of Travel Motivation**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.854
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2513.970
	df	136
	Sig.	.000

*(Source: Author)*

**Table 4.2 KMO and Bartlett's Test of Experience, Satisfaction, Quality of Life and Revisit Intention**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.928
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	6458.312
	df	325
	Sig.	.000

*(Source: Author)*

KMO assesses sample sufficiency, or whether the responses provided with the sample are adequate (Budaev, 2010). Data with KMO above 0.50 is considered satisfactory and suitable for factor analysis (Taherdoost et al., 2022; Halil & Kardaş, 2017). Table 4.1 provides the KMO value for the motivational factors, which is .854, and table 4.2 provides the KMO values for the other four factors (experience, satisfaction, quality of life, and revisit intention) which is .928, thereby explains suitability of the data for further analysis. Additionally, using Bartlett's test of sphericity, the evidence regarding the degree of association between the variables is

estimated (Rusuli et al., 2013). And the test result value of less than 0.05 is considered significant (Pfaller et al., 1990). Further, using EFA, the various underlying variables of constructs/ factors were identified and ascertained (Hair, Howard & Nitzl, 2020).

**Table 4.3 Eigenvalues and variance extracted for Travel Motivation factors**

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	5.535	32.557	32.557	5.535	32.557	32.557	3.874	22.786	22.786
2	2.110	12.415	44.972	2.110	12.415	44.972	2.193	12.902	35.688
3	1.481	8.711	53.683	1.481	8.711	53.683	2.140	12.588	48.276
4	1.131	6.653	60.335	1.131	6.653	60.335	2.050	12.060	60.335
5	.871	5.122	65.458						
6	.772	4.540	69.998						
7	.690	4.056	74.054						
8	.642	3.775	77.829						
9	.594	3.492	81.322						
10	.544	3.203	84.525						
11	.473	2.781	87.305						
12	.453	2.665	89.971						
13	.436	2.563	92.534						
14	.372	2.189	94.723						
15	.357	2.102	96.825						
16	.315	1.852	98.677						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

(Source: Author)

**Table 4.4 Eigenvalues and variance extracted for the other 4 factors (Experience, Satisfaction, Quality of Life & Revisit Intention)**

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	11.394	43.823	43.823	11.394	43.823	43.823	5.360	20.615	20.615
2	1.920	7.385	51.208	1.920	7.385	51.208	4.372	16.817	37.432
3	1.657	6.375	57.583	1.657	6.375	57.583	3.330	12.807	50.239
4	1.164	4.478	62.061	1.164	4.478	62.061	3.074	11.822	62.061
5	.946	3.640	65.701						
6	.776	2.986	68.687						
7	.722	2.778	71.464						
8	.653	2.511	73.976						
9	.617	2.372	76.348						
10	.609	2.341	78.689						
11	.586	2.256	80.945						
12	.545	2.095	83.040						
13	.479	1.843	84.883						
14	.463	1.779	86.662						
15	.429	1.652	88.314						
16	.389	1.496	89.809						
17	.380	1.460	91.269						
18	.350	1.346	92.615						
19	.340	1.307	93.923						

20	.305	1.173	95.096					
21	.282	1.086	96.182					
22	.252	.970	97.152					
23	.232	.894	98.046					
24	.221	.851	98.897					
25	.180	.693	99.590					
26	.107	.410	100.000					

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

(Source: Author)

VARIMAX (orthogonal) rotation was employed on 16 motivational items and 26 items from the other four factors (experience, satisfaction, quality of life and revisit intention). Using eigenvalues greater than one, four factors from each analysis were determined (table 4.3 & table 4.4). Accordingly, the explained variance percentages were 60.335% and 62.061%, respectively.

**Table 4.5 Cronbach Alpha and Factor Loadings of Travel Motivation**

		<b>Cronbach Alpha</b>		<b>.796</b>			
		<b>My motivation for taking the wellness holiday is</b>					
		<b><u>Transcendence</u></b>					
		<b>F1</b>	<b>F2</b>	<b>F3</b>	<b>F4</b>		
M1	To improve mental health			.785			
M7	To find my inner self			.699			
M16	To connect with nature			.691			
		<b><u>Rejuvenation</u></b>					
M2	To improve physical health		.838				
M8	To feel healthier		.782				
M4	To feel refreshed		.792				
		<b><u>Escapism</u></b>					
M3	To get away from daily routine					.823	
M14	Get away from the pressures of work					.828	
M10	To reduce my stress level and let go of my worries					.718	

	<b><u>Relaxation</u></b>				
M5	To increase my self-esteem	.593			
M6	To tell others where I have been	.443			
M9	To experience something new and exciting	.618			
M11	To experience calmness	.765			
M12	To feel relaxed	.772			
M13	To live energetically	.806			
M15	To focus on myself and to gain more confidence in myself	.690			

*\*Factor Loadings below .60 were removed and not considered for the final survey of the questionnaire (Effendi et al., 2019).*

*(Source: Author)*

**Table 4.6 Cronbach Alpha and Factor Loadings of Experience, Satisfaction, Quality of Life, Revisit Intention**

<b>Cronbach alpha</b>		<b>.946</b>			
		<b>F1</b>	<b>F2</b>	<b>F3</b>	<b>F4</b>
E1	This holiday helped me to improve my mental health		.547		
E2	On this vacation, I felt more satisfied with my life		.676		
E3	This vacation made me more knowledgeable and stimulated my curiosity		.620		
E4	I escaped from my daily routine during the holiday		.455		
E5	This vacation met my overall well-being needs		.590		
E6	This holiday experience encouraged me to understand myself better		.682		
E7	After this trip, my perception of life changed		.602		

E8	I felt free from the pressures of life on this trip		.636		
S1	Services at the wellness centre (e.g., activities, attractions, accommodations, etc.) were high in quality	.745			
S2	Services provided at the wellness centre were problem-free	.724			
S3	I am overly satisfied with my experience on this wellness holiday	.767			
S4	My experiences on this holiday exceeded my expectations	.685			
S5	I am happy about my decision to choose this wellness destination	.671			
S6	I believe that I have taken the right thing by choosing this wellness holiday	.816			
S7	I have enjoyed a lot myself this wellness holiday	.735			
QOL1	<del>This holiday helped me to enhance my life quality</del>		<del>.507</del>		
QOL2	<del>After this holiday I feel much better about things and myself</del>		<del>.423</del>		
QOL3	This holiday helped me to enhance my mental and spiritual state of well-being			.754	
QOL4	This trip encouraged me to lead a purposeful and meaningful life			.734	
QOL5	This vacation made me realize that I actively contribute to the happiness and well-being of others more than before			.794	
QOL6	This trip encouraged me to become more optimistic about my future			.786	
QOL7	<del>My satisfaction with life, in general, increased shortly after the trip</del>	<del>.512</del>			

RI1	I will definitely recommend this wellness destination to other people (e.g., friends, relatives, families, etc.)				.699
RI2	I will say positive things about this wellness vacation to other people (e.g., friends and relatives)				.727
RI3	If I will decide again to go for a wellness holiday, I will choose this wellness destination again				.856
RI4	I will revisit the same wellness destination in the near future				.843

*\*Factor Loadings below .60 were removed and not considered for the final survey of the questionnaire (Effendi et al., 2019).*

*(Source: Author)*

To investigate the relationships among observed items and variables, EFA was used (Hadi, Abdullah & Sentosa, 2016). Additionally, factor loading was used to avoid biasness and determine the number of variables for each factor (Park et al., 2002; Gaskin & Happell, 2014). The factor solution and factor loading of the five factors (motivation, experience, satisfaction, quality of life, and revisit intention) and their related variables are shown in tables 4.5 and 4.6. When it comes to taking into account and accepting variables based on their factor loading, it is suggested that all items with factor loadings ought to fall within the range of 0.5 to 0.7 for irrespective of sample size (Steenkamp & Maydeu-Olivares, 2022; Hadi et al., 2016). However, factor loading higher than 0.6 is considered the ideal value for established items (Effendi et al., 2019; Shrestha, 2021). Therefore, statements with factor loadings above 0.60 were taken into consideration for the final survey, while statements with factor loadings below 0.60 had been excluded from the final questionnaire.

