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# Health, Wellness, and Happiness: A Demand Analysis

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**Abstract:** Wellness Tourism is one of the most promising niche markets within the tourism field worldwide, assuming a recognized role in the global tourist scenario. In socio-demographic terms, it is related to some of the major contemporary international trends and is intrinsically related to population ageing and the increase in life expectancy. That has a set of consequences to tourist phenomena, based on the demand for unique and true experiences and products, that include health services, mainly in tourist destinations with more accessible costs, with infrastructure and natural conditions conducive to well-being. This paper analyses the contribution of Health and Wellness Tourism in the improvement of Happiness levels of the ones who experience these kinds of services. In this research, the analysis is focused on the demand side, considering health and wellness users and tourists in Portugal, providing a sociodemographic characterization, observing their travel behaviour, assessing their satisfaction with the health and wellness experience, and the levels of happiness obtained. The results demonstrate the potential of health and wellness tourism on the contribution to the happiness of users, according to their different profiles. It also evidences the impact of the frequency of use of this type of service on the improvement of happiness levels. Theoretical and practical implications for the development of health and wellness tourism from a marketing perspective are provided, complemented with a set of proposals for future research.

**Keywords:** Health, Wellness, Tourism, Happiness, Demand, Portugal

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## 1. Introduction

Health and wellness tourism has experienced a dynamic development in its different forms (medical and aesthetic treatments, fitness and anti-stress activities, and spiritual retreats) and it is gaining a relevant role in world tourism, with an impact on the economic performance of destinations. This phenomenon is due to the demographic contemporary international trends, mainly in Europe, but also to the middle-class growth in emerging economies, the changes in the needs and preferences combined with social and environmental awareness of consumers. In a post-health crisis context and socio-economic change, there are growing concerns about health and well-being and happiness addressed in various areas, namely in Tourism. The current situation presents a dynamic market logic, which depends on increasing knowledge of demand, as it has an increasingly determinant role and where past travel experiences influence future travel options. This paper focuses on the contribution of Health and Wellness Tourism in improving the levels of Happiness of those who experience these services. Through travel behaviour analysis, it also aims to demonstrate the impact of the frequency of use of this type of service on the improvement of happiness levels. The analysis is focused on demand analysis, including health and wellness users and tourists in Portugal, a country with an ancient tradition of Thermalism, and with great potential for future growth. In the European context, Portugal represents around 2,5% of the total International Tourist Revenues and in 2018, the Tourism sector affirms its position as the main export sector of the national economy, with tourist revenues registering a contribution of 8,2% to the GDP (Turismo de Portugal, 2018). The results are explored from a marketing and branding perspective, providing a sociodemographic characterization, observing their travel behaviour, and assessing their satisfaction with the health and wellness experience, regarding the levels of happiness obtained.

## 2. Health and Wellness Tourism in Portugal

Portugal is a country characterized by the existence of more than forty hot springs and thermal baths, along the North and Central regions of the territory. These mineral waters have different characteristics regarding the curative properties of the waters, beneficial for different kinds of diseases. Even though the curative properties of the thermal waters are known since ancient times, in Portugal only in the eighteenth century, the therapeutic effects of the waters were recognized. According to Ferreira (1994), thermalism in Portugal is institutionalized in 1892 through the publication of new legislation, known as “*Lei das Águas*” (Waters’ Law). In the twentieth century thermal activity was regulated by another regulatory publication (*Decreto-Lei n.º*

15401), published in April 1928. But only in 1989, the therapeutic indications for Thermal Baths in Portugal were officially defined. These laws defined over time the organisation of thermal tourism in Portugal, implying that health thermal tourism predominated and not recreational thermal tourism since they did not facilitate the attribution of concession licences that would encourage the development of tourism in a broader dimension. It was only at the beginning of the twenty-first century that the publication of *Decreto-Lei n.º 142/2004*, of 11th of July concerned the operation of the Spa, providing an updated legal framework to the sector, overlapping the last diploma from 1928.

