

# THE ROLE OF FOODSCAPE AND FOOD WELL-BEING IN WELLNESS TOURISM: EVIDENCE FROM SEM AND FSQCA

Zhi-Xuan LI<sup>1</sup>, Si-Fan LIU<sup>1</sup> and Yang ZHANG<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Management, Macau University of Science and Technology Macau 999078, China; l65236119@163.com (Z. L.); liusifan421@gmail.com (S. L.); yangzhang@must.edu.mo (Y. Z.)

## ARTICLE HISTORY

**Received:** 31 July 2024

**Revised:** 14 August 2024

**Published:** 24 August 2024

## ABSTRACT

Drawing on the servicescape concept and authentic happiness theory, the objectives of this study are three-fold: firstly, to construct a measurement scale for the wellness tourism foodscape; secondly, to investigate the mechanism through which wellness tourism foodscape impact revisit intention and explore the mediation roles of food well-being; and thirdly, obtain sufficient configurations to predict tourists' revisit intention for wellness tourism destination. Data were collected at Chinese Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. To address the lack of a refined measurement scale for evaluating wellness tourists' foodscape and their food well-being, two exploratory factor analysis were initially conducted. The findings are expected to reveal a three-dimensional scale for wellness tourism foodscape and a four-dimensional scale for wellness tourists' food well-being. Afterwards, this study used PLS-SEM to confirm positive relationships between foodscape, food well-being, and revisit intention. Additionally, the fsQCA results illustrated multiple configurations leading to low and high intention to revisit wellness tourism destination.

**Keywords:** Wellness Tourism, Foodscape, Food Well-Being, Authentic Happiness Theory, Complexity Theory

**CITATION INFORMATION:** Li, Z., Liu, S., & Zhang, Y. (2024). The Role of Foodscape and Food Well-Being in Wellness Tourism: Evidence from SEM and fsQCA. *Procedia of Multidisciplinary Research*, 2(8), 51.

## INTRODUCTION

Today, with the improvement of people's living standards and the enhancement of health awareness, wellness tourism, as an emerging form of tourism, is gradually being favored by more and more tourists. Wellness tourism not only focuses on the physical and mental relaxation and pleasure of tourists, but also emphasizes promoting the health and well-being of tourists through tourism activities. Therefore, the significance of studying wellness tourism lies in deeply understanding the connotation, characteristics and impact of this tourism form on tourists' behavior, so as to provide theoretical support and practical guidance for the sustainable development of the tourism industry.

As an important part of wellness tourism, foodscape is one of the key elements of tourists' experience. It not only includes visual elements such as the appearance, color, and plating of food, but also covers deeper content such as the harmonious coexistence of food and the environment, the inheritance and display of food culture (Zhu et al., 2022). The significance of studying foodscape is to reveal how it affects tourists' perception and emotions through multi-sensory experiences such as vision, smell, and taste, thereby improving tourists' overall satisfaction and loyalty.

Food well-being is not only the health that tourists gain in the process of tasting food, but also the pleasure, satisfaction, and happiness in this process. In the context of wellness tourism, food is not only to meet basic physiological needs, but also to pursue spiritual pleasure and emotional resonance. The significance of studying food well-being is to explore how food can become a bridge between tourists and the culture of tourist destinations, and how to enhance the quality of tourists' travel experience by improving food well-being.

Revisit intention is an important indicator to measure the attractiveness of tourist destinations and tourist loyalty. As key factors affecting tourist experience, foodscape and food well-being are worth exploring in depth. Therefore, this study aimed to determine the dimensions of the foodscape, investigate the mechanism through which wellness tourism foodscape influences revisit intention, and obtain multiple configurations leading to low and high intention to revisit wellness tourism destination. The findings will contribute to both theory development and practice.