Table 4.5 showed the final solution of Motivation that retained fourteen items across four variables, and it was also found fourteen statements have the highest loading (above 0.6). The Cronbach's alpha value was .796 (after deleting 2 statements) which is acceptable range (Mohamad et al., 2015; Taber, 2018). Additionally, table 4.6 displays the final solution of the other four variables namely, experience, satisfaction,

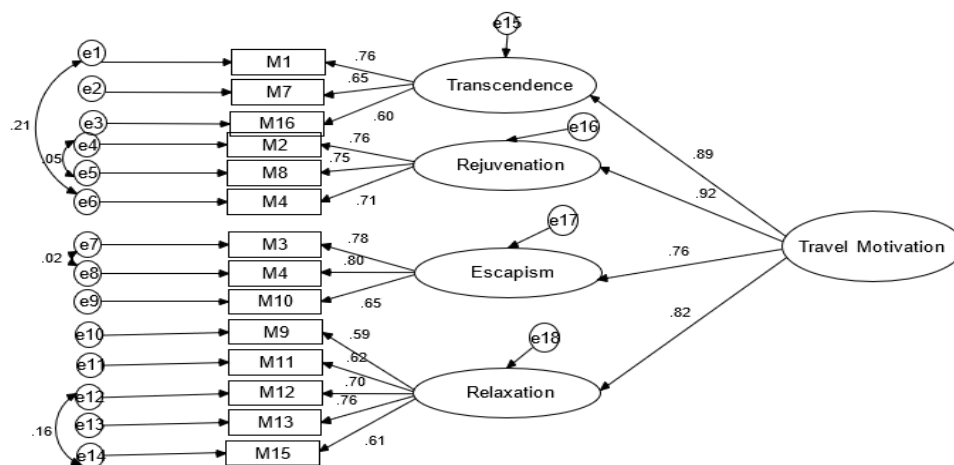


quality of life, and revisit intention that retained twenty items across the four variables. It was overall found that experience has five items; Satisfaction has seven items; Quality of Life has four items, Revisit intention has four items and overall Cronbach's alpha value was .946 (after deleting 6 statements) and indicated acceptable scale reliability (Mohamad et al., 2015; Taber, 2018). Therefore, 34 statements of 5 factors were finally considered.

## 4.2 Confirmatory factor analysis

To examine the measurement model, CFA was employed in AMOS 16.0. As discussed in the previous chapter, CFA evaluates construct validity. It is also a suitable technique for evaluating the relationships among the observed indicators and the underlying latent variable structure using theory-based expertise (Deesilatham, 2018). In order to verify the parameters used to evaluate the underlying constructs, a total of five measurement models of travel motivation, experience, satisfaction, quality of life, and revisit intention were evaluated. Statistical findings are explained along with the estimation procedure for each model.

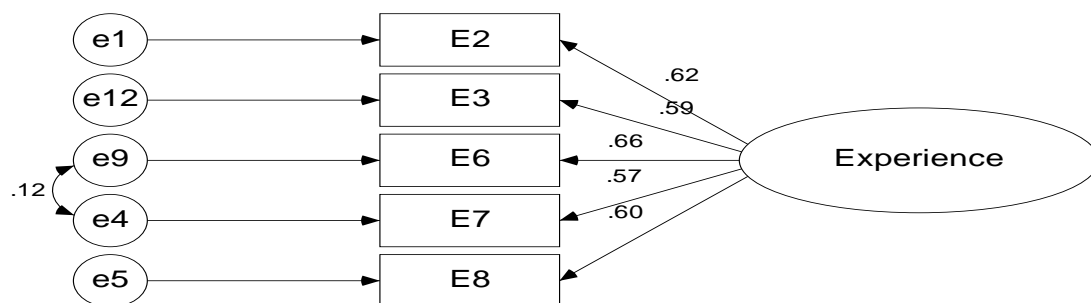
### 4.2.1 Confirmatory factor analysis for Travel Motivation



**Figure 4.1 Second-order Confirmatory factor analysis for Travel Motivation**  
(Source: Author)

The second-order confirmatory factor analysis of travel motivation was conducted by using 14 indicators. The second-order latent variable travel motivation shows four multiple first-order constructs (transcendence, rejuvenation, escapism, and relaxation) which in turn indicated the 14 observed variables or indicators (three from transcendence, three from rejuvenation, three from escapism, and five from relaxation) in two layers/ levels. In the above measurement model (Fig. 4.1) travel motivation exhibited factor loading ranging from .76 to .92. In addition, the four latent constructs (transcendence, rejuvenation, escapism, and relaxation) exhibited factor loading ranging from .59 to .80 which showed above the recommended cut-off value (0.5) as mentioned by Hair et al. (2010). Henceforth, the results of CFA indicated that the measurement model showed good fit indices and threshold criteria, i.e., Cmin/df: 1.102; GFI: 0.969; AGFI: 0.989; CFI:1.000; NFI: 0.992; RMR:0.005; RMSEA:0.023 (table 4.7). In addition to model fit, the Composite Reliability (CR) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of the construct were also examined. Accordingly, CR value falls between 0.883 to 0.919 which is above the suggested cut-off value (0.70) (Aguirre-Urreta et al., 2013), and AVE value ranges between 1.29 to 1.83 (greater than the cut-off 0.50) (Ab Hamid et al., 2017). Lastly, the result of Cronbach's alpha was 0.832 (table 4.7), indicating satisfactory reliability. Therefore, considering the evidence of good model fit, validity, and reliability it was postulated that the above measurement model was appropriate.

#### 4.2.2 Confirmatory factor analysis for Experience

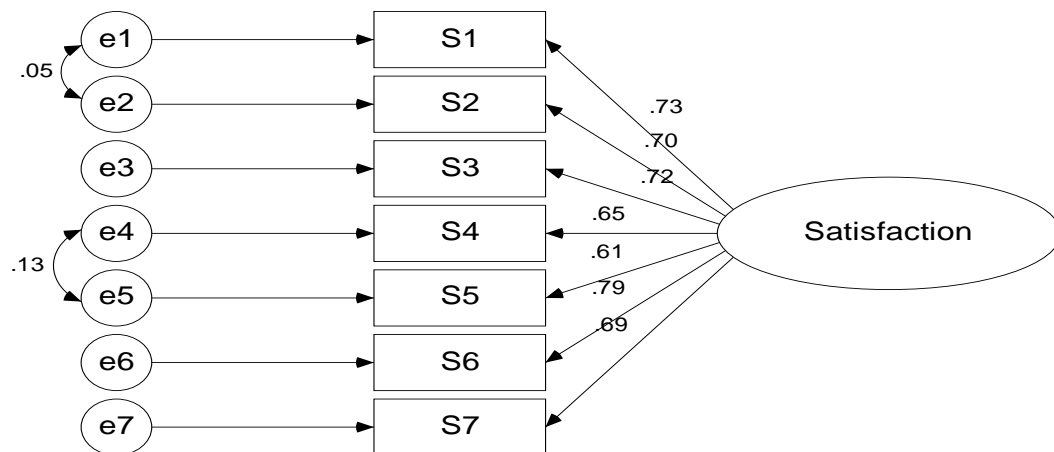


**Figure 4.2 Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Experience**

(Source: Author)

CFA for Experience with five statements/items, coded as E2, E3, E6, E7, and E8, and e1, e12, e9, e4, and e5 were respective error terms of apparent variables. The standardized regression weight for the above variables ranged from .57 to .66, indicating significant loadings. Cmin/df: 0.228; CFI:0.990; GFI:1.000; AGFI:0.999; NFI:0.999; RMR:0.022; RMSEA:0.001 were the CFA results that revealed a good fit (table 4.7). Furthermore, Composite Reliability (CR) was 0.880 and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) was 1.15 which fits the cut-off criteria (table 4.8). Cronbach's alpha was 0.804, this value explained satisfactory reliability. Eventually, given the evidence of good model fit, validity, and reliability the above measurement model is widely accepted.