The new regulation not only extends the scope of the application of thermal waters but also highlights the potential of spas in terms of tourism. The new framework distinguishes between Therapeutic Thermalism and Wellness Thermalism, revealing itself to be an adequate and modern norm for the activities of thermal spas, aligned with the characteristics and trends of European Thermalism. This new law represents a moment of investment leverage, conferring a renewal and sophistication of the thermal offer. This diversification of the offer allows the full exploitation of the health and well-being dimensions, increasing the tourism potential, through new services, dedicated to relaxation, stress scape and beauty. These new services contribute to combating seasonality, attracting new targets and markets, such as young people, and international tourists. Contrary to the trend that has been registered in the last decades, in which most users of this type of service belong to an older age group, mainly Portuguese. These factors explain and contribute decisively to the development of this type of tourism in Portugal in recent decades. The growth of this type of tourism, situated between health and leisure, is also due, in great part, to a set of social circumstances, such as the increase of free time, the greater economic capacity of the citizens, combined with the ageing of the population and the modification of lifestyles (greater sensitivity to health care, practice of healthier lifestyles) and Portugal, - due to the abundance of thermal spas, mainly in the North and Centre regions of the country - reveals itself as a destination with great potential for a level of Health and Wellness Tourism. Some of these spas were included in the empirical study and will be described in detail in the following sections of the document.

### 3. Happiness and Tourism

Happiness has become an important subject of research and, as much as tourism, it is a highly interdisciplinary area (Frey, 2008). Many insights from psychology have been introduced, considering it is related to many aspects of physical, material, and spiritual life. Although, Frey (2008) also argues it became an assumed and well-defined study area, that the author classifies as a “hot topic” and an “exception” in the so well-established and “close” body of knowledge in economics (Frey, 2008, p. ix).

Philosophers have debated the nature of Happiness for years, but nowadays it become an empirical construct and scientists have revealed that Happiness can have different meanings (Diener, 1995), its study is never linear or consensual (Averill & More, 1993). In addition to Philosophy, which from the beginning has focused on the theme of Happiness, many other disciplines focused on this subject. Psychology (Nettle, 2005) is the area in which more has been invested in this theme, presenting great developments in the field, including the name of a new branch of Psychology – Positive Psychology – that emerged at the turn of the century, more precisely in the year 1998 with Martin Seligman, who assumed himself as its founder when he chose this theme for the speech of his inauguration as president American Psychological Association (Cabanas & Illioz, 2018).

Happiness research has relied primarily on self-report scales to assess and evaluate Happiness, based mainly on self-report surveys, through which people rate their own Happiness levels, answering to respond to numbered scales to indicate their levels of satisfaction, positive feelings, and lack of negative feelings (Diener, 1984). However, the literature refers there are no satisfactory objective measures of Happiness. Thus, any effective measure of well-being needs to include some subjective measures. Argyle (2001) elaborates on the many problems of measuring Subjective Well-Being (SWB), underlining that measures are open to response bias because surveys on cultural differences do not exist for most historical periods and are expensive to conduct.

Besides the interest of many disciplines in Happiness over time, it also has received increasing attention in the tourism field, in the latest decades. If Tourism as a discipline started to be analysed by academics from a purely economic perspective (Zártori & Beardsley, 2018), currently the value of Tourism has been expanded, with a constant shift of focus to the intrinsic impacts of tourism, such as Happiness and well-being and Quality of Life (QoL) of tourists and hosts of destination (Sirgy & Uysal, 2016). Increasingly, there is an interest in finding out how long-term satisfaction, happiness, and *eudaimonia* are attributes that can be used to further explore the possible impacts of Tourism on well-being (Filep & Deery, 2010), analysing how it really affects individuals who

participate, enjoy, or promote tourist activities (Zátori & Beardsley, 2018). To figure out the relationship between Tourism and Happiness is very important to travel and tourism has also been considered a promising opportunity for individuals to pursue higher levels of life satisfaction (Rubenstein, 1980) and because Happiness constitutes a central issue to the individual's life as social beings (Richards, 2014). Vacations have long been considered an avenue for travellers to escape their everyday life and pursue rest, relaxation, and rejuvenation (Liu, 2013; Richards, 2014). Tourism is known as one of the most common ways for people to rest and relax. But in addition to these goals, it has become even more popular, considering its increasing impact on people's lives (Liu, 2013) and that that can make visitors happier, offering them opportunities to improve their perspective, socialize and feel mentally and physically well (Nawijn, 2011; Tse, 2014; Wu et al., 2017). Although, research and empirical evidence regarding the impacts of travel on the happiness of tourists are still limited (Carneiro & Eusébio, 2019). According to Sirgy (2012), there are several theories that have been used to explain the connection between Tourism, Leisure activities, and Happiness (Liu, 2013).