## LITERATURE REVIEWS

### Conceptual model construction

#### 1) Wellness tourism foodscape

The term "foodscape" refers to this intricate social structure in which people interact with the food and place through diverse practices (Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2019; Richards, 2021). Hall and Gössling (2016) asserted that foodscape is a dynamic concept because it presents a shifting image of the relationship between food and its external social, physical, perspectival, and cultural surroundings. Zhu et al. (2022) divided existing foodscape research into three overlapping but different research directions, that is, foodscape in the field of public health and nutrition research, foodscape in the field of geography, sociology, and politics, and foodscape in the field of consumer behavior and culture. Wellness destination foodscape belongs to the third direction (i.e., foodscape consumption and experience), and it can be regarded as a landscape of interaction and co-creation between tourists, food, and wellness destination (Zhu et al., 2022).

Björk and Kauppinen-Räsänen (2019) have summarized the destination foodscape into five dimensions: physical environment, social interactions, food quality value, monetary value, and divergence. The physical environment includes the decoration, location, functionality, and service encounter's story. Social interactions include the interactions with family member, other guest, and service staff. Food quality values include food locality and food sensation. Monetary value is the relationship between price and quality. Divergence describes distinctions

or unique occurrences. This study uses these five dimensions to measure the wellness destination foodscape.

## 2) Food well-being

In recent years, the concept of food-related well-being has emerged as a significant area of study, generating extensive literature (Birtalan et al., 2020). Food serves as a critical component of overall well-being, significantly influencing individuals' subjective evaluations of their lives (Grunert et al., 2007; Schnettler et al., 2017). This construct explicitly incorporates subjective dimensions of well-being, encompassing physical, psychological, and socio-environmental factors (Ares et al., 2014; Block et al., 2011; Holder, 2019). Block et al. (2011) established a comprehensive framework for food well-being, identifying five essential domains that elucidate the complexities of individuals' relationships with food: food socialization, food marketing, food literacy, food policy, and food availability. Additionally, Guillemain et al. (2016) contributed to this field by developing the Well-Being related to Food Questionnaire (Well-BFQ), further facilitating the assessment of food-related well-being.

Birtalan et al. (2020) highlight the intrinsic connection between food and physical well-being, noting that dietary choices directly influence bodily functions. A growing body of research supports the notion that food not only affects physical health but also plays a pivotal role in shaping emotions and psychological well-being. The positive impacts of food consumption extend beyond individual dietary choices, encompassing the broader social context of food intake (Ares et al., 2016; Birtalan et al., 2020; Bublitz et al., 2019). Food often serves as a medium for establishing rituals and practices that imbue meaning and shape individuals' relationships with consumption as a fundamental aspect of life (Ravenscroft et al., 2013). Consequently, this study adopts the four-dimensional framework of food-related well-being proposed by Birtalan et al. (2020), which includes physical well-being, psychological well-being, social well-being, and spiritual well-being. This multidimensional approach provides a holistic understanding of how food influences various facets of individual and collective well-being.

Wellness tourists leave their daily lives to seek the unique landscape of wellness destinations. Food becomes one of the core attractions that mark the uniqueness of wellness destinations and create memorable experiences. According to Björk and Kauppinen-Räsänen (2017) and Rocha et al. (2023), wellness tourists can not only use food to satisfy their hunger needs, but also seek a sense of well-being in the process by understanding the food itself and the interaction with the environment and people. Besides, Batat (2019) asserted that situatedness and enduring salience of the food experience can achieve food well-being. Therefore, this study proposed the following hypothesis:

H1: Wellness tourism foodscape has a positive effect on wellness tourists' food well-being.