#### 4.2.3 Confirmatory factor analysis for Satisfaction



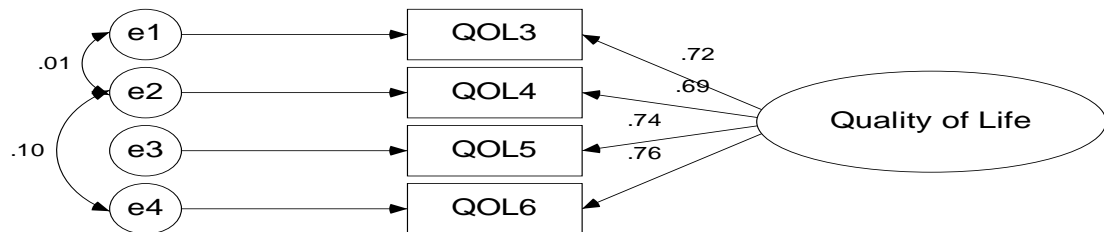
**Figure 4.3 Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Satisfaction**

(Source: Author)

CFA for Satisfaction tested with seven items, coded as S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6, and S7. The standardized regression weights for the above variables ranged from .61 to .79, indicating significant loadings. Cmin/df: 0.105; CFI: 1.000; GFI:1.000; AGFI: 1.000; NFI: 1.000; RMR: 0.015; RMSEA: 0.006 were the CFA results that revealed a good fit (table 4.7). Additionally, the calculated composite reliability (CR) was 0.932 and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) was 1.217 which meets the threshold criteria (table 4.8). Lastly, the value of Cronbach's alpha was 0.920 (table 4.7), which indicates excellent reliability. Therefore, considering the good model fit

indices, construct validity, and reliability the measurement model was widely regarded as appropriate.

#### 4.2.4 Confirmatory factor analysis for Quality of Life

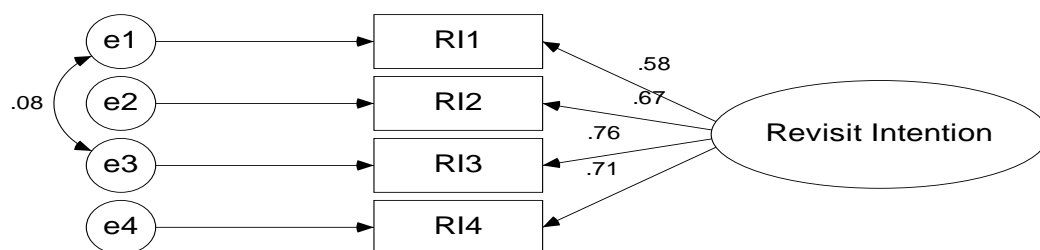


**Figure 4.4 Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Quality of Life**

(Source: Author)

CFA for Quality of Life determined by four statements/items, coded as QOL3, QOL4, QOL5, and QOL6. The above variables' standardized regression weights ranged from .69 to .76, indicating significant loadings. The CFA results revealed a good fit with Cmin/df: 1.01; CFI: 1.000; GFI: 1.000; AGFI: 0.999; NFI: 1.000; RMR: 0.011; RMSEA: 0.020 (table 4.7). Additionally, Average Variance Extracted (AVE) was 1.848 and Composite Reliability (CR) was 0.925 which fulfils the mentioned cut-off criteria (table 4.8), as well the Cronbach's alpha value was 0.862, indicating excellent reliability. Thus, the above measurement model was considered appropriate based on evidence of good model fit, reliability, and validity.

#### 4.2.5 Confirmatory factor analysis for Revisit Intention



**Figure 4.5 Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Revisit Intention**

(Source: Author)

CFA for Revisit Intention tested with four statements/items, coded as RI1, RI2, RI3, and RI4. The standardized regression weights for the above variables ranged from .58 to .76, indicating significant loadings. Cmin/df: 0.60; CFI: 0.998; GFI: 1.000; AGFI: 0.999; NFI: 0.998; RMR: 0.050; RMSEA: 0.000 were the CFA results that revealed a good fit (table 4.7). Furthermore, Composite Reliability was 0.906 and Average Variance Extracted was 1.638, which meets the threshold criteria (table 4.8). Lastly, the outcome of Cronbach’s alpha was 0.891 (table 4.7), which represented a satisfactory reliability. Therefore, the measurement model was considered appropriate based on good model fit indices, validity and reliability.

**Table 4.7 Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis**

Constructs	Variables	Model Fit Indices	Alpha-Value	Standardized Regression Weight (SRW)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Composite Reliability (CR)		
Transcendence	M1	Cmin/df: 1.102;  RMR:0.005;  GFI: 0.969;	.832	.765	1.83	0.883		
	M7			.658				
	M17			.601				
Rejuvenation	M2					.767	2.21	0.917
	M8					.752		
	M4					.711		
Escapism	M3					.782	2.23	0.919
	M14					.799		
	M10					.655		
Relaxation	M9			.592	1.29	0.902		

	M11	AGFI: 0.989;		.623		
	M12			.706		
	M13	CFI:1.000;		.762		
	M15	NFI: 0.992		.614		
		RMSEA:0.0 23				
Experience	E2	Cmin/df: 0.228;	.804	.620	1.15	0.880
	E3			.596		
	E6	RMR:0.022;		.668		
	E7			.573		
	E8	GFI:1.000;		.599		
		AGFI:0.999;				
		CFI:0.990;				
		NFI:0.999;				
		RMSEA:0.0 01				
Satisfaction	S1	Cmin/df: 0.105;	.920	.737	1.21 7	0.932
	S2			.691		

	S3			.725		
	S4	RMR:0.015;		.653		
	S5			.618		
	S6	GFI:1.000;		.793		
	S7	AGFI:1.000;		.690		
		CFI:1.000;				
		NFI:1.000;				
		RMSEA:0.006				
Quality of Life	QOL3	Cmin/df: 1.01;	.862	.721	1.848	0.925
	QOL4			.697		
	QOL5	RMR:0.011;		.741		
	QOL6			.766		
		GFI:1.000;				
		AGFI:0.999;				
		CFI:1.000;				
		NFI:1.000;				

		RMSEA:0.020				
Revisit Intention	RI1	Cmin/df: 0.60; RMR:0.050; GFI:1.000; AGFI:0.999; CFI:0.998; NFI:0.998; RMSEA:0.000	.891	.586	1.638	0.906
	RI2			.673		
	RI3			.768		
	RI4			.711		

(Source: Author)

**Table 4.8 Fit indices and acceptable cut-off criteria**

Indices	Ideal Value/ Cut-off Criteria
Cmin/df (Chi-square/ Degree of Freedom)	<.5
(Chi-squared P-value) $\chi^2$ P-value	>0.05
AGFI (Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index)	> 0.90
GFI (Goodness-of-Fit Index)	> 0.90
CFI (Comparative Fit Index)	> 0.90



NFI (Normed Fit Index)	> 0.90
RMR (Root Mean Square Residual)	<.05
RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation)	< .08
AVE (Average Variance Extracted)	>.5
CR (Composite Reliability)	>.7

(*Adopted from- Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Browne, 1993; Hair et al., 1998; Aguirre-Urreta et al., 2013; Hair et al., 2014; Ab Hamid et al., 2017*)

### 4.3 Respondents Profile

In order to understand more about the respondents, a number of demographic questions were added to the questionnaire. These inquiries contain a lot of information, such as age, gender, marital status, educational background, annual household income, employment status, and nationality.