According to Liu (2013), which concerns motivation, there are two types of well-being and two types of motivation in relation to Tourism. There are two kinds of Happiness according to the philosophical tradition and developed nowadays by Positive Psychology, one regarding subjective well-being (*hedonia*) – dealing with Happiness and Psychological Well-being (PWB). The first type is based on good life SWB responses, and the other type regards psychological well-being (*eudaimonia*), based on PWB responses, with two different types of approaches to understanding tourist happiness (Filep, 2012, as cited in Liu, 2013). In the specific case of Health and Wellness Tourism, there are other motivations that are based on the push and pull factors of health and wellness tourists. Push factors are defined as reasons or internal forces that lead tourists to seek activities to reduce their needs, while pull factors are forces generated by the destination and the knowledge that tourists have about a destination (Gnoth, 1997). Most pressure factors are instructive motivators, such as the desire to escape, rest and relaxation, prestige, health and fitness, adventure, and social interaction. Attraction factors emerge due to the attractiveness of a destination, including beaches, recreation facilities, and cultural attractions (Uysal & Jurovski, 1994). To highlight a relationship between Happiness and Health and Wellness Tourism, reference can be made to the analysis carried out by Smith & Puczko (2014), regarding the factors of pushing and pulling for health and wellness tourists, where is possible to identify, among others, “the wish to be happier” as one of the pull factors, meaning that the Health and Wellness Destinations and activities are eventual paradises to achieve higher levels of Happiness.

#### 4. Methods

The analysis focused on the demand side, including health and wellness users and tourists in Portuguese Thermal Baths and Spas characterizing them in sociodemographic terms, observing their travel behaviour, assessing their satisfaction with the health and wellness experience, and the levels of happiness obtained. This analysis is based on an empirical study developed over nine months, whose data were collected in a total of six Thermal Baths and Spas, located in the Northern and Central regions of Portugal, providing a total of 376 valid responses. In the empirical study, a quantitative approach is made, using descriptive and multivariate statistical analysis. This analysis allowed demonstrates the potential of health and wellness tourism on the contribution to the happiness of users, according to their different profiles. The study's main conclusions provide a set of theoretical and practical implications for the development of health and wellness tourism in both countries, from a perspective of marketing, complemented with proposals for future research in this area.

The sample characterization develops in successive planes with the following sequence for Portugal: sociodemographic profile of respondents; travel behaviour and habits; perceived effects before and after Health and Wellness Experience (H&WE); Happiness and Subjective Well-being (H&SWB), and Global Life Satisfaction (GLS) levels. The justification for each one of these points is explained by the fact that social, demographic, and economic characteristics are important data to start defining and analysing the sample in data in social sciences. Its importance is also related to its influence on purchasing patterns and consumer behaviour. The main demographic characteristics include age, gender, marital status, family data, professional situation, educational attainment and nationality, and origin country. Psychographic data defines what motivates and influences the client to take certain behaviours during the use of Health and Wellness Services (H&WS). Travel behaviour of Thermal Spas users is related to motivation, level of loyalty, characteristics of stay as well as the way to meet the service and the reason for choosing it. In what concerns travel consumer behaviour and habits, the behaviour of users before and during their stay in the Thermal Spa, analysing: the reason for their travel, the way they became aware of the establishment, the number of days who use the services, the type of services used and the reason for travel, the type of accommodation units they use for the

night, and the level of loyalty to the Thermal Baths and Spas visited. In some of these points, as done in other dimensions of the empirical data analysis, was decided not to analyse their representativeness in each of the units. This option has been considered due to the fact this is an international study and not a specific regional one. Although is recognized that this analysis may be useful to further understanding of their market position and it can be developed in future studies.

#### 4.1 Data Collection and Procedure

The sample selection method was non-probabilistic sampling for convenience, following the previous studies (Antunes, 1997; Quintela, 2008) for a similar population. The data collection procedure consisted in some cases of a mixed procedure, based on direct administration by the researcher and/or by the Thermal Baths' staff (Table 1). The option for this procedure represented in some cases a condition imposed by the Thermal Baths to allow the development of the study. This condition is based on the characteristics and the very nature of the activities, where privacy and the selected and relaxed environment of the places should be respected and not interrupted or disturbed by the presence of people outside the organisation. In this way, a total of 376 valid answers were obtained among six Portuguese Thermal SPAs. The rate of answers obtained in the total sample has different representativeness (Table 1).