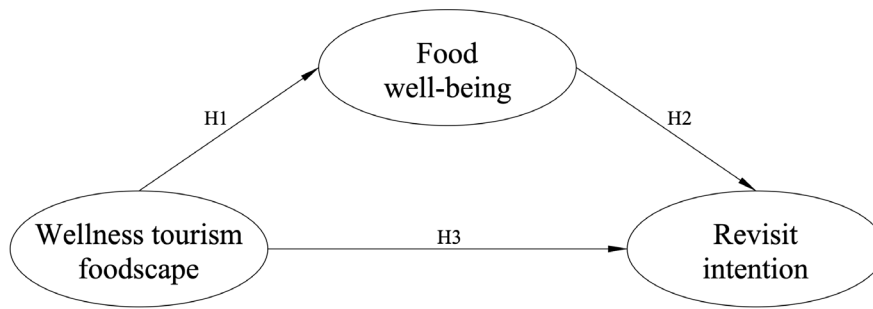
## 3) Revisit intention

Revisit intention refers to the probability of tourists revisiting a certain destination or repeating an activity (Baker & Crompton, 2000). Enhancing tourists' revisit intention is important to the sustainable development of tourism destinations (Long & Nguyen, 2018). Numerous research have explored the antecedents of tourist' revisit intention (e.g., An et al., 2022; Hasan et al., 2020; Yang et al., 2020). In wellness tourism, the antecedents that have been identified are memorability (Chen et al., 2024; Meng & Cui, 2020), organizational identification (Chen et al., 2023), perception price destination and brand love (Han et al., 2020), motivation (Lim et al., 2016), and cuisine experience and psychological well-being (Lin, 2013). Previous studies have verified that experience (Hallmann et al., 2021) and well-being (Dat et al., 2024) was an appropriate predictor of revisit intention. The following hypotheses were proposed:

H2: Wellness tourism foodscape has a positive effect on their revisit intention.

H3: Wellness tourists' food well-being has a positive effect on their revisit intention.

Figure 1 depicts a graphical representation of the proposed model.



**Figure 1** Structural model

### Complexity approach and its research practice in wellness tourist behavior

Variable relationships are complicated, frequently nonlinear, and prone to abrupt shifts that might significantly impact results (Pappas & Woodside, 2021). When it comes to tourists behavior analysis, linear approaches find it difficult to fully describe how each indicator interacts with the other in a complex system (Shi et al., 2022). Moreover, complexity theory's nonlinear properties provide important light on the complex interactions between causation and outcome conditions (Olya & Al-Ansi, 2018). Because of this, complexity theory—which holds that there are many events in the universe that are not reducible to cause-and-effect relationships—is embraced by our study.

This is based on the chaos theory (Pappas, 2019), which suggests that it is difficult to forecast long-term dynamic patterns since little behavioral alterations may have a big impact (Baggio, 2008). Numerous research in the context of tourism have investigated complexity theory (e.g., Al-Ansi et al., 2024; Li et al., 2024; Shi et al., 2022). In particular, complexity theory predicts that while forecasting outcomes, one would come across several causal solutions that result from the random interactions of components in complex systems (Kretzschmar, 2015). Because of the expected nonlinear dynamics between variables inside a complex system, research based on complexity theory refers to testable precepts as "tenets" rather than "hypotheses" (De Canio et al., 2020). According to Woodside (2014), drawing on the preceding discussion (Woodside, 2014), this study proposed the following tenets:

Tenet 1	A simple antecedent condition related to foodscape or food well-being may be necessary but is rarely sufficient to predict low or high scores in the outcome condition of wellness tourists' revisit intention.
Tenet 2	A complex antecedent condition of two or more simple conditions related to foodscape or food well-being is sufficient to consistently achieve high score in the outcome condition of wellness tourists' revisit intention.
Tenet 3	A model that is sufficient for obtaining a high score in the outcome of wellness tourists' revisit intention is not necessarily required for such a high score to occur.
Tenet 4	Recipes of foodscape or food well-being indicating a second outcome (e.g., rejection) are unique and not simply the mirror opposites of recipes for a different outcome (e.g., acceptance).
Tenet 5	An individual feature of foodscape or food well-being in a recipe can contribute positively or negatively to a specific outcome depending on the presence or absence of the other elements in the recipes.
Tenet 6	For high scores of wellness tourists' revisit intention, a given recipe of foodscape or food well-being is relevant for some, but not all, cases; coverage is less than 1.00 for any single recipe. A few exceptions exist where a given recipe effectively predicts high scores of wellness tourists' revisit intention.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study chose the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) as the research location because the GBA is the birthplace of Cantonese cuisine, which is famous for its the principles of Chinese traditional wellness thinking. Wellness tourism fooscape was captured using 19 items from Chen et al. (2023) study. Scales for wellness tourists' food well-being (26 items) and their revisit intention (three items) were primarily based on Guillemin et al. (2016) and Zhang et al. (2018), respectively. All measurements were shown in a five-degree Likert scale questions, where “5” represented “strong agreement” and “1” represented “strong disagreement”. Furthermore, this research also asked the demographic information of respondents. Purposive sampling was chosen in this study. Moreover, this study employed SPSS 27.0, Smart-PLS 3.0, and fsQCA to analyze the obtained data.