**Table 4.9 Profile of All Respondents**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Frequencies</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	216	57.0
Female	163	43.0
Total	379	100.0
<b>Age</b>		
15-24	49	12.9
25-44	258	68.1
45-64	66	17.4
above 65	6	1.6
Total	379	100.0
<b>Marital status</b>		
Unmarried	170	44.9

Married	202	53.3
Others	7	1.8
Total	379	100.0

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#### **Educational Qualification**

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High School	19	5.0
Intermediate	27	7.1
Graduate	172	45.4
Post Graduate	129	34.0
Doctorate	22	5.8
Others	10	2.6
Total	379	100.0

---

#### **Annual household income**

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2 to 4 Lakhs	46	12.1
4 to 6 Lakhs	46	12.1
6 to 8 Lakhs	102	26.9
10 Lakhs or More	184	48.5
Total	379	100.0

---

#### **Employment Status**

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Employed	204	53.8
Unemployed	21	5.5
Student	36	9.5
Retired	8	2.1
Others	110	29.0
Total	379	100.0

---

#### **Nationality**

---

Indian	322	85.0
Foreigner	57	15.0
Total	379	100.0

---

**Traveling**

Alone	173	45.6
With partner	72	19.0
With group or friends	87	23.0
With family	47	12.4
Total	379	100.0

---

**Number of visits to Himachal Pradesh**

1	119	31.4
2	56	14.8
3	57	15.0
4 or more	147	38.8
Total	379	100.0

---

**Number of visits to Himachal Pradesh Wellness Centers**

1	264	69.7
2	70	18.5
3	22	5.8
4 or more	23	6.1
Total	379	100.0

---

**Length of Stay on the Current Trip**

1-5 Days	122	32.2
6-10 Days	96	25.3

11-15 Days	25	6.6
15 Days or more	135	35.6
Total	379	100.0

*(Source: Author)*

According to the descriptive analysis of the respondents' demographics profiles (table 4.9), 57% of tourists were male and the other 43% were female. Regarding age, most of tourists aged between 25 and 44 (15-24: 12.9%; 25-44: 68.1%; 45-64: 17.4%; above 65: 1.6%). Among them 44.9% were unmarried, 53.3% were married and only 1.8% were others (separated/divorced). Most of the tourists' completed their graduation i.e., 45.4%. Regarding the annual household income, the wellness tourists were high-income tourists with annual household income of 10 lakhs or more (2 to 4 Lakhs: 12.1%; 4 to 6 Lakhs: 12.1%; 6 to 8 Lakhs: 26.9%; 10 Lakhs or More: 48.5%). Furthermore, the majority of tourists, approximately 53.8%, were employed, with only 2.1% were retired. As far as nationality is concerned the majority of tourists (85%) were from India, with the remaining 15% were foreigners. Besides that, 45.6% of tourists traveled alone, 23% with groups or friends, 19% with a partner, and 12.4% with family. Regarding the number of visits to Himachal Pradesh, most tourists (38.8%) visited Himachal Pradesh four or more times, and the majority of tourists (69.7%) visited the wellness retreat for the first time. Subsequently, 32.2% of tourists stayed 1-5 days in wellness retreats on their most recent trip, while 25.3% for 6-10 days, 6.6% for 11-15 days, and 35.6% for 15 days or more.

#### **4.4 Descriptive Analysis of Items/Indicators**

As mentioned in the previous chapter, descriptive analysis is used to organize and summarize data. It helps in providing an understanding of the sample characteristics as well as variables (Singh, 2021). Furthermore, the descriptive analysis explained the data's basic characteristics and the distribution's nature. In the current study, statistical methods such as percentages, mean, and standard deviation were applied, and discussed.

#### 4.4.1 Travel Motivation

**Table 4.10 Travel Motivations of Retreat Visitors for taking Wellness Holidays**

Construct	Variables	Items/Indicators	Codes	Mean	SD
Travel Motivation	Transcendence	To improve mental health	M1	4.82	0.467
		To find my inner self	M7	4.78	0.450
		To connect with nature	M16	4.83	0.389
	Rejuvenation	To improve physical health	M2	4.31	0.770
		To feel healthier	M8	4.52	0.616
		To feel refreshed	M4	4.80	0.401
	Escapism	To get away from daily routine	M3	4.53	0.678
		Get away from the pressures of work	M14	4.62	0.641
		To reduce my stress level and let go of my worries	M10	4.72	0.506
	Relaxation	To experience something new and exciting	M9	4.71	0.516
		To experience calmness	M11	4.79	0.424
		To feel relaxed	M12	4.80	0.398
		To live energetically	M13	4.75	0.446
		To focus on myself and to gain more confidence in myself	M15	4.73	0.459

*(Source: Author)*

According to analysis, it was revealed that tourists are highly motivated to get connected with nature (M= 4.83, SD= 0.389) and want their mental health to be improved (M= 4.82, SD= 0.467). Considering the rejuvenation aspect, their (tourists') motivation is highly inclined toward the feeling of being greatly refreshed (M= 4.80, SD= 0.401). Similarly, results defined escapism as another factor where, tourists are highly motivated to travel as they believe it can reduce their stress levels (M= 4.72, SD= 0.506). With respect to relaxation, the tourists are highly motivated to wellness

activities for some relaxation (M= 4.80, SD= 0.398), followed by their expectation/motivation to experience some calmness (M= 4.79, SD= 0.424) and energetic (M= 4.75, SD= 0.446).

#### 4.4.2 Experience

**Table 4.11 Wellness Holidays Experience of Retreat Visitors**

Constructs	Items/Indicators	Codes	Mean	SD
Experience	On this vacation, I felt more satisfied with my life	E2	4.84	0.373
	This vacation made me more knowledgeable and stimulated my curiosity	E3	4.82	0.403
	This holiday experience encouraged me to understand myself better	E6	4.79	0.412
	After this trip, my perception of life changed	E7	4.71	0.501
	I felt free from the pressures of life on this trip	E8	4.75	0.449

(Source: Author)

The results of table 4.11 indicated that during wellness vacations, tourists were extremely satisfied with their life (M= 4.84, SD= 0.373), gained more knowledge, and became curious (M= 4.82, SD= 0.403). Additionally, tourists feel highly experienced in terms of better understanding themselves (M= 4.79, SD= 0.412) and being free of life's pressure (M= 4.75, SD= 0.449).

#### 4.4.3 Satisfaction

**Table 4.12 Wellness Holidays Satisfaction of Retreat Visitors**

Constructs	Items/Indicators	Codes	Mean	SD
Satisfaction	Services at the wellness centre (e.g., activities, attractions, accommodations, etc.) were high in quality	S1	4.72	0.494
	Services provided at the wellness centre were problem-free	S2	4.74	0.485

	I am overly satisfied with my experience on this wellness holiday	S3	4.75	0.436
	My experiences on this holiday exceeded my expectations	S4	4.71	0.478
	I am happy about my decision to choose this wellness destination	S5	4.78	0.419
	I believe that I have taken the right thing by choosing this wellness holiday	S6	4.75	0.439
	I have enjoyed a lot myself this wellness holiday	S7	4.8	0.406

(Source: Author)

According to the analysis, it was found that tourists enjoyed a lot in the wellness holidays (M= 4.8, SD= 0.406) and were happy with their decision that they choose the wellness retreats of Himachal Pradesh for their vacation (M= 4.78, SD= 0.419), and felt overly satisfied (M= 4.75, SD= 0.439). Additionally, tourists were extremely satisfied with the problem-free (M= 4.74, SD= 0.485) and high-quality services (such as activities, attractions, accommodations, etc.) offered at the wellness centre (M= 4.72, SD= 0.494). Moreover, they were very happy because their holiday experiences were better than they had expected (M= 4.71, SD= 0.478).

#### 4.4.4 Quality of Life

**Table 4.13 Quality of Life of Retreat Visitors from Wellness Holidays**

Constructs	Items/Indicators	Codes	Mean	SD
Quality of Life	This holiday helped me to enhance my mental and spiritual state of well-being	QOL3	4.68	0.491
	This trip encouraged me to lead a purposeful and meaningful life	QOL4	4.66	0.518
	This vacation made me realize that I actively contribute to the happiness and well-being of others more than before	QOL5	4.59	0.544
	This trip encouraged me to become more optimistic about my future	QOL6	4.64	0.518

(Source: Author)

The results of table 4.13 indicated that tourists' quality of life had significantly improved as a consequence of their wellness holiday. The holiday contributed to

enhancing their mental and spiritual state of well-being (M= 4.68, SD= 0.491). It inspired them to live a meaningful life (M= 4.66, SD= 0.518) and become more optimistic about the future (M= 4.64, SD= 0.518). Additionally, they were able to actively promote the happiness and well-being of others more than before (M= 4.59, SD= 0.544).

#### 4.4.5 Revisit Intention

**Table 4.14 Revisit Intention of Retreat Visitors after Wellness Holidays**

Constructs	Items/Indicators	Codes	Mean	SD
Revisit Intention	I will definitely recommend this wellness destination to other people (e.g., friends, relatives, families, etc.)	RI1	4.74	0.440
	I will say positive things about this wellness vacation to other people (e.g., friends and relatives)	RI2	4.75	0.439
	If I will decide again to go for a wellness holiday, I will choose this wellness destination again	RI3	4.69	0.499
	I will revisit the same wellness destination in the near future	RI4	4.70	0.489

(Source: Author)

According to the analysis, the results revealed that tourists were strongly agreed to speak favourably of their wellness vacation (M= 4.75, SD= 0.439) to other people such as friends, relatives, families, etc. (M= 4.74, SD= 0.440). Additionally, they will revisit the same wellness destination in the near future (M= 4.70, SD= 0.489), if they will decide for a wellness holiday (M= 4.69, SD= 0.499).