**Table 1: Survey Administration Methods and Number of Valid Surveys**

Thermal Baths and SPAs	By the researcher	By the staff	No. of valid surveys	%
Thermal Baths of <i>Chaves</i>	✓	✓	56	14,9
<i>Vidago</i> Palace Thermal SPA		✓	32	8,5
Thermal Baths of <i>Melgaço</i>		✓	16	4,3
Thermal Baths of <i>S. Pedro do</i>	✓	✓	140	37,2
Thermal Baths of <i>Curia</i>		✓	84	22,3
Thermal Baths of <i>Luso</i>	✓	✓	48	12,8
<b>Total</b>			376	100,0

Source: Author's elaboration

## 5. Results

The treatment of the data is based on the use of descriptive statistical methods descriptive methods, as well as multivariate analysis.

### 5.1 Sociodemographic Profile

The fundamental set of sociodemographic and economic characteristics of the sample is treated based on the results of the descriptive analysis and the variables of characterization of the respondents. In what concerns age, the division between the different groups followed a Generation criterion. Regarding age, 36,7% of respondents of the sample collected on Portuguese Thermal Spas belong to the Baby Boomers followed by the Traditionalists or Loyals, with 22,6%. The same kind of results can be observed in previous studies for the same region (Antunes, 1997, 2004; Quintela, 2008; Alpoim, 2010). Generation Y (8,5%) and Generation Z (3,5%) have low expression in the case of visiting the Portuguese Thermal Spas, keeping the trend of associating this kind of tourism, mainly with senior people. In what concerns gender, the sample is somehow balanced, though most of the respondents are female (56,9 %), while 38,8% are male. In this question, 4,3% didn't know or didn't answer (DK/DA). According to previous studies for the same region (Antunes, 1997, 2004; Quintela, 2008; Alpoim, 2010), the same trend was found, indicating a greater feminine presence in these Thermal Spas. Regarding the level of education (LoE), 37,2% have finished "high school" and 25,8% have an "undergraduate degree". It should be noted that only 8,5% of the total sample obtained a "postgraduate degree". Also 10,4% DK/DA to the question. In what concerns this aspect and analysing previous studies in the field (Quintela, 2008), where 34% of the sample have basic school, and 2,2% of the sample has a postgraduate degree. Regarding these results, is possible to observe that in a period of almost a decade, there was an accentuated change in what concerns the LoE of the visitants of Portuguese Thermal Spas that register nowadays at higher levels of education. In what concerns the professional situation, about 46% of the respondents are retired and 32,7% have a full-time job and only 1,3% are students. For the unemployed, 5,1% were accounted.

Compared with previous studies (Antunes, 1997, 2004; Quintela, 2008; Gustavo, 2009; Alpoim, 2010), is possible to affirm that the trend in this aspect didn't register changes, and it permits also to affirm that the demand for thermal baths is constituted mainly by retired people and by people with an active professional life. Analysing the family structure, the most representative status class in the sample analysed is "married or living martially", with 54,8%; 18,9% reported being single, and only 13% divorced/separated/widowed. From the 70% of respondents who answered the same question about family structure, 55,1% stated that they have children. In what concerns nationality, 96% of the respondents are Portuguese, while only 2,5% of the sample are international tourists 1,1% Spanish, 0,5% Angolan, 0,3% French, 0,3% Italian, and 0,3% Belgian. Similar results show that 96,5% of the respondents have Portugal as their country of residence, while only 1,1% reported Spain, 0,3% France, Italy, and Belgium in the same percentage. These results reveal that the demand for Thermal Baths or Spas in Portugal is mainly constituted by national tourism and/or residents. This trend was also confirmed by the referred studies (Quintela, 2008), where the presence of international tourists was not registered. Through this analysis, it is possible to affirm that a small evolution is being made in what concerns the international demand for Health H&WS in Portugal. Regarding the household monthly income, 32,7% of the total sample has an income under 1.500,00 €, and 22,9% reported earning between 1.501,00 € and 2.500,00 €. Only 7,4% have an income of over 4.500,00 € per month. The results demonstrate that is according to the average income in Portuguese society, based on the national statistical data (INE and PORTDATA, 2018).