## RESEARCH RESULTS

This study has not yet conducted field data collection, but we expect to obtain the following results: First, the exploratory factor analysis result is expected to reveal a three-dimensional scale for wellness resort foodscape, consisting of food sensory, sociocultural interactions, and food symbolism. Second, positive relationships between wellness tourism foodscape, food well-being and revisit intention are confirmed by PLS-SEM. Third, the fsQCA results illustrated multiple configurations leading to low and high intention to revisit wellness resort.

## DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

Drawing on the servicescape concept, authentic happiness theory, and complexity theory, this study has three theoretical contributions, namely, first, this study construct a measurement scale for the wellness tourism foodscape; second, this study investigate the mechanism through which wellness tourism foodscape impact revisit intention and explore the mediation roles of food well-being; and third, this study obtain sufficient configurations to predict tourists' revisit intention for wellness tourism destination. From a practical implication perspective, this research also provides guidance on foodscape design for wellness tourism destination, promoting the consideration of food well-being in wellness tourism destination design.

## REFERENCES

- Al-Ansi, A., Kim, S., Xu, Y., Chen, C., Chua, B. L., & Han, H. (2024). Wellness Tourism Attributes and Tourist Outcomes: An Analysis of Configurational Effects. *Journal of Travel Research*, 00472875241237262.
- An, S., Jiang, L., Woosnam, K. M., & Eck, T. (2022). Volunteer tourists' revisit intentions explained through emotional solidarity and on-site experience. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 53, 70-80.
- Baker, D. A., & Crompton, J. L. (2000). Quality, satisfaction and behavioral intentions. *Annals of tourism research*, 27(3), 785-804.
- Batat, W., Peter, P. C., Moscato, E. M., Castro, I. A., Chan, S., Chugani, S., & Muldrow, A. (2019). The experiential pleasure of food: A savoring journey to food well-being. *Journal of Business Research*, 100, 392-399.
- Björk, P., & Kauppinen-Räsänen, H. (2017). A destination's gastronomy as a means for holiday well-being. *British Food Journal*, 119(7), 1578-1591.
- Björk, P., & Kauppinen-Räsänen, H. (2019). Destination foodscape: A stage for travelers' food experience. *Tourism Management*, 71, 466-475.
- Charak, N. S. (2019). Role of spa resorts in promoting India as a preferred wellness tourism destination-a case of Himalayas. *International Journal of Spa and Wellness*, 2(1), 53-62.