#### 4.5 Hypotheses Testing

This section represents the statistical analysis, i.e., hypotheses testing of the study. A total of five hypotheses were tested by using SPSS 22.0 and AMOS16.0. To find out how the different variables are related to each other, regression analysis was applied (Green, 1991). Four hypotheses were tested using regression analysis. On the other hand, as SEM is better served for mediation analysis (Sarstedt et al., 2020). So, for mediation effect, Structural Equation Modelling technique was applied. In the mediation analysis, a proposed mediator is indeed frequently used to indirectly examine



how a proposed cause will affect the result/ outcome (Preacher & Hayes, 2004). Furthermore, structural relationships between various factors/ latent variables on which the hypothetical framework was based are measured and explained using the SEM technique along with pertinent theories and earlier research evidence (fig. 4.6) (Deesilatham, 2018).

**4.5.1 H1: Travel motivations have a significant relationship with wellness tourism experiences.**

**Table 4.15 Regression Model Summary- Travel Motivations and Experience**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.705 <sup>a</sup>	.503	.477	.23283
a. Predictors: (Constant), Relaxation, Rejuvenation, Transcendence, Escapism				

(Source: Author)

Regression analysis is used to test the first hypothesis, and the results are discussed further below. The effect and strength of relationship between travel motivation and wellness tourism experience are assessed utilizing multiple regression analysis. The regression model summary shown in Table 4.15 includes R and R<sup>2</sup> values. The R-value measures how closely two variables are correlated (Taylor,1990), and the R-value is generally positive and ranges from 0 to 1 which signifies a good fit (Ratner, 2009). However, the estimated value is .705, which explains the strong association between retreat visitors' travel motivations (Relaxation, Rejuvenation, Transcendence, Escapism) and their experiences while on wellness tourism. Additionally, the dependent variable's total variation as a result of the independent variable is indicated by its R<sup>2</sup> value (Hamilton et al., 2015), and the value ranges from 0 to 100% (Brown, 2001). In this case, the R<sup>2</sup> value is 50.3%, which is satisfactory and implies that travel motivations (Relaxation, Rejuvenation, Transcendence, Escapism) (independent variables) accounts for 50.3% of variation in experience (dependent variable).

**Table 4.16 ANOVA- Travel Motivations and Experience**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	19.971	4	4.993	92.100	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	21.413	375	.054		
	Total	41.384	379			
a. Dependent Variable: Experience						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Relaxation, Rejuvenation, Transcendence, Escapism						

(Source: Author)

The ANOVA table (4.16) illustrates the regression equation's accuracy in predicting the dependent variable and how nicely it fits the data (Peng et al., 2002). As per table 4.16, regression model successfully predicts dependent variable in a significant way. Here, the regression model's overall statistical significance is  $p < 0.0005$ , or less than 0.05 (Reilly et al., 2007). Therefore, it fits the data well, and the overall model is found to be significant.

**Table 4.17 Coefficients- Travel Motivations and Experience**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.608	.063		4.967	.000
	Transcendence	.322	.019	.341	8.279	.000
	Rejuvenation	.149	.015	.271	1.795	.053
	Escapism	.213	.017	.401	1.477	.031
	Relaxation	.408	.041	.437	9.921	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Experience						

(Source: Author)

The beta coefficients for travel motivations such as transcendence, rejuvenation, escapism, and relaxation in table 4.17 showed positive values, indicating a positive relationship between retreat visitors' travel motivations and their wellness tourism experience. However, the rejuvenation variable does not support the hypothesis, as evidenced by the p-value ( $p < 0.05$ ;  $0.05 < .053$ ), whereas transcendence, escapism, and relaxation all showed less than 0.05 ( $.000 < 0.05$ ;  $.031 < 0.05$ ;  $.000 < 0.05$ ) (Neil &

Cant, 2014). As a result, besides rejuvenation, the other three variables of travel motivation (transcendence, escapism, and relaxation) strongly and positively influence tourists' experience. Overall, the first hypothesis “travel motivations have a significant relationship with wellness tourism experiences” is supported.

**4.5.2 H2: There is a significant relationship between Wellness tourism experience and tourist satisfaction.**

**Table 4.18 Regression Model Summary- Experience & Satisfaction**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.653 <sup>a</sup>	.426	.425	.28208
a. Predictors: (Constant), Experience				

(Source: Author)

**Table 4.19 ANOVA- Experience & Satisfaction**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	23.541	1	23.541	295.860	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	31.669	378	.080		
Total	55.210	379			
a. Dependent Variable: Satisfaction					
b. Predictors: (Constant), Experience					

(Source: Author)

**Table 4.20 Coefficients- Experience & Satisfaction**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.145	.210		5.444	.000
	Experience	.754	.044	.653	17.201	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Satisfaction						

(Source: Author)

Table 4.18 presents the model summary of the regression analysis using experience as the predictor variable and satisfaction as the outcome variable. The R-value is .653, implying that the two variables are strongly correlated. The coefficient of determination ( $R^2 = .426$ ) specifies a 42.6% variance of the dependent variable (satisfaction) which is explained by the variation of the independent variable (experience). The adjusted  $R^2$  is .425 and the standard error of the estimate is .2820 respectively. The F value in ANOVA table 4.18 is 295.860, with a significant level of .000, stating that this model is acceptable and fits the framed hypothesis. Additionally (table 4.20), the beta value is .754, indicating that when an independent variable is changed by one unit, the dependent variable changes by one unit as well. The occurrence of a positive beta value signifies a strong relationship between the Wellness tourism experience and tourist satisfaction. Moreover, the p-value is less than 0.05 ( $.000 < .05$ ), inferring that the alternative hypothesis is statistically significant and accepted as a positive relationship is depicted between wellness tourism experience and tourist satisfaction.

#### 4.5.3 H3: Tourists' satisfaction significantly influences tourists' revisit intention

**Table 4.21 Regression Model Summary- Satisfaction & Revisit Intention**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.602 <sup>a</sup>	.363	.361	.32464
a. Predictors: (Constant), Satisfaction				

(Source: Author)

**Table 4.22 ANOVA- Satisfaction & Revisit Intention**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	23.877	1	23.877	226.562	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	41.945	398	.105		
	Total	65.822	399			
a. Dependent Variable: Revisit Intention						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Satisfaction						

(Source: Author)

**Table 4.23 Coefficients- Satisfaction & Revisit Intention**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.010	.181		11.112	.000
	Satisfaction	.573	.038	.602	15.052	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Revisit Intention

(Source: Author)

Table 4.21 provides the model summary for the regression analysis that focused on the predictor variable satisfaction and the outcome variable revisit intention. The R-value is .602 which indicates a positive relationship between the variables and asserts that tourists' satisfaction (independent variable) has a positive relationship with the revisit intention (dependent variable) of tourists. The coefficient of determination ( $R^2 = .363$ ) describes a 36.3% variance in the revisit intention which is accounted for by the variation in the tourists' satisfaction. The adjusted  $R^2$  is .361 and the standard error of the estimate is .32464. The F value from Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) (table 4.22) is 226.562, and the significance level is .000, indicating that this model is appropriate and fits the framed hypothesis. Furthermore, the p-value is less than 0.05 ( $.000 < .05$ ) (table 4.23), revealing that the alternative hypothesis is statistically significant. Additionally, the beta value is .573. The positive beta value suggests a strong correlation between tourists' satisfaction with wellness tourism and their intention to return. In other words, if tourist satisfaction in wellness tourism context increases, more travelers will desire to return/ revisit to the same destination.