## 5.2 Travel Behaviour

In what concerns the location of the Thermal Spas, the results demonstrate that 76,3% of the respondents reported that the visited Thermal Spas were not located in their areas of residence, the same is not true for the remaining 23,7%. The results clearly demonstrate that the sample is composed mainly of tourists (287). Though, focusing on the previous results about the nationality of the sample is possible to verify that in the case of Portuguese Thermal Spas, the demand is composed mainly of national tourists. In the case of the tourists, whose Thermal Spas are not in their areas of residence, 76,6%, choose accommodation located near the Thermal Spas, demonstrating that exists lodgement units near this area for this kind of tourist.

In what concerns the kind of accommodation selected by the 287 respondents that are located near the Thermal Spas, 50,9% selected a hotel, 11,5% selected House of Friends, or Relatives (F&R), only 3,5% selected Airbnb and 31% choose another kind of accommodation that was not specified.

Regarding the length of stay of these 287 respondents, there is a trend for long stays with 41,2% representing more than 10 days, 24,5% "between 5 and 10 days" and 27,1% "less than 5 days". Long stays represent, simultaneously, an advantage and a criterion for Health and Wellness Tourism, because most of the thermal treatments have a significant number of sessions that varies between one and two weeks. These long stays also represent an opportunity for the services to provide and promote complimentary wellness activities. Besides that, in what concerns destination, it represents an opportunity in economic terms and for subsidiary stakeholders such as hotels, restaurants, the local market and tourist animation companies, and local travel agencies. Besides that, according to the literature (Uysal et al., 2015), extended stays seem to further accentuate the positive effect and sense of well-being than short stays.

Keeping analysing touristic behaviour, most of the respondents (36,7%) usually go on holidays twice a year, followed by 35,9% that spend vacations "once" a year. Also, 11,7% spend "more than three times" on vacation per year and only 8,5% spend vacations "three times" per year.

When asked if these days corresponded to their vacation periods, the answers were relatively balanced, 54,5% yes and 40,4% no. This fact can be related to two different situations: the fact that some of these treatments correspond to a period of sick leave and it can be also related with the fact that most of the respondents are retired, not considering the idea of "vacations", because of the fact they don't have to work along the civil year.

## 5.3 Thermal Spas Visiting Habits and Trends

In this study were considered regular users, all the individuals answered one of the five options of the question: "How regularly do you go to a Thermal Bath / SPA?" in a total of 285 respondents. This decision was since even the ones that go once or twice per year to the thermal baths as usually happens with the classical thermal users, registering stays between 7 and 15 days. In some cases, it can be more significant than the ones that go once a month, e.g. As non-regular users were considered the ones who went for the first time to a

Thermal Bath or Spa and the ones that, although have answered “No” to the referred question, didn’t give any other information on the correspondent and complementary questions, in a total of 84 respondents.

Of the 83,8% of respondents who indicated it is not their first time visiting Thermal Spas 24,2% have been doing so for “more than 15 years”, while 16% “between 5 and 10 years” and 13,8% “between 10 and 15 years”. Low levels of frequency go to 13% “between 1 and 3 years”, 7,3% started using these services just a few months ago and 6,1% are users “between 3 and 5 years”. This long-term loyalty in this specific case can be related to the fact that in what concerns classical thermalism, the prescriptions, and the treatments must be done at least once per year, with no interruptions. On the total of the ones that respond this is not the first time they are visiting a Thermal Bath or Spa (285 answers), 59,8% stated that usually go “once or twice per year” and 9% “more than once a week”. The other respondents go to Thermal Spas “once a week” (2,9%), “at least once a month” (2,1%), and “less than once a month” (1,9%). Most of these respondents (46,8%) use their holidays time to go to Thermal Baths or Spas and 12,8% of respondents go “On weekly leisure time”, while 6,9% go “On some work break”, 3,7% “On weekends” and only 0,5% go “On business trips”.

#### 5.4 Perceived Effects of Health and Wellness Experience

Before the experience in the Thermal Spas, the states “Feeling tired” (27,7%) and “Feeling stressful” (25,3%) were the ones that obtained the highest agreement (Agree and Strongly Agree) among the respondents, followed by “Feeling confident” (25%) and “Feeling balanced” (24,7%). The states with the lowest agreement values were “Feeling toned” (6,1%) and “Feeling renewed” (7,2%) (Table 2).