- Chen, K. H., Huang, L., & Ye, Y. (2023). Research on the relationship between wellness tourism experiencescape and revisit intention: A chain mediation model. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 35(3), 893-918.
- Chen, K. H., Ye, Y., & Yu, C. H. (2024). Military tourism cultural heritage site experiencescape effects on authenticity, memorability, and revisit intention: learning from Taiwanese military dependents' villages. *Tourism Review*, 79(3), 739-756.
- Dat, L. T., Wu, H. C., Li, T. N., Huang, W. S., Liou, G. B., & Hsieh, C. M. (2024). The effects of landscape fascination on subjective well-being and revisit intention: Evidence from agritourism destinations. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 26(1), e2621.
- De Canio, F., Nieto-Garcia, M., Martinelli, E., & Pellegrini, D. (2020). The motives behind consumers' intention to use peer-to-peer accommodation: an fsQCA application. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 32(9), 2969-2989.
- Dryglas, D. (2020). Wellness as a new direction of development of Polish spa resorts. *International Journal of Spa and Wellness*, 3(2-3), 69-81.
- Hall, C. M., & Gössling, S. (2016). From food tourism and regional development to food, tourism and regional development: Themes and issues in contemporary foodscapes. In *Food tourism and regional development* (pp. 2-58). Routledge.
- Hallmann, K., Zehrer, A., & Rietz, J. (2021). Sport events as experiencescapes: the spectator's perspective. *International Journal of Sports Marketing and Sponsorship*, 22(4), 764-779.
- Han, H., Kiatkawsin, K., Koo, B., & Kim, W. (2020). Thai wellness tourism and quality: Comparison between Chinese and American visitors' behaviors. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, 25(4), 424-440.
- Hasan, K., Abdullah, S. K., Islam, F., & Neela, N. M. (2020). An integrated model for examining tourists' revisit intention to beach tourism destinations. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, 21(6), 716-737.
- Li, H., Chen, S., He, B., & Huang, G. (2024). The role of motivation in the subjective well-being of older adult sojourners: An investigation using a hybrid technique of PLS-SEM and fsQCA. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 13567667241269057.
- Lim, Y. J., Kim, H. K., & Lee, T. J. (2016). Visitor motivational factors and level of satisfaction in wellness tourism: Comparison between first-time visitors and repeat visitors. *Asia pacific journal of tourism research*, 21(2), 137-156.
- Lin, C. H. (2013). Determinants of revisit intention to a hot springs destination: Evidence from Taiwan. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, 18(3), 183-204.
- Long, N. T., & Nguyen, T. L. (2018). Sustainable development of rural tourism in an Giang Province, Vietnam. *Sustainability*, 10(4), 953.
- Manhas, P. S., Charak, N. S., & Sharma, P. (2019). Wellness and spa tourism: finding space for Indian Himalayan spa resorts. *International Journal of Spa and Wellness*, 2(3), 135-153.
- Markowitz, J. S., Gurley, P. C., & Gurley, B. J. (2020). Medical foods—A closer look at the menu: A brief review and commentary. *Clinical Therapeutics*, 42(7), 1416-1423.
- Meng, B., & Cui, M. (2020). The role of co-creation experience in forming tourists' revisit intention to home-based accommodation: Extending the theory of planned behavior. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 33, 100581.
- Richards, G. (2021). Evolving research perspectives on food and gastronomic experiences in tourism. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 33(3), 1037-1058.
- Rocha, R. R., Chaim, D. F., Veloso, A. R., Costa, M. L. A., & Falcão, R. F. (2023). Deleterious food socialization: the negative impacts of the school environment on children's food well-being. *British Food Journal*, 125(12), 4610-4621.

- Shi, D., Yi, B., Shi, F., & Satta, S. (2022). Motivation configuration of bluxury tourism behavior: An FsQCA application. *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, 63(1), 33-47.
- Woodside, A. G. (2014). Embrace• perform• model: Complexity theory, contrarian case analysis, and multiple realities. *Journal of Business Research*, 67(12), 2495-2503.
- Yang, S., Isa, S. M., Ramayah, T., Blanes, R., & Kiumarsi, S. (2020). The effects of destination brand personality on Chinese tourists' revisit intention to Glasgow: an examination across gender. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, 32(5), 435-452.
- Zhu, D., Wang, J., Wang, P., & Xu, H. (2022). How to frame destination foodscapes? a perspective of mixed food experience. *Foods*, 11(12), 1706.

**Data Availability Statement:** The raw data supporting the conclusions of this article will be made available by the authors, without undue reservation.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

**Publisher's Note:** All claims expressed in this article are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of their affiliated organizations, or those of the publisher, the editors and the reviewers. Any product that may be evaluated in this article, or claim that may be made by its manufacturer, is not guaranteed or endorsed by the publisher.



**Copyright:** © 2024 by the authors. This is a fully open-access article distributed under the terms of the Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0).