#### **4.5.4 H4: There is a significant relationship between Wellness tourism satisfaction and the quality of life of tourists**

**Table 4.24 Regression Model Summary- Satisfaction & Quality of Life**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.590 <sup>a</sup>	.348	.347	.,32833

a. Predictors: (Constant), Satisfaction

(Source: Author)

**Table 4.25 ANOVA- Satisfaction & Quality of Life**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	22.918	1	22.918	212.596	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	42.905	378	.108		
	Total	65.822	379			

a. Dependent Variable: Revisit Intention  
b. Predictors: (Constant), Satisfaction

(Source: Author)

**Table 4.26 Coefficients- Satisfaction & Quality of Life**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.660	.211		7.880	.000
	Satisfaction	.644	.044	.590	14.581	.000

(Source: Author)

Table 4.24 showed the model summary of regression analysis of the predictor variable (satisfaction) and the outcome variable (quality of life). The R-value is .590 clearly stating a positive relationship between the variables, which means tourists' satisfaction has a positive relationship with the quality of life of tourists in the context of wellness tourism. According to the coefficient of determination ( $R^2 = .348$ ), the variation in tourists' experiences accounts for a 34.8% variance in the quality of life. The adjusted  $R^2$  is .347 and the standard error of the estimate is .32833. The F value from the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) (table 4.25) is 212.596, and the significance level is .000, confirming that the model is appropriate and fits the framed hypothesis. Additionally, the p-value is less than 0.05 ( $.000 < .05$ ) (table 4.26), indicating that the alternative hypothesis is statistically significant and accepted as it shows a positive relationship between wellness tourism satisfaction and tourist quality of life. Furthermore, the beta value is positive and is .644, which showed a substantial relationship between wellness tourism satisfaction and tourist quality of life. Accordingly, as tourist satisfaction increases consequently the quality of life of tourists increases as well.

#### 4.5.5 H5: The quality of life of tourists has a significant relationship with tourist revisit intention

According to the literature, the mediation role of QOL has been defined with the revisit intentions and satisfaction level of tourists. Accordingly, SEM analysis was applied to justify relationship. In fact to test its overall role in travel behavior of tourists, Path analysis (in SEM) was applied. The other model fit indices include NFI = .952; RFI = .922; IFI = .956; TLI = .927; CFI = .955; PCLOSE = .000, all of which showed a good model fit (table 4.28) (Schumacker & Lomax, 2004). It was observed that QOL has a significant positive mediation role in defining the relation between revisit intention and tourists' satisfaction (refer fig. 4.6). This authenticates and validates the 5<sup>th</sup> hypothesis of our research. In fact the relation gets much increased when mediated with QOL (refer fig. 4.6). Therefore, SEM model not only supports H4 but also defines the overall relationship of QOL in the travel behavior of wellness tourists in Himachal Pradesh.

**Table 4.27 Baseline Comparisons**

Model	CMIN/DF	NFI Delta1	RFI rho1	IFI Delta2	TLI rho2	CFI	RMSEA	PCLOSE
Default model	12.887	.952	.922	.956	.927	.955	.013	.000

(Source: Author)

**Table 4.28 Baseline Comparison Model Fit Indices**

Model Fit Indices	Acceptable Threshold Criteria
CMIN/DF	Good <3, acceptable <5
NFI Delta1	>0.9
RFI rho1	>0.9
IFI	>0.8

Delta2	
TLI rho2	>0.9
CFI	>0.9
RMSEA	Good <0.05
PCLOSE	Good <0.05

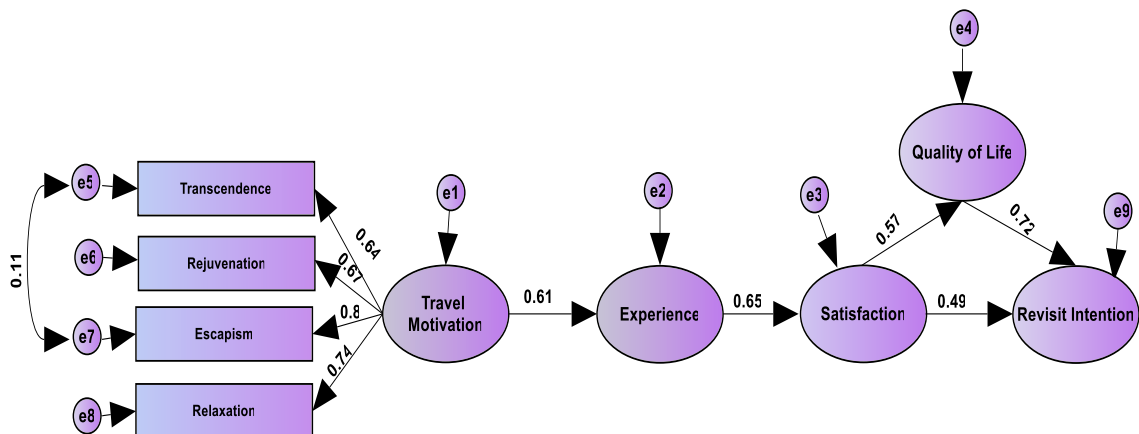
(Sources: Bentler & Bonett, 1980; Schumacker & Lomax, 2004; Shadfar & Malekmohammadi, 2013; Zhou & Chai, 2015)

**Table 4.29 Results of Path Analysis**

Hypothesis	Structural Path	Path Coefficient ( $\beta$ )	t-value	Result (p=.000)
<b>H1</b>	Motivation--> Experience	0.61	10.11	Accepted
<b>H2</b>	Experience--> Satisfaction	0.65	17.346	Accepted
<b>H3</b>	Satisfaction--> Revisit Intention	0.49	9.162	Accepted
<b>H4</b>	Satisfaction--> QOL	0.57	11.617	Accepted
<b>H5</b>	Satisfaction--> QOL--> Revisit Intention	0.72	19.882	Partial mediation (Accepted)

(Source: Author)





**Figure 4.6 Tested Structural Equation Model**

**Table 4.30 Summary of Hypotheses Testing**

<b>H</b>	<b>Hypotheses</b>	<b>Result</b>
H1	Travel motivations have a significant relationship with wellness tourism experiences	Accepted
H2	There is a significant relationship between Wellness tourism experience and tourist satisfaction	Accepted
H3	Tourists' satisfaction significantly influences tourists' revisit intention	Accepted
H4	There is a significant relationship between Wellness tourism satisfaction and the quality of life of tourists	Accepted
H5	The quality of life of tourists has a significant relationship with tourist revisit intention	Accepted

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND IMPLICATIONS**

#### **5.1 Summary**

This research was designed to investigate the travel motivation factors and travel determinants such as experience, satisfaction, quality of life, and revisit intention of retreat visitors visiting wellness retreats in Himachal Pradesh. Develops a conceptual framework to investigate the interrelationships of these five factors. The previous chapter presented the results of hypotheses testing using regression and SEM analysis. The present chapter discusses the research findings in detail, revealing how the study objectives and hypotheses were achieved. The research contributions or implications are then explained, along with potential future research directions, and drawbacks.

#### **5.2 Conclusion and Discussion of the Research Findings**

##### **5.2.1 Motivational factors amongst retreat Visitors to perform wellness tourism**

The objective of the current study is to determine motivational factors amongst retreat visitors to conduct wellness tourism in Himachal Pradesh's Wellness retreats. The identified motivational factors that influence retreat visitors' travel decisions for wellness tourism include; transcendence, rejuvenation, escapism, and relaxation (Kessler et al., 2020; Fakfare et al., 2020; Tuzunkan, 2018; Dimitrovski & Todorović, 2015; Yousefi & Marzuki, 2012; Voigt et al., 2011; Jönsson & Devonish, 2008). However, earlier studies investigated push and pull motivational factors that affect wellness tourists' travel decisions (Ashton, 2018; Baniya & Paudel, 2016; Krishnamoorthy & Venkatesh, 2015; Azman & Kim, 2012; Chan & Baum, 2007). Some studies focused on cross-cultural factors (Warangkana & Supawat, 2020), even though these factors play an important role in wellness tourist travel decisions, there is no such understanding of which factors are categorized as more crucial when making a travel decision to a wellness tourism destination (Cooper & Buckley, 2022; Sharafuddin & Madhavan, 2020). In order to achieve the first objective of this research, EFA, CFA, and descriptive statistics have been used. Extensive literature review had been carried out to identify the different factors that define retreat visitors' travel motivation.