**Table 2: Emotional and Physical States Before the H&W Experience**

Emotional and Physical States	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree	DK/DA
Feeling depressed	24,5	10,6	12,0	11,4	2,1	39,4
Feeling relaxed	8,0	19,1	17,3	9,6	1,3	44,7
Feeling self-confident	2,9	5,9	18,4	22,6	2,4	47,8
Feeling refreshed	2,9	17,8	18,1	8,5	0,8	51,9
Feeling tired	9,3	8,0	12,0	23,7	4,0	43,0
Feeling fulfilled	4,5	8,8	21,3	6,9	1,6	56,9
Feeling renewable	6,9	13,0	21,0	6,4	0,8	51,9
Feeling stressful	9,3	9,3	11,4	22,6	2,7	44,7
Feeling healthy	2,9	12,0	16,0	21,8	1,3	46,0
Feeling calm and peaceful	3,7	12,2	17,3	17,0	1,1	48,7
Feeling toned	4,3	13,0	25,5	5,3	0,8	51,1
Feeling Pampered	4,8	12,5	17,3	14,9	0,5	50,0
Feeling Balanced	3,7	9,0	13,0	23,4	1,3	49,6
Feeling energized	5,9	14,9	18,4	12,9	1,1	47,8
Feeling bored	14,1	11,4	11,7	10,9	0,8	51,1

Source: Author’s elaboration, from the outputs of SPSS (25.0)

The states of the highest agreement for respondents after the experience in the Thermal Spas, among them “Feeling comfortable” with 50,3% and “Feeling relaxed” with 49,5%. On the opposite side are the states “Feeling bored” with 10,4% and “Feeling depressed” with 14,1% (Table 3).

**Table 3: Emotional and Physical States After the H&W Experience**

Emotional and Physical Benefits	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree	DK/DA
Feeling depressed	28,2	9,0	5,9	8,0	6,1	42,8
Feeling relaxed	2,7	2,4	7,2	29,8	19,7	38,2

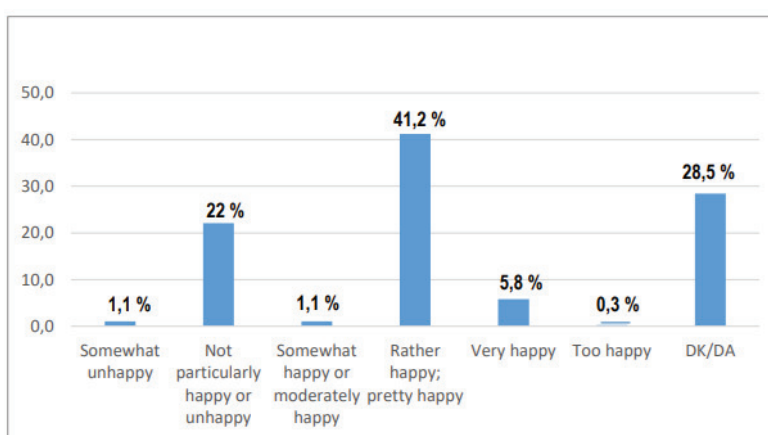
Emotional and Physical Benefits	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agreee	Strongly Agree	DK/DA
Feeling self-confident	0,8	0,5	14,4	23,4	14,9	46,0
Feeling refreshed	1,1	4,0	10,9	21,0	11,7	51,3
Feeling tired	16,0	8,0	9,0	10,9	7,7	48,4
Feeling fulfilled	1,9	0,8	17,0	20,2	8,2	51,9
Feeling renewable	2,9	2,9	9,6	25,8	12,2	46,6
Feeling stressful	18,4	8,5	7,4	11,2	5,9	48,6
Feeling healthy	2,1	2,1	12,2	29,8	14,4	39,4
Feeling calm and peaceful	1,3	0,8	8,0	34,6	14,4	40,9
Feeling toned	1,3	0,8	16,2	21,5	13,0	47,2
Feeling pampered	0,5	0,3	7,7	36,2	14,1	41,2
Feeling Balanced	1,1	0,5	8,5	35,1	10,6	44,2
Feeling energized	1,6	0,3	8,2	33,8	12,5	43,6
Feeling bored	27,1	6,1	4,5	7,7	2,7	51,9

Source: Author’s elaboration, from the outputs of SPSS (25.0)

### 5.5 Happiness Levels of Thermal Spa Users

Levels of Happiness and Subjective Well-being (SWB) concerning Happiness and Subjective Well-being (H&SWB) measured through the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ) scale, the more popular phrases selected by the Thermal Spa users “I always committed and involved” (63%), “I feel that life is very rewarding” (61,4%) and “I’m very interested in other people” (60,9%). On the other hand, those with the lowest agreement were “I find no particular meaning or purpose in my life” (11,7%) and “I have no fun with others” (16,3%).

The happiness score was calculated according to the instructions of Hills and Argyle (2002) on the OHQ, interpreting the score purposed by Wright (2007). After the calculation of the level of Happiness of the respondents of the Portuguese Thermal Baths or Spas, the OHQ score of the H&W users’ respondents the value of 41,2% for “rather happy, pretty happy”, 5,8% for “very happy” and 0,3% of answers for “too happy”. On the other hand, 22% of the respondents are “not particularly happy or unhappy”, 1,1% are “somewhat happy or moderately happy” and the same percentage of 1,1% are “somewhat unhappy” (Figure 1).



Source: Author’s elaboration

**Figure 1: Happiness Scores and Subjective Well-Being**

Regarding the test of the hypothesis, were considered the “happier people”, the individuals that achieved the levels of Happiness of: “rather happy, pretty happy”, “very happy” and “too happy” on the OHQ index, in a total of 178 respondents (Table 4).

**Table 4: Happier People in Thermal SPAs**

Individuals' happiness	Number of Answers	%
<b>NOT HAPPY</b>	91	24,2
<b>HAPPIER PEOPLE</b>	178	47,3
<b>DK/DA</b>	107	28,5
<b>Total</b>	376	100

Source: Author's elaboration, from the outputs of SPSS (25.0)

In what concerns Life Satisfaction, measured by 4 points scale respondents provided their Happiness levels (Table 5). Thus, 65,4% refer they were "happy" and 14,4% "very happy". Only 8,5% mentioned that they are "not very happy", and no one answered, "not happy".

**Table 5: Happiness Levels Regarding Whole-Life Satisfaction**

All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days?	No. of Answers	%
<b>Not happy at all</b>	0	0,0
<b>Not very happy</b>	32	8,5
<b>Happy</b>	245	65,4
<b>Very happy</b>	54	14,4
<b>DK/DA</b>	44	11,7
<b>Total</b>	376	100,0

Source: Author's elaboration, from the outputs of SPSS (25.0)

To compare the results between the different scales to measure happiness, the Spearman correlation was used. Spearman's correlation coefficient is a non-parametric measure of rank correlation (statistical dependence of the ranking between two variables). It measures the strength and direction of the association between two classified variables. These tests allowed confirming there is a significant correspondence between both scales of Happiness presented in the questionnaire (Table 6).

**Table 6: Comparing Happiness Scales Results (OHQ vs Whole Life Satisfaction)**

Happiness Scales	N*	R <sub>s</sub> **	p
<b>OHQ versus SIV.Q2.3</b>	259	0,196	0,002

\*N=256 (excludes DK/DA from both scales) | \*\*RS (Spearman correlation)

Source: Author's elaboration, from the outputs of SPSS (25.0)

Analysing these results, it is possible to identify and isolate two main groups (Table 4) and verify that happier people among the Thermal Spas services and facilities users, achieve more benefits through the H&WE. On the other hand, based on the approach of Keyes et al. (2002) and Nawjin (2011), that defend Tourism (experiences and activities) only contribute to short-term well-being, is possible to establish a causal relationship between the levels of Happiness and the regular use of H&WS. According to the results, is possible to confirm that regular users of H&WS are happier than non-regular users.

## 6. Conclusions

The results obtained by this research contribute to a deeper understanding of the characteristics of the demand for Health and Wellness Tourism in Portugal. Considering the study's main findings, it is possible to state that the practice of Health and Wellness Tourism represents a contribution to the Happiness of individuals. Furthermore, the results of the empirical study provide useful indications about the Thermal Spa's potential presenting several management implications, regarding the demand for Spas that should be recognized and lead to the introduction of a sum of strategies that can promote these services to a wider

public, diversifying the demand segments, which in the case of Portugal are still reduced to a national elderly public, developing marketing strategies for the creation of a destination brand, based on the potential of the use of Spas for the improvement of Happiness. Considering and acknowledging this potential, the implications of this finding can be seen as useful for the destination brand, the brand itself, and the marketing management practices of the Portuguese Thermal Baths. Thus, associating Thermal Springs with the idea of Happiness may carry the risk of significantly increasing consumers' expectations. This way, the creation of a brand associated with the concept of happiness can represent an additional effort of the offer to meet these expectations, betting on the quality and innovative character of the services offered, but on the other hand, it will be more connected to its clients and will represent a sum of development opportunities in the present and in the future.

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