Following data collection, EFA was used to establish the factor structure. Furthermore, CFA was used to confirm the factor structure, for transcendence, rejuvenation, escapism, and relaxation. These were further validated with fourteen indicators and afterward utilized for descriptive analysis. The descriptive statistics results revealed that the biggest motivation of wellness retreat visitors travelled to the wellness retreats of Himachal Pradesh was transcendence, they wanted to connect with nature, improve their mental health as well as find their inner selves in the lush tranquility atmosphere/surroundings. The finding is supported by previous studies that suggested similar results on the decision to travel of retreat visitors (Kessler et al., 2020; Kelly, 2012). Similarly, results indicated that rejuvenation is another significant factor to travel for wellness holidays. The purpose of travel was to feel refreshed, feel healthier, and improve physical health (Dimitrovski & Todorović, 2015; Konu & Laukkanen, 2009). Additionally, visitors travel to the wellness destination instead of residing at their usual residence (Campón-Cerro et al., 2019) to feel relaxed, experience calmness, live energetically, experience something new that is different from their daily lives, and focus on themselves to gain more confidence in themselves (Tuzunkan, 2018; Damijanić & Šergo, 2013; Yousefi & Marzuki, 2012). Besides that, wellness tourists travelled to get away from their daily routines and work pressures, as well as to alleviate their stress level and anxieties through yoga, meditation, or simply walking in nature (Kessler et al., 2020; Kim et al., 2017; Dimitrovski & Todorović, 2015; Voigt et al., 2011; Jönsson & Devonish, 2008).

### **5.2.2 Relationship between travel motivations and tourists' experience of wellness tourism**

To find out the relationship between wellness travel motivations and wellness tourism experience at the retreat centres of Himachal Pradesh multiple regression analysis was applied. An extensive literature reviewed and conceptual framework of the study was developed to understand which motivational factors influence wellness tourists' experience. It was found that motivational factors such as, transcendence, escapism, and relaxation significantly influence tourist experience. During the wellness trip, tourists reported feeling liberated from life's stresses and the holiday experience encouraged them to understand themselves better (Dillette et al., 2021). It was also

found that the wellness vacation made them more knowledgeable and stimulated their curiosity (Hwang & Lee, 2019). Furthermore, they felt more satisfied with life and after completion of the holiday their perception of life changed, as wellness vacations provide a deeply relaxing as well as self-searching unique experience. This finding, however, was consistent with previous findings (Kim et al., 2015). On the contrary, rejuvenation did not influence the tourist experience. As a consequence, the other three factors of travel motivation—transcendence, escapism, and relaxation—have a greater impact on tourists' experiences than rejuvenation. Overall, the first hypothesis "travel motivations have a significant relationship with wellness tourism experiences" is supported by evidence.

### **5.2.3 The level of satisfaction of retreat visitors from wellness tourism in Himachal Pradesh**

This objective was achieved using descriptive analysis. A five-point Likert scale was used to survey the participants (retreat visitors) in order to measure their satisfaction level (Westbrook & Oliver, 1981) with the provided services and holiday experiences at the wellness retreats of Himachal Pradesh. The results revealed that retreat visitors enjoyed a lot throughout their wellness holiday and they were happy about their decision to choose the wellness retreats of Himachal Pradesh as their wellness destination. Moreover, they were overly satisfied with their wellness vacation experience and believed that they had taken the right thing by choosing the destination. Additionally, retreat tourists agreed that the wellness center's offerings were flawless and that facilities/offerings such as activities, attractions, accommodations, etc. were high in quality. This result supported the previous parallel studies that services at wellness centres played a vital role in tourists' satisfaction (Shavanddasht & Allan, 2019; Chen et al., 2015). Furthermore, retreat visitors' holiday experiences exceeded their expectations, which increased their level of satisfaction (Warangkana & Supawat, 2020; Su et al., 2020). As a result, overall findings indicated that retreat visitors' satisfaction with Himachal Pradesh's wellness retreats had increased.

#### **5.2.4 Relationship between Wellness tourism experience and tourist satisfaction**

Numerous studies have shown that travel experiences, such as pre-trip planning, on-site visits, and post-trip reflection, have a significant impact on travellers' satisfaction (Richardson & Insch, 2021; Chen, 2019; Sirgy et al., 2011; Neal & Gursoy, 2008). Additionally, it was found that the degree to which tourists are satisfied with their travel experiences is directly related to each of the aforementioned service elements of the tourism system and, each one has a substantial effect on overall satisfaction (Hwang & Lee, 2019; Chen et al., 2016). Additionally, the present study explored association between wellness tourism experience and visitor satisfaction at the wellness retreats of Himachal Pradesh. The relationship was identified using regression analysis. The findings revealed that the wellness tourism experience has significantly influence tourists' satisfaction (Luo et al., 2016). It was also found that retreat visitors experiences surpassed their expectations, which in turn influence tourists' satisfaction. Additionally, tourists had a positive experience on the services and accommodation facilities at the centres (Warangkana & Supawat, 2020), henceforth, the second hypothesis "There is a significant relationship between Wellness tourism experience and tourist satisfaction" is supported.

#### **5.2.5 Influence of satisfaction on the revisit intentions of retreat visitors**

Extensive empirical research has been conducted to determine the association between tourist satisfaction and revisit intention or other travel-related behaviours (Warangkana & Supawat, 2020; Shavanddasht & Allan, 2019; Prayag & Ryan, 2012; Jang & Feng, 2007). However, both regression and SEM analysis were employed to achieve research objective. The study's findings showed that there was a significant positive association between tourist satisfaction and revisit intention. This result indicated that the effectiveness of vacation satisfaction had a positive influence on tourists' intentions to return wellness retreats (Deesilatham, 2018). This finding was consistent with existing literatures (Bayih & Singh, 2020; Khuong & Ha, 2014). Moreover, the satisfied retreat visitors ensure that they will definitely tell their friends, families, and others about the wellness destination and will say positive things about the wellness vacation (Han et al., 2020; Shavanddasht & Allan, 2019). According to

them, if they will decide again to go for a wellness holiday, will choose wellness retreats of Himachal Pradesh again. As a result, the third hypothesis “Tourists’ satisfaction significantly influences tourists' revisit intention” is supported.

#### **5.2.6 Role of quality of life in defining the revisit intentions of retreat visitors in Himachal Pradesh**

To determine the role of quality of life in defining the revisit intentions, extent literature was reviewed which showed the effect of quality of life on revisit intentions (Deesilatham, 2018; Nicolaidis & Grobler, 2017; Neal et al., 2007). Based upon the literature conceptual framework of the study was developed. Several studies have investigated the role of QOL as a mediating factor in determining revisit intention of tourists in various sectors of hospitality industry as well as in retail and also in leisure tourism destinations (Rohman, 2020; Lin et al., 2015). In addition, the researcher intended to broaden the literature by emphasising that the association between satisfaction and revisit intention will get stronger while mediated by the quality of life in the wellness tourism context. To achieve this objective, SEM (Structural Equation Modelling) analysis was conducted. The results revealed that quality of life significantly mediates the relationship between satisfaction and revisit intention, indicating that the relationship between satisfaction and revisit intention (Wang et al., 2020) actually strengthens or increases when QOL is involved in the mediation. This result is in line with earlier studies (Berutu et al., 2022). Overall, SEM model defined the overall relationship of QOL in the revisit intentions of retreat visitors in Himachal Pradesh and supported the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> hypotheses that "There is a significant relationship between Wellness tourism satisfaction and the quality of tourists" and "The quality of tourists has a significant relationship with tourist revisit intention."

## **5.3 Implications of the Research**

### **5.3.1 Practical Implications**

The current study's findings provide useful information to wellness service providers and decision-makers. The findings indicate that the wellness tourism market is vast and heterogeneous, with a wide range of tourist needs, expectations, and wellness lifestyle preferences. Therefore, service providers and destination marketers should develop promotional and marketing campaigns that focus on desires of tourists. It is suggested for wellness service providers to carefully plan their services in order to draw domestic as well as foreign wellness tourists by providing them opportunities to explore new experiences, unwind mentally and physically, and enhance spiritual wellbeing.

Similar to this, the results indicated that destination managers should pay more attention to the desires of tourists for relaxation, transcendence, and escape in order to pertain the wellness tourists' travel motivations. The implications can be emphasised from a managerial standpoint because these motivations are crucial to improving the visitor experience at the retreat. Accordingly, the wellness destination marketers should consider how these motivational factors will actually work in practice. Additionally, positive tourist experiences at retreats significantly influence tourist satisfaction. This in turn facilitates both tourist quality of life and destination loyalty, including the intention to return and recommendation to others. Therefore, in order to draw in new potential tourists and keep loyal customers who are already visitors, tourism managers must enhance their marketing strategies.

As a result, this study provides a conceptual framework and make suggestions and implications that are beneficial for strategic planning of the destination. Travel agents, policy-makers, and advertising agencies can establish combative strategies for advertising and branding to boost wellness tourism destinations in Himachal Pradesh.

### **5.3.2 Theoretical Implications**

This research significantly contributes to the theoretical understanding in the field of wellness tourism. First, an extensive review of the available literature

on various wellness travel is needed to examine the travel patterns of wellness tourists. Thus, this study adds to the literature by incorporating various types of wellness travel and their multidimensional aspects (Dini & Pencarelli, 2021; Karn et al., 2017). Second, previous studies revealed information about Himachal Pradesh's spa tourism (Charak, 2019; Manhas et al., 2019), yet little regarding yoga tourism (Goswami & Singh, 2017). As a result, the scope of wellness tourism (including yoga retreats and meditation retreats) in the Himachal Pradesh region is briefly described in this study. Additionally, provides insights about offerings at wellness retreats that helps to maintain physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing of tourists (Koncul, 2012).

Furthermore, the most of studies have been carried out to comprehend tourists' travel motivations in context of wellness tourism (Moura et al., 2023; Kessler et al., 2020; Hashim et al., 2019; Mueller & Kaufmann, 2001), whereas handful researches have been conducted on the travel motivations of retreat visitors (Ashton, 2018; Kelly, 2012). As a consequence, the present research broadens the current body of knowledge by addressing travel motivation factors of retreat visitors to take wellness vacations.

Besides, the study makes an effort to integrate model of travel motivation, experience, satisfaction, quality of life and revisit intention (Kim et al., 2015) in order to develop a structural model for wellness tourism industry. The sole requirement for this model is that it benefit the wellness tourism industry and be able to account for wellness travellers' steadfast loyalty, which is demonstrated by their willingness to return and refer others to the location. Notably, the study's conclusions regarding the connections between various variables and the role of quality of life as a mediator in defining overall travel behaviour of wellness tourists add new information to the body of prior research on the wellness tourism industry.

#### **5.4 Limitations of the Study**

This study has certain limitations, just like every other study, despite our best efforts. The following are the limitations that have been identified:

- Since this study was conducted at a selected number of wellness destinations in Himachal Pradesh, no generalizations can be drawn about other locations.



- This study only considers the demand-side of wellness tourism and does not pay attention to the supply-side (service provider) approach.
- Wellness tourists' motivations, experiences, satisfaction, and quality of life in other geographic areas or countries may differ from those of wellness tourism destination behavioural intention. The results of this study are not supposed to extrapolated other wellness tourism hotspots in different geographical areas.
- The respondents in this study were visitors to a wellness retreat (visited for yoga and meditation). Henceforth, caution should be taken when inferring the research outcome to other tourism-related disciplines.

### **5.5 Direction for the Future Research**

- The current study emphasised on examining the relationships between travel motivational factors and travel determinants for wellness tourism. Therefore, this study has validated a theoretical framework for wellness tourism. The model examined the factors that influence travel behaviour, including motivation, experience, satisfaction, quality of life, and revisit intention to the retreat centres in Himachal Pradesh. Future research, however, might test the model from different destination perspectives as well as extend the model by embedding crucial factors.
- The current study focused at both domestic and foreign wellness tourists who visited Himachal Pradesh's wellness retreats. Future research, indeed, should emphasise on a comparison of domestic and foreign wellness tourists and could investigate different aspects of their travel motivations.
- Future studies should examine similar study in different locations and may conduct a comparative analysis between two different destinations.
- In contrast to this study, which examines the mediating role of quality of life on defining travel behavior, future research might emphasize on the moderating impact of demographic factors like age, gender, and income on defining travelers' behaviors to wellness retreats.

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5. Annual household income (in Lakhs) (INR):

- a) 2 to 4                      c) 6 to 8
- b) 4 to 6                      d) 10 or More

6. Employment Status:

- a) Employed                      d) Retired
- b) Unemployed                      e) Others
- c) Student

7. Nationality:

- a) Indian                      b) Foreigner

Specify Country (if foreigner) or State (if Indian)

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8. Traveling with:

- a) Alone                      c) Group or friends
- b) Partner                      d) Family

9. Number of visits to Himachal Pradesh:

- a) 1                      b) 3
- b) 2                      c) 4 or more

10. Number of visits to Himachal Pradesh Wellness Centers:

- a) 1                      b) 3
- b) 2                      c) 4 or more

11. Length of Stay on the current trip:

- a) 1-5 Days                      c) 11-15 Days
- b) 6-10 Days                      d) 15 Days or more

**Section B:**

*The following statements describe travel motivations, experiences, life quality, satisfaction and revisit intentions of retreat visitors about wellness holidays in Himachal Pradesh on 5-point Likert scale. Please read carefully and express your level of disagreement or agreement for each statement by ticking (✓) in the scale; where 1= Strongly disagree; 2= Disagree; 3= Neutral; 4= Agree and 5= Strongly agree.*

<b>Travel motivation for taking the wellness holiday is _____</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
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To improve mental health	1	2	3	4	5
To improve physical health	1	2	3	4	5
To get away from daily routine	1	2	3	4	5
To feel refreshed	1	2	3	4	5
To increase my self-esteem	1	2	3	4	5
To tell other where I have been	1	2	3	4	5
To find my inner self	1	2	3	4	5
To feel healthier	1	2	3	4	5
To experience something new and exciting	1	2	3	4	5
To reduce my stress level and let go my worries	1	2	3	4	5
To experience calmness	1	2	3	4	5
To feel relaxed	1	2	3	4	5
To live energetic	1	2	3	4	5
Get away from the pressures of work	1	2	3	4	5
To focus on myself and to gain more confidence about myself	1	2	3	4	5
To connect with nature	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Wellness retreat visit Experience is _____</b>					
This holiday helped me to improve my mental health	1	2	3	4	5
On this vacation I felt more satisfied with my life	1	2	3	4	5

This vacation made me more knowledgeable and stimulated my curiosity	1	2	3	4	5
I escaped from my daily routine during the holiday	1	2	3	4	5
This vacation met my overall well-being needs	1	2	3	4	5
This holiday experience encouraged me to understand myself better	1	2	3	4	5
After this trip my perception about life changed	1	2	3	4	5
I felt free from pressures of life on this trip	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Satisfaction after this wellness holiday</b> _____					
Services at the wellness centre (e.g., activities, attractions, accommodations etc.) were high in quality	1	2	3	4	5
Services provided at the wellness centre were problem-free	1	2	3	4	5
I am overlay satisfied with my experience on this wellness holiday	1	2	3	4	5
My experiences on this holiday exceeded to my expectations	1	2	3	4	5
I am happy about my decision to choose this wellness destination	1	2	3	4	5
I believe myself that I have taken a right thing by choosing this wellness holiday	1	2	3	4	5
I have enjoyed a lot myself on this wellness holiday	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Quality of Life after wellness holiday is</b> _____					
This holiday helped me to enhance my life quality	1	2	3	4	5
After this holiday I feel much better about things and myself	1	2	3	4	5

This holiday helps me to enhance my mental and spiritual state of well-being	1	2	3	4	5
This trip encouraged me to lead a purposeful and meaningful life	1	2	3	4	5
This vacation made me realize that I actively contribute to the happiness and well-being of others more than before	1	2	3	4	5
This trip encouraged me to become more optimistic about my future	1	2	3	4	5
My satisfaction with life in general was increase shortly after the trip	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Revisit Intention to the Wellness center after this visit</b> _____					
I will definitely recommend this wellness destination to other people (e.g., friends, relatives, families etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
I will say positive things about this wellness vacation to other people (e.g., friends and relatives)	1	2	3	4	5
If I will decide again to go for a wellness holiday, I will choose this wellness destination again	1	2	3	4	5
I will revisit the same wellness destination in the near future	1	2	3	4	